



LEGAL PROTECTION OF EVENTS IN THE DIGITAL SPACE

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Abstract:

"The criminal protection of the child has faced several legislative and practical technical difficulties, especially in the digital space, which has spread its use in all fields and by all members of society. The seriousness of cybercrimes increases when the child is one of the victims of cybercriminals.

International and national legislations have sought to protect minors from digital space crimes by enacting substantive and procedural laws, as well as establishing institutions that take care of minors in case of danger. Additionally, security systems have been put in place to protect minors when they access the digital space".

Keywords: Criminal protection, Cybercrime, Digitalchild, Proceder.

INTRODUCTION

The distinction between the terms "minor" and "technology" is shrouded in considerable ambiguity due to the significant risks that threaten children and impact their family upbringing. While a child's ordinary environment was once considered among the factors leading to crimes against them, the digital space has now become one of the primary factors contributing to crimes targeting children. This is particularly evident with what is known within families as the "digital child," who uses technological tools enabling access to the digital virtual world, making them susceptible to numerous crimes without even realizing it. Their motivation for using technology stems from curiosity in browsing websites.

Websites attract various age groups, with minors being the most vulnerable legally to the dangers of these sites due to their unethical content and temptations, which easily lure children into electronic crimes.

Algerian legislation has attempted to develop legal provisions that indicate criminal protection for children against assaults occurring in the digital space, reflecting its concern for this group by dedicating a special law to it.

The legislator has granted minors specific procedures distinct from those set for adults at all stages of public prosecution, starting from the initiation of public action by the public prosecution during evidence collection, progressing to judicial investigation, and culminating in the trial.

Accordingly, the following issue can be raised:

To what extent have legislations contributed to protecting minors from the dangers of electronic crimes?

This research paper aims to address this issue through a methodological approach that covers all aspects of the topic. We will employ the descriptive method to define the concepts of "minor" and "electronic crime," and, on the other hand, use the analytical method to examine all preventive and punitive mechanisms for combating this type of crime, especially since the victim is a person afforded special legal protection.

Section One: The Concept of the Minor and Cybercrime

Childhood is the most crucial stage in a person's life, marked by physical and mental vulnerability, which makes children more susceptible to risks, deviance, and, consequently, involvement in various types of crimes—often referred to as juvenile delinquency.



Juvenile delinquency is a serious social phenomenon that affects all societies and poses risks, as it targets the most important group within society: children or minors.

Criminal protection, as defined by law, comprises procedural measures and penalties established to safeguard human rights from any form of assault. The objective of criminal protection for minors is to preserve their safety from all forms of assaults and crimes they may be exposed to, regardless of their nature. Thus, the Algerian legislator has made significant efforts to ensure this protection.

Minors can be subject to assaults and violations of their rights, being a vulnerable party that may lack the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. Therefore, legal systems must establish standards to identify minors. The Algerian legislator relies on age as a criterion, which is determined through official documents, such as a birth certificate.

First Requirement: The Concept of the Minor

Arab researchers and certain legislative texts have used terms like "deviance" and "delinquent" to describe a minor involved in criminal acts punishable by law, rather than employing the internationally recognized term "delinquent minor."¹

Section One: The Minor in Psychological and Social Terms

A minor is defined as a young individual from birth until reaching social and psychological maturity, encompassing the elements of rationality: awareness (the ability to understand the nature and consequences of one's actions) and will (the capacity to direct oneself toward or refrain from a particular action).²

In psychology, a "mental event" is understood as a mental phenomenon within the mind, forming part of the child's conscious state. Mental events can include thoughts, dreams, or perceptions.³

Section Two: The Minor from a Legal Perspective

Defining the concept of a minor is especially significant from a legal standpoint, particularly in criminal law and juvenile law. Generally, the law considers a person a minor if they have not reached a certain age, referred to as the "age of criminal responsibility." It is presumed that before reaching this age, a person has limited or no capacity for awareness and judgment. Upon reaching this age, a person is assumed to have full awareness and understanding.⁴

In Algeria, a minor is defined as an individual under the age of eighteen. This definition aligns with the terminology used in Article 2 of Law 12-15 related to child protection,⁵ which mirrors the international definition of a child. The age of the minor is determined through an official document, such as a birth certificate; in the absence of such a document, an age estimation can be conducted by an expert appointed by the court.

