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ERGA signs a joint Declaration with other networks of regulators supporting the goals of the UNESCO Global Conference for the protection of democracy and human rights

On the 23th February 2023, on the occasion of the UNESCO Global Conference “Internet for Trust”, AGCOM President Giacomo Lasorella, in his capacity of ERGA Chairman, signed a joint Declaration, promoted by the French regulator Arcom, in its capacity of Chair of the Francophone Network of Media Regulators – REFRAM), together with other networks of regulators in the media and online safety sector (the African Communication Regulation Authorities Network - ACRAN, the Global Online Safety Regulators Network - GOSRN, the Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities - MNRA, the Platform of Ibero-American Audiovisual Regulators - PRAI and the Francophone Network of Media Regulators – REFRAM).

The signatory networks have expressed their full support to the goals of the UNESCO Global Conference for the protection of democracy and human rights and to the proposal of developing further consultations aimed at the adoption of guidelines on the regulatory approach to digital platforms.

In particular, ERGA endorses the objectives pursued by the UNESCO in the digital environment, aiming to support freedom of expression and to secure information as a public good, while dealing with content that damages or potentially damages human rights and democracy, particularly content that conveys hatred, incitement to violence, harassment, discrimination against women, minorities and other vulnerable groups, and mis- and/or disinformation. To this end, ERGA welcomes any initiative aimed at developing coherent regulatory systems based on the role of media regulators pursuing common principles across regions, such as the transparency and independence of media and content regulation, to better meet these objectives while minimizing Internet fragmentation.

ERGA recalls that the EU regulatory standards promote a safer digital space in which the fundamental rights of all users are protected, as well as a level playing field to foster innovation, growth, and competitiveness, that should be achieved both in the European Single Market and globally. Specifically important in that regard are cross-border cooperation mechanisms in order to achieve effective enforcement worldwide.

“While appreciating the initiative by UNESCO, ERGA restates that the EU framework, in particular the recently adopted Digital Service Act Regulation, provides a well-advanced set of rules that may serve as a best practice in several aspects. In this context, the relevance and legitimacy of the institutional

signatories of the joint declaration, along with national regulators and stakeholders contributing to the UNESCO debate, are essential factors to the development of international human rights standards for a safer digital space that respects democracy and human rights” said Giacomo Lasorella, ERGA Chair.

About ERGA:

The European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) consists of the national regulatory authorities in the field of audiovisual media services. ERGA advises the European Commission and facilitates cooperation between the regulatory bodies in the EU. Mr Giacomo Lasorella, President of the Italian AGCOM (Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni) is the current Chairperson of ERGA.