

Policy brief:

Brave Movement's G20 call to action 2025:

Enhancing online safety provisions
to protect children from sexual
exploitation and abuse



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A G20 call to action (2025)

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Mission: To end childhood sexual violence through survivor leadership

Executive summary

The digital revolution has outpaced safeguards, leaving millions of children vulnerable to online sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA). In 2023, over 105 million child sexual abuse material (CSAM) reports were filed, while online grooming cases surged by 300%. The rise of AI-generated CSAM, deepfake exploitation, and algorithmic targeting further exacerbates risks. Without urgent action, children worldwide especially in the Global South will face escalating harm.

This policy brief calls on G20 nations, under South Africa's presidency, to:

1. Enact globally aligned laws mandating tech companies to detect, remove, and prevent CSAM.
2. Strengthen cross-border cooperation among governments, law enforcement, and tech firms.
3. Regulate AI and emerging technologies to ban synthetic CSAM and exploitative algorithms.
4. Invest in survivor-informed prevention programs and digital literacy for children.

The G20 must act now: children's safety is non-negotiable.

1. The escalating crisis of online child sexual exploitation

Key statistics and evidence

- 105 million CSAM reports in 2023 (*National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 2024*).
- 300% increase in online grooming (*Interpol, 2023*).
- AI-generated CSAM and deepfake exploitation are rising (*WeProtect Global Alliance, 2024*).
- Disrupting Harm in South Africa (2022): Many cases go unreported due to fear and lack of support.

Gaps in current protections

- Fragmented legislation: Jurisdictional gaps allow exploiters to evade accountability.
- Tech industry inaction: Many platforms lack proactive CSAM detection (e.g., end-to-end encryption without safeguards).
- Under-resourced enforcement: Law enforcement lacks capacity to handle escalating cases.
- AI risks: Generative AI enables synthetic CSAM and hyper-targeted grooming.

2. Policy recommendations for G20 action

1. Enact and harmonize global legislation

- Mandate "Safety by Design" for tech companies (inspired by the EU Digital Services Act).
- Align with the UN Global Digital Compact to ensure ethical AI governance.

2. Strengthen cross-border and multi-stakeholder cooperation

- Establish a G20 Task Force on Online CSEA (modeled after INTERPOL's Crimes Against Children Unit).
- Require mandatory reporting by tech firms under standardized protocols (e.g., U.S. SHIELD Act).

3. Regulate AI and emerging technologies

- Ban AI-generated CSAM and enforce strict penalties for deepfake exploitation.
- Promote ethical AI development via youth-informed guidelines (*Y20's proposed Code of Conduct*).

4. Invest in prevention and digital literacy

- Fund school-based online safety programs (*UNICEF's Digital Literacy Toolkit*).

- Amplify survivor-led advocacy in policymaking.

5. Adopt the AU Model Law and regional frameworks

- Adopt the AU Model Law on Child Online Safety as a regional standard.
- Leverage South Africa's G20 presidency to champion AU-led protections.
- Harmonize laws with the African Charter on the Rights & Welfare of the Child (ACERWC).

3. Why G20 must act now

- Prevalence: 300 million+ children under the age of 18 are exposed to online sexual exploitation and abuse (Childlight's Into the Light Index, June 2024)
- Legal obligation: G20 states must comply with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

4. for G20 leaders (2025)

We urge G20 leaders, under South Africa's presidency, to:

- Pass binding resolutions on child online safety at the 2025 Summit.
- Allocate dedicated funding for enforcement and survivor support.
- Endorse the AU Model Law and push for global alignment.
- The future of digital children's safety must be non-negotiable.

Further reading:

- African Charter on the Rights & Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)
- WeProtect Global Alliance (2024) Global Threat Assessment
- UNICEF (2023) Disrupting Harm Report
- Interpol (2023) Online Grooming Trends
- 5Rights Foundation (2025) AI Design Code for Children