Section Three: The Minor in Islamic Sharia

In Islamic Sharia, a minor is an individual lacking the capacities of awareness and choice due to an immature intellect that hinders understanding of the true nature of things, selecting beneficial actions, and avoiding harm due to incomplete mental and religious development at an early age.⁶

In Sharia, a minor is essentially any person who has not reached puberty, as indicated by the verse:

"وَإِذَا بَلَغَ الْأَطْفَالُ مِنْكُمُ الْحُلُمَ فَلْيَسْتَأْذِنُوا كَمَا اسْتَأْذَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ" ⁷

Here, puberty is established as the threshold between childhood and the stages of maturity and responsibility, with puberty signifying full mental capacity, which is the basis for accountability. Puberty is recognized by natural signs: for males, it is nocturnal emission, and for females, menstruation or pregnancy. If these signs do not appear or are uncertain, some jurists recommend using an objective age criterion applicable to everyone, where the person is presumed to have reached puberty by a certain age if they are male, a rule also applicable to females.

There is variation among jurists regarding this threshold age. Shafi'i scholars and some Hanafi scholars consider 15 years as the age of puberty, whereas Maliki scholars hold that a person remains a minor from birth until 18 years, unless signs of puberty appear sooner.

Imam Al-Suyuti suggests using both criteria; if puberty signs appear early, the individual remains a minor and is not accountable until reaching 15 years.

Sudanese legislation adopted this view in the 1991 law, where Article 3 defines an "adult" as someone proven to have reached puberty by natural, definitive signs after completing 15 years of age, or anyone who has reached 18 years, even without signs of puberty. The Libyan legislator similarly followed Imam Malik's opinion, setting 18 lunar years as the age of criminal responsibility across various Sharia-based laws, such as Law No. 4 of 1972 concerning the establishment of punishments for theft and banditry.⁸

This study finds that Algerian legislators have shown significant concern for minors, moving from offering protection under the Juvenile Code to dedicating Law 15-12 specifically for child protection. Article 10 of this law states, "The use of children in proximity ads is prohibited under criminal penalties."

Second Requirement: Definition of Cybercrime

Various fields, including psychology, sociology, and especially criminology and penology, have focused on studying the aspects necessary to ensure security and criminal protection for individuals—whether on a national or international level—particularly when the person at risk is vulnerable and lacks agency, like a child. This requirement is divided into two main sections: in the first, we address the doctrinal definition of criminal protection, and in the second, we discuss the legal definition of cybercrime.⁹

Section One: The Doctrinal Definition of Cybercrime

Scholars have varied in their attempts to establish a unified definition of cybercrime, due to differing perspectives on the scope of this crime. Some view it in a narrow sense, while others adopt a broader interpretation.¹⁰

Proponents of a narrow view define cybercrime as any unlawful act where substantial knowledge of computer technology is necessary for its commission, as well as for its observation and investigation.

Professor Mass defines cybercrime as legal violations carried out using information technology for the purpose of profit. Professor Rosenblatt defines it as "an unlawful activity aimed at copying, accessing, altering, or deleting information stored within a computer or transmitted through it."¹¹

German jurist Tie de Mann sees cybercrime as "all forms of unlawful and socially harmful behavior committed using computers," emphasizing the means by which the crime is carried out. The U.S. Office of Technology Assessment defines computer crime (Cybercrime) as crimes in which computer data and information systems play a central role, also focusing on the technological means used to commit the crime.

David Thompson defines computer crime as any offense requiring the perpetrator to possess knowledge of computer technology, basing his definition on the necessity of information technology expertise.¹²

This definition suggests that illegal acts using computers as a tool for their commission fall outside the scope of traditional criminalization. Professor Parker defines cybercrime as any criminal act, in any connection with information technology, that results in a loss to the victim or a gain for the perpetrator.

Section Two: The Legal Definition of Cybercrime

In terms of its legal definition, the Algerian legislator has termed cybercrime as "crimes related to information and communication technology." According to Article 02 of Law 04/09, cybercrime is defined as "offenses against automated data processing systems specified in the Penal Code, and any other crime that is committed or facilitated through an information system or electronic communication system."¹³

This definition shows that the Algerian legislator adopted the role of information systems in defining the boundaries of the crime. Crimes directed at information systems are termed "offenses against automated data processing systems" and are addressed in the Penal Code from Article 394 bis to Article 394 bis 07.



