Meeting between President von der Leyen and Ashton Kutcher (Thorn) and Ernie Allen (WeProtect Global Alliance) – VTC 13 November 2020

The meeting between President von der Leyen, Mr Ashton and Mr Allen concerned the prevention of child sexual abuse online. Ashton Kutcher met the President in his capacity as co-founder of Thorn, an organisation set up to develop technological tools that ensure children’s safety online, and Ernie Allen in his capacity as Chairman of the WeProtect Global Alliance. The discussion focused on legislation that is being discussed in the EU to make sure that existing technical tools can continue to be used to remove from the internet content of children being sexually abused. This is a temporary solution to address an immediate legal problem and the President informed that the Commission is planning to present a longer-term solution in 2021. Both considered that is important to avoid any legal vacuum and that today’s technology should be used to help detect and report child sexual abuse material, giving children the protection they need. The President pointed out to the need for a balancing exercise, which also guarantees the protection of the right to privacy and personal data. Finally, the President expressed the Commission’s commitment to continue its work through WeProtect Global Alliance to ensure a global strategic response to child sexual abuse online.