



MINISTRY  
COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## MEDIA STATEMENT

**To : All Media**  
**Date : 15 July 2025**

### **DCDT WELCOMES THE RULING ORDERING META TO SHUT DOWN CERTAIN INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS AND WHATSAPP CHANNELS POSTING SEXUAL CONTENT**

The Department of Communications and Digital Technologies and the Film and Publication Board welcome the ruling by the Gauteng High Court ordering Meta to shut down certain Instagram accounts and WhatsApp channels that were distributing explicit Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) which is also known as Child Pornography. Judge Mudunwazi Makamu ordered Meta to take down any content of a sexual nature that involves school children and to ensure that such profiles are permanently deleted.

The Films and Publications Act (The Act) defines child pornography as any image, however created, or any description or representation, that visually depicts a child engaged in sexual activity. The Act makes it a criminal offense to produce, distribute, possess, or expose children to child pornography. The penalties for these offenses are severe and include imprisonment and fines.

The court ruling was welcomed by the Deputy Minister, Hon Mondli Gungubele as it confirms his remark at the Department's recent Budget Vote on the dangers of CSAM. "With the development and expansion of digital technologies, the crime of online child exploitation and abuse has grown exponentially and has become the most insidious form of global, modern and

borderless cybercrime. The psychological effects on victims of child pornography are long-lasting and devastating, hence we applaud the high court ruling.” said the Deputy Minister.

“Parents and guardians are encouraged to regularly monitor their children’s online activities and educate them about harmful and prohibited content that could lead to their arrest as well as the long-term psychological effects of such content on victims.” he concluded.

Harmful content is described as content that causes emotional, psychological or normal distress to a person, whether it be through any online or offline medium, including through the internet. Prohibited content is described as content which amounts to propaganda for war, incitement of imminent violence, advocacy of hatred that is based on an identifiable group characteristic, or is prohibited in section 16 (2), 16 (4) and 18 (3).

The Deputy Minister will be hosting quarterly media briefings on the trends monitored by the FPB on harmful and prohibited content including CSAM. Media invites will follow in due course.

The FPB encourages the public to report any harmful and prohibited material through the FPB hotline 0800 148 148 or on our WhatsApp Hotline Channel on 083 428 4767. The public can also access these links on the FPB website at [www.fpb.org.za](http://www.fpb.org.za).

ENDS

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**Issued by the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies and the Film and Publication Board.**