Furthermore, the legislator left room for other crimes that may be committed through an information system or electronic communication network.¹⁴

According to the Algerian legislator, cybercrime can be realized merely by the act of committing a crime or facilitating it through an information system or electronic communication system. This definition covers a wide range of crimes, though it includes some redundancy since the concept of electronic communication systems is encompassed within the term information systems.¹⁵

Section Three: Characteristics of Cybercrime

Cybercrime has several distinctive characteristics, and understanding these features can aid in finding effective solutions to combat it. These characteristics can be summarized as follows:

1. **Hidden and Concealed Nature:** Most cybercrimes go unnoticed by the victim, even though they may occur while the victim is online. The perpetrator possesses technical skills that enable them to carry out their crimes precisely, such as through the transmission of destructive viruses, theft or destruction of private data, espionage, or call theft. Some crimes can occur within seconds or fractions of a second.¹⁶
2. **Specialized Nature in a Digital Environment:** Cybercrimes are committed in a digital information environment, with offenders using specific scientific knowledge and the hardware and software components of computers (Hardware and Software) to carry out their crimes using advanced expertise and professional techniques.¹⁷
3. **Difficult to Detect:** Cybercrimes are challenging to investigate due to the scarcity of physical evidence, as the available evidence is often electronic. The difficulty of obtaining evidence is particularly pronounced when the crime is committed within an organization by its employees, who can exploit their trusted positions to commit offenses without leaving any trace.
4. **Requires Specialized Methods for Proof:** Due to the nature of cybercrimes, specialized evidence-gathering techniques involving continuous training in computer science are essential. Cybercrimes require specialized professionals, including cyber police, cyber investigators, cyber judges, and cyber experts to uncover the crime, track down the perpetrators, and bring them to justice. Consequently, relying on experts is crucial to uncover, analyze, and interpret the digital evidence that establishes innocence or guilt. Cybercrime has no geographical boundaries; it is global in scope, allowing, for example, an individual in China to commit forgery or steal information or money from a person or entity in the U.S. and vice versa.¹⁸
5. **Low Reporting Rates by Victims:** Especially in cases involving companies and institutions, victims may be reluctant to report cybercrimes to avoid damage to their reputation or a loss of client trust. For instance, a notable case involved the British bank "Marchant Bank City," where £8 million was stolen from one of its accounts and transferred to an account in Switzerland. Although the perpetrator was caught in the act of withdrawing the stolen funds, the bank opted to pay the offender £1 million to prevent them from publicizing the crime and to learn about the method used to breach the bank's main computer security.
6. **Inherently Technical:** Cybercrimes are characterized by their technical nature, often committed through the Internet by offenders who use their expertise and knowledge to exploit the network for various crimes, such as espionage or violating others' privacy, including deceiving minors—all without physical violence.

Section Two: Legal Mechanisms for Protecting Minors in the Digital Space

Children are especially vulnerable to exploitation by criminals involved in prostitution and sex trafficking, who use heinous means to exploit them. This has prompted the United Nations, European nations, and other entities to make extensive efforts to combat these crimes through various conventions that criminalize and penalize offenders while seeking to protect children by any means necessary. Many legislations have introduced specific provisions criminalizing the exploitation of children in pornography, including the dissemination of pornographic images of children by any means of publication.¹⁹



First Requirement: International Mechanisms for Protecting Minors from Cybercrime

Several countries have sought to combat crimes targeting children in the digital space by signing various international and regional agreements. Among these agreements is:

Section One: The Budapest Convention

The Council of Europe aimed to achieve greater unity among its members and, recognizing the importance of cooperation with other countries, was convinced of the need for a unified criminal²⁰ policy as a priority measure to protect society against cybercrime. Thus, in 2001, it established the Convention on Cybercrime in Budapest. Twenty-six member states of the European Union, along with the United States, Japan, Canada, and South Africa, signed the agreement. Though originating in Europe, it is open for other countries to join.²¹

The Convention includes provisions to protect children from exploitation, as outlined in Article 9, titled "Offenses Related to Child Pornography." The first paragraph of Article 9 mandates that member states implement legislative and other necessary measures to criminalize certain acts under their domestic laws when committed intentionally and unlawfully. The criminalized acts listed include:²²

1. Producing pornographic images of children for distribution via computer systems.
2. Offering or making pornographic images of children available through computer systems.
3. Distributing or transmitting pornographic images of children via computer systems.
4. Procuring or providing pornographic material involving children through computer systems.
5. Possessing pornographic images of children within a computer system or stored on digital media.

The Convention defines "pornographic images of children" to include:

1. A minor engaged in explicit sexual conduct.
2. A person appearing to be a minor engaged in explicit sexual conduct.
3. Realistic images depicting a minor engaged in explicit sexual conduct.

