*****Country:South Africa*

*Committee:UNODC*

*Topic:Cyber Bullying*

*Position paper*

**Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that occurs online through various digital platforms such as social media, instant messaging, and text messaging. In South Africa, this issue has been gaining more attention in recent years due to the growing use of technology and the internet among young people. As a result, individuals need to understand the legal implications of cyberbullying and how they can protect themselves and others from its harmful effects.**

**The starting point is gaining a clear understanding of what constitutes cyberbullying. The problem, however, is that cybercrime or cyberbullying needs to be defined explicitly in the latest legislation. “Bullying” is” seeking to harm, intimidate, or coerce.”**

**Cyberbullying is a global issue, and South Africa is not immune to it. According to a 2018**

**survey by Ipsos, South Africa has the highest rate of cyberbullying in the world, with 51%**

**of South African teens reporting that they have experienced cyberbullying.1 This is**

**significantly higher than the global average of 37%.**

**One of the key challenges of cyberbullying is that it can be difficult to detect and prevent.**

**Unlike traditional bullying, which often takes place in person and can be observed by**

**teachers, parents, or peers, cyberbullying is often anonymous and takes place in online**

**environments that are difficult to monitor. This means that victims may be unaware of the**

**extent of the bullying and may be less likely to report it to authorities.**

**The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the problem of cyberbullying, as more**

**people spend time online. According to a study by L1GHT, a company that specialises in**

**artificial intelligence (AI) that is designed to detect and filter toxic content to protect**

**children, online toxicity and cyberbullying on social media sites and video conferencing**

**apps during the Covid-19 pandemic increased by up to 70%.**

**2 The study also revealed an**

**increase in hate speech among children and teens that correlated directly with an**

**increase of COVID-19 infections within the populace.**

**To combat this issue globally, UNESCO has called for increased efforts to address online**

**violence, including strengthening legal frameworks and providing support services for**

**victims.**

**3 Similarly, the StopBullying Organization has emphasised the need for a**

**comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to addressing cyberbullying, which includes**

**education, policy, and support services. Recently, South Africa has seen a surge in violence, cyberbullying by learners against peers, and online malicious acts against teachers. In response, the South African Department of Basic Education invited the social crime prevention police to intervene. This study reports on the developmental issues contributing to cyberbullying and the police response to this violence in rural schools. An extensive literature review was conducted, and a conceptual framework was developed to guide the study and development of a mobile application.**