INTERNATIONAL GRAND COMMITTEE
ON DISINFORMATION AND FAKE NEWS

Preamble
We the undersigned:

Members of the national Parliaments of: the Argentine Republic; the Kingdom of Belgium; the Federative Republic of Brazil; Canada; the French Republic; Ireland; the Republic of Latvia; the Republic of Singapore; and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Noting that:— the world in which the traditional institutions of democratic government operate is changing at an unprecedented pace; it is an urgent and critical priority for legislatures and governments to ensure that the fundamental rights and safeguards of their citizens are not violated or undermined by the unchecked march of technology; the democratic world order is suffering a crisis of trust from the growth of disinformation, the proliferation of online aggression and hate speech, concerted attacks on our common democratic values of tolerance and respect for the views of others, and the widespread misuse of data belonging to citizens to enable these attempts to sabotage open and democratic processes, including elections.

Affirming that:— representative democracy is too important and too hard-won to be left undefended from online harms, in particular aggressive campaigns of disinformation launched from one country against citizens in another, and the co-ordinated activity of fake accounts using data-targeting methods to try manipulate the information that people see on social media.

Believing that:— it is incumbent on us to create a system of global internet governance that can serve to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of generations to come, based on established codes of conduct for agencies working for nation states, and govern the major international tech platforms which have created the systems that serve online content to billions of users around the world.

Declaration
In the interests of transparency, accountability and the protection of representative democracy we hereby declare and endorse the following principles:

i. The internet is global and law relating to it must derive from globally agreed principles;

ii. The deliberate spreading of disinformation and division is a credible threat to the continuation and growth of democracy and a civilising global dialogue;

iii. Global technology firms must recognise their great power and demonstrate their readiness to accept their great responsibility as holders of influence;

iv. Social Media companies should be held liable if they fail to comply with a judicial, statutory or regulatory order to remove harmful and misleading content from their platforms, and should be regulated to ensure they comply with this requirement;

v. Technology companies must demonstrate their accountability to users by making themselves fully answerable to national legislatures and other organs of representative democracy.

SIGNED:

[Signatures and signatures]

Chairperson of the Joint Committee on Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Parliament of Ireland

Deputy Speaker, Parliament of the Republic of Latvia

Member, Parliament of the UK

Member, National Congress of Argentina

Member, Parliament of Belgium

Member, National Congress of Brazil

Member, Parliament of Canada

Member, Parliament of France

On this Tuesday, the Twenty Seventh of November MMXVIII in WESTMINSTER, LONDON