The Convention defines a minor as any person under the age of eighteen (18) years, though it allows each party to set a lower age limit, provided it is not below sixteen (16) years. It also permits each party to reserve the right not to apply any provision fully or partially. The purpose of this article is to strengthen measures that protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation by updating criminal laws more effectively. This ensures that laws include provisions criminalizing the use of computer systems in committing sexual offenses against children. The article aligns with the international trend toward combating child sexual exploitation crimes and is consistent with the recent European Commission initiative to combat all forms of child sexual exploitation and child pornography, as per Resolution 854 of 2000.

Section Two: The International Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international charter and legally binding instrument that outlines children's civil, political, economic, and cultural rights. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child oversees the implementation of the Convention's provisions. Countries that have ratified the Convention are required to submit reports and appear before the Committee periodically to evaluate the application of the Convention and assess the state of children's rights in those countries.²³

The Convention defines a child as every human being below the age of eighteen unless national laws specify a younger age of majority.²⁴ This Convention addresses the sexual exploitation of children within two frameworks: a general framework that addresses the violation of children's rights overall and a specific framework that directly addresses the sexual exploitation of children in Articles 19 and 34.

Article 19 focuses on preventing sexual abuse and exploitation of children. For this purpose, it mandates that state parties take all appropriate measures—national, bilateral, and multilateral—to prevent:²⁵

1. Coercing or forcing a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity.



2. The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices.
3. The exploitative use of children in pornographic materials.

Article 1 of the Convention requires state parties to respect and ensure the rights detailed within the Convention for every child under their jurisdiction, without discrimination of any kind, regardless of the child's race, parentage, nationality, social origin, wealth, disability, birth, or any other status. States are also obligated to provide legal representation in any judicial dispute concerning children's care, require that children's views be heard in such cases, and prohibit the imposition of the death penalty on children.

Section Three: The Arab Charter on the Rights of the Child

The Arab Charter on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1983 by the Arab League, represents an Arab contribution to the focus on childhood and the unification of the Arab concept of children's rights. The Charter outlines a range of rights aimed at developing, caring for, and protecting children from all forms of violence and abuse. It also emphasizes the protection of the family as the core unit of society, adhering to the Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1959 and preserving Arab cultural identity.²⁶

The Arab Charter on the Rights of the Child consists of fifty articles detailing principles, goals, requirements, methods, and guidelines for joint Arab action. It includes general provisions and a preamble that outlines the motivations of Arab states for establishing a charter specific to the rights of the Arab child. The document incorporates principles from the United Nations Charter, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, and other international instruments, along with the objectives contained in the Arab League Charter and the regulations of its specialized agencies. The Charter is founded on the following principles:²⁷

To address the issue of child sexual exploitation, Article 10 of the Charter stipulates:

1. The prohibition of slavery and human trafficking in all its forms, with penalties for violations. Slavery and servitude are strictly forbidden under any circumstances.
2. Forced labor and human trafficking for prostitution, sexual exploitation, or the exploitation of others' prostitution, as well as any other form of exploitation or the involvement of children in armed conflicts, are also prohibited.

Despite the efforts made, the Charter has some limitations. For instance, Article 49 commits Arab states to taking necessary steps to implement its provisions within the limits of their available resources. This wording potentially allows Arab governments to evade the Charter's provisions by claiming a lack of resources.

Moreover, Article 50 does not specify the deadlines for submitting reports by Arab states to the Arab League's General Secretariat, nor does it mandate the establishment of an Arab committee of child welfare experts to review these reports.²⁸

The Charter is largely directive in nature, serving as a plan and set of guidelines for childhood welfare across the Arab region. Consequently, it may require revision and updating, especially after the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been ratified by most Arab countries. When comparing the Arab Charter with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, and other international child rights conventions, it becomes evident that Arab countries are often reluctant to address certain societal challenges that impact many Arab communities. Recognizing and addressing these issues would prevent them from being consistently highlighted by international organizations as obstacles to the progress of Arab states.

Second Requirement: National Mechanisms to Combat Cybercrime Targeting Children

The Algerian legislator has introduced specific provisions in the Algerian Penal Code aimed at addressing cybercrime. Law 04-15, under the title "Offenses Against Automated Data Processing Systems," is situated within Section 7 bis 1 under Chapter Three, which addresses crimes against property. Including these provisions in this chapter signifies that the targeted offense involves property or data regarded as property.



