Everyone must help eliminate cyber hatred, says Secretary-General

16 June 2009 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today said that parents, the Internet industry and policy makers all have a role to play in eliminating hate speech from cyberspace. "Some of the newest technologies are being used to peddle some of the oldest fears," Mr. Ban **said** at a seminar in New York entitled "Cyberhate" – the latest in an ongoing series on combating intolerance, organized by the UN Department of Public Information (DPI).

"We have seen it time and again," he said, "targeting innocents because of their faith, their race, their ethnicity, their sexual orientation."

The Secretary-General said everyone has a role to play in eliminating cyber hate.

Parents have a responsibility to teach their children to safely surf the net, he said. The Internet industry can help ensure that hate speech does not proliferate online, and policy makers must "take a hard look at this problem and work to safeguard people while balancing basic freedoms and human rights."

Among the other speakers scheduled for the full-day gathering were Kiyo Akasaka, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information; Hemanshu Nigam, Chief Security Officer, News Corporation and MySpace; and Marta Santos Pais, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children.

The UN began the "Unlearning Intolerance" series in 2004 with discussions of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and has continued the programme with lectures and seminars since then.