

To:
Consumer Minister

Dear Minister

**Data protection and security of connected products and services for children
An initiative of the G20 Consumer Summit.**

The G20 Consumer Summit will be held in Argentina on the 15th and 16th of May 2018. The event will be co-hosted by the Argentinian National Directorate for Consumer Protection and Consumers International, the international membership organisation for consumer groups with 200-member organisations in more than 100 countries. An important focus for this year's summit will be to discuss the measures that are needed to address the emerging data protection and security issues related to connected products and services for children and young people.

As part of this international initiative, Consumers Japan as a member of Consumers International, would like to request that you join a statement with other G20 countries that commits Japan to taking steps to improve data protection and security for children over the next year and supporting greater international co-operation on this issue.

The problem

Digital games and services have always had the ability to collect and share data about a child's patterns of online behavior, their location and the friends they link up, contributing to a picture of their usage and identity online. Without proper data protection and security, this data can be shared and viewed, creating substantial safety risks for children or enabling it to be used in ways that many find inappropriate.

New connected products that are marketed to children, or for use with children, create new challenges for protecting children's data and security. With estimates that 20 billion devices are now connected to the internet, connected devices now outnumber people by nearly three to one. Connected devices have the potential to children, their parents and carers around the world, however, alongside the benefits, there are serious risks. For example, weak security can allow these products to be easily hacked, making it possible for strangers to alter the functionality of the product or even communicate directly with the children.

Taking Action

We would like to use the opportunity created by the G20 Consumer Summit, to deliver a short statement from G20 countries that includes a commitment to act to improve data protection and security of children's connected products and services over the next year and support greater international co-operation on the topic.

This would help to raise the profile of the issue, support new and current initiatives to protect children online and promote greater international co-operation. As with last year's G20 Consumer Summit, the statement would also help to inform the work of the G20 Digital Economy Taskforce.

The measures that countries could take would depend on their context, but could include:

- 1) Raising awareness amongst developers, manufacturers, retailers and consumers of the risks that connected products and services can pose to children and the steps that different actors can take to improve data protection and security.
- 2) Developing or adopting a minimum set of acceptable security and privacy standards for developers, manufacturers and retailers of connected devices that are marketed to, or for children.
- 3) Creating a national body has responsibility for all aspects of digital consumer protection including the Internet of Things and the protection of vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. Such a body should have the necessary authority and independence to fulfil their mandates and the technical resources and capabilities to respond to developments in the sector.
- 4) Supporting greater international co-operation by holding a meeting with other G20 countries during 2018 / 2019 to raise the international profile of this challenge and exchange good practice and support international co-operation

If you are interested in supporting this initiative, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can circulate a first draft ahead of the Summit.

Yours sincerely,