Articles on automated data processing systems in the Penal Code span from Article 394 bis to Article 394 bis 8, added by the legislator as part of efforts to combat cybercrime.

Section One: Legislative Mechanisms in the Penal Code

Given the increasing incidents of offenses against minors, the Algerian legislator has enacted several amendments, notably through Law 01-14 of 2014, which amended and supplemented Ordinance No. 156/66, the Penal Code. Among these amendments, Section Six introduces a new offense under Article 333 bis 1, which stipulates a prison sentence of 5 to 10 years and a fine ranging from 500,000 to 1,000,000 DZD for anyone who photographs a minor under 18 engaging in sexual activities, either real or simulated, or images of a minor's sexual organs for sexual purposes. This provision also criminalizes the production, distribution, publication, promotion, import, export, display, sale, or possession of pornographic material related to minors.

These amendments aim to address technological advances and new forms of offenses involving photographs taken by mobile phones, cameras, or computers and shared over the internet. The Algerian legislator, through these amendments to the Penal Code, particularly Law 14-01, seeks to provide greater protection for children amidst rising criminal activity and the emergence of cybercrime. Additional traditional provisions in the Penal Code, such as Articles 334 and 335/2, address offenses violating the modesty of minors, and Section Seven prohibits inciting minors to vice and prostitution under Articles 342-344.²⁹

This commitment is evident in Article 6 of Law 15-12, which ensures the child's right to protection from all forms of harm, neglect, violence, exploitation, or physical, moral, or sexual abuse. The law mandates that the state take all appropriate preventive measures and provide necessary conditions for the child's growth, care, safety, and development in a healthy and sound environment. Additionally, it safeguards children's rights during emergencies, disasters, wars, and armed conflicts.

Furthermore, the state ensures that information directed toward children, through various media, does not harm their physical or mental well-being, thus offering comprehensive protection against all forms of harm, including cybercrime as a recent type of harm impacting children. This implies that the legislator has extended protection to children from all types of offenses, both traditional and emerging, without specifying the type of offense. This provision can thus be applied to cyber-related offenses against children due to the physical and psychological harm they cause, highlighting the need for appropriate protective measures to prevent these offenses.³⁰

In conclusion, the Algerian legislator has not explicitly addressed cybercrimes affecting children within cyberspace; however, it has introduced special provisions under Law 01 as a step toward regulating technology use to prevent its misuse for promoting crimes online. Nonetheless, this law alone is insufficient to address the global scope of this technology, as the internet continues to pose risks to children. This underscores the need for the legislator to enact laws that keep pace with technological developments, comprehensively addressing all aspects of cybercrime.

Section Two: Legislative Mechanisms in the Code of Criminal Procedure

The Algerian Code of Criminal Procedure repealed specific provisions concerning juvenile offenders (Articles 442 to 494), transferring them to the Child Protection Law 12/15. This law serves as a protective, punitive, and procedural framework for addressing any harm or offenses against or by a minor "delinquent minor."

While it may be possible to control the information a child is exposed to within the family or educational institutions, which are guided by the community the child belongs to, it is challenging, if not impossible, to control the content of messages and images children receive through digital platforms, especially the internet. These often come from various societies and cultures and may not be appropriate for the child's developmental stage due to limited monitoring of these media. As a result, internet exposure may carry several risks that can affect a child's morals, such as:

- The impact of media content on the child's behavior, shaping their actions according to the intentions of content creators. Children often imitate the actions they observe, as they tend to mimic everything they see and observe.³¹



- One major risk of these media is the targeting of children, making them victims of trafficking and exploitation in various domains, most notably sexual exploitation.³² The internet has notably exacerbated cases of child sexual exploitation, with a marked increase in instances where children are lured online for sexual purposes. According to the Pew Research Center, 60 percent of teenagers reported receiving messages from strangers, not all of which were sexual in nature, and one in four children considered this to be normal.

These findings emphasize the need for comprehensive protective legislation that addresses modern digital risks impacting children's welfare and development.

Section Three: Technical Mechanisms for Combating Cybercrime Targeting Minors

Algeria has introduced several software programs designed to protect children from the various risks they may encounter while browsing the internet on their devices. These tools provide parents with monitoring capabilities over their children's internet activities. Some of these programs include:

1. Fi@amane Program

The Fi@amane program is a downloadable software for computers that safeguards children from online risks. It is easy to install with straightforward instructions and is protected by a password. Available in multiple languages, it filters all web browsers installed on the computer according to parental settings. Parents can set time schedules for internet usage, control which websites can or cannot be accessed, and restrict downloading and application usage on the computer for specific users. Additionally, the program allows parents to view a history of all websites visited by each user. Key features of Fi@amane include:³³

- **Content Filtering:** The program analyzes and verifies content, blocking access to chat sites, forums, and other undesired web platforms.
- **Browsing Modes:** In "Teen Browsing Mode," children can access all websites except those restricted by the program. In "Parent Browsing Mode," parents have unrestricted access using a password.
- **Time Management:** Parents can set specific internet usage times or sessions for each child, as well as block certain types of content categories such as drugs, violence, racism, gambling, and pornography.
- **Application Blocking:** Parents can restrict access to specific applications.
- **File Downloads:** The program can block the download of certain file types as selected by parents.

2. Kaspersky Safe Kids

Kaspersky Safe Kids is a unique protective software that provides robust security for children against phishing, hacking, and intrusion attempts. Its features include:

- **Content Blocking:** Restricts access to inappropriate or harmful content.³⁴
- **Screen Time Management:** Parents can set specific screen time limits for each child and each device individually.
- **Location Tracking:** Allows parents to track their children's locations in real-time using GPS.

These technical measures provide additional layers of protection, allowing parents to monitor and control their children's online interactions, thereby reducing exposure to cyber risks.

Conclusion:

The Algerian legislator has aligned itself with international law aimed at protecting children from various cybercrimes. Although a specific law addressing such crimes does not yet exist, Law 09-04, which establishes rules for the prevention of information and communication technology-related crimes, implicitly provides this protection.



This study addressed the informational risks children face when using social media platforms. Despite the disadvantages, these platforms also offer advantages and allow children to explore their potential, though the cognitive ability to distinguish between risk and beneficial usage varies.

The study concludes that cybercrime differs from traditional crimes in terms of the crime's nature, the characteristics of cybercriminals, and the profile of victims. Children are especially drawn to the virtual world, particularly online games, some of which contain applications that undermine public morals and encroach on a child's privacy.

The significant increase in internet usage worldwide has led to a rise in child victims of cybercrime, especially due to the frequency with which children use these sites. This calls for intensified efforts and measures to combat such crimes. Establishing preventive mechanisms and creating specialized institutions to protect children have helped to reduce these dangers, but these measures remain insufficient given the rapid evolution of the digital space.

Findings:

1. A child is defined as any person under 18, and the term includes those at risk in situations where their living conditions or behaviors may expose them to harm, whether in physical or digital environments.
2. The Algerian legislator derived the criteria for defining a child's age from Islamic law, particularly Imam Malik's view, which bases the definition on the age of maturity.
3. The Child Protection Law is a punitive, procedural, and protective law addressing all forms of harm or risk affecting minors, including cybercrimes.
4. The Algerian legislator has not provided a precise definition of cybercrimes targeting children, particularly as new types of offenders emerge.
5. One key feature of cybercrime is the lack of physical evidence, with offenders often able to destroy digital evidence.
6. Specialized cybercrime units use technical methods to uncover cybercrimes, aligning with the evolving nature of these crimes. Investigation procedures include techniques like electronic searches.
7. Cybercrimes come in various forms; some resemble traditional crimes, such as defamation, while others are exclusively digital, like cyber extortion.
8. Despite Algeria's amendments to combat cybercrime, these provisions remain inadequate given the sophistication of cybercriminals.
9. International cooperation in combating cybercrimes affecting minors remains limited and often relies solely on agreements, which are insufficient given the global nature of cybercrime.

Recommendations:

1. The term "digital child" should be included in child protection legislation.
2. Maturity should be considered in defining the age of a minor, and the Algerian legislator should ensure this standard is applied.
3. Cyber protection for minors should incorporate both judicial and social safeguards, as outlined in Law 15-12.
4. The legislator should define cybercrimes specifically targeting children.



5. Establish a research center focused on cybercrime to study its evolution and devise effective preventive measures.
6. A specialized judicial unit for minors, who are victims of cybercrime, should be established, and investigation procedures should be updated.
7. Laws should be developed and regularly updated to provide more effective criminal protection for minors in the digital space, particularly regarding methods for proving and locating the crime and identifying offenders.
8. Educational institutions should incorporate social media awareness and safe usage practices into their curricula, starting at the elementary level.

These recommendations aim to strengthen Algeria's legal and protective framework for shielding children from cyber risks and safeguarding their well-being in the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

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