



Recommendations for Freedom Online

Adopted in Tallinn, Estonia on April 28, 2014
by Ministers of the Freedom Online Coalition

We, the members of the Freedom Online Coalition

Reaffirming our commitment to respect and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and endorsed in the Freedom Online Coalition's Founding Declaration,

Recalling our obligation to adopt and encourage policies and practices, nationally and internationally, that promote the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms online, in particular freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, the right to privacy, as set out in the article 17 in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the freedom of peaceful assembly and association,

Emphasising that the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online, and that the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and security online are complementary concepts,

Reiterating the fundamental importance that non-discriminatory access to and accessibility of the Internet have for exercising the freedom to seek, receive and impart information,

Recalling that the Internet has been fuelled by policies that promote the free flow of information and that protect human rights, foster innovation and economic growth,

Noting with particular concern growing attempts to restrict democratic voices online, including journalists and other media actors as well as human rights defenders, through imprisonment, harassment and physical violence, censorship, hacking as well as through illicit filtering, blocking, monitoring and other repressive means,

Recognising the growing global concern about surveillance practices which may have a negative impact on human rights online, in particular the right to privacy, as set out in the article 17 in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and to freedom of expression,

Recognising transparency of government processes and open government data initiatives as important elements in protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms and that the Internet is a powerful tool for supporting such transparency,

Acknowledging the need for efficient sharing of best practices on how Internet and online communication technologies can be used to guarantee and reinforce human rights and fundamental freedoms, and participation in a democratic society,

Noting the importance and responsibilities of the private sector as a stakeholder in respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms online in the age of data-driven economies,

Recognising the global and interoperable nature of the Internet, governed by multistakeholder processes open to governments, international organisations, the private sector and civil society, including academic and technical communities, as a driving force in accelerating progress towards development in its various forms,



Decide to:

- 1. Support** programs, initiatives and technologies that promote and help to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms online, and recommend other stakeholders to join these efforts,
- 2. Invite** governments and the private sector, in consultation with all stakeholders that safeguard human rights and fundamental freedoms online, to implement and share such best practices at the next Freedom Online Coalition conference in 2015,
- 3. Call** upon governments to halt imprisonment, harassment, physical violence, censorship, hacking as well as illicit filtering, blocking and monitoring of opposition voices and other repressive measures utilised to restrict freedom of expression and organisation online in contravention of international human rights obligations,
- 4. Dedicate** ourselves, in conducting our own activities, to respect our human rights obligations, as well as the principles of the rule of law, legitimate purpose, non-arbitrariness, effective oversight, and transparency, and call upon others to do the same,
- 5. Reaffirm** support for an open and interoperable internet, noting that strong cyber security and secure and stable communication are critical to maintaining confidence and trust in the internet, and key to safeguarding human rights and realising the internet's economic, social and cultural benefits,
- 6. Call** upon governments worldwide to promote transparency and independent, effective domestic oversight related to electronic surveillance, use of content take-down notices, limitations or restrictions on online content or user access and other similar measures, while committing ourselves to do the same,
- 7. Collectively condemn** – through diplomatic channels, public statements, and other means — violations and abuses of human rights and fundamental freedoms online as they occur in different countries throughout the world,
- 8. Commit** to enhanced transparency of government processes and open government data initiatives and encourage the development of e-government solutions in the public sector, while safeguarding the privacy of citizens and the security of such data,
- 9. Commit** to supporting digital literacy to empower Internet users to make informed decisions, promote their access to information and economic opportunities, and protect their human rights and fundamental freedoms with particular attention being paid to the challenges faced by persons and groups in a vulnerable position or who are subject to discrimination,
- 10. Commit** to preserve and strengthen the multi-stakeholder model of internet governance and increased participation in multi-stakeholder fora, such as the Internet Governance Forum,
- 11. Invite** governments, the private sector, international organisations, and civil society worldwide to endorse these recommendations to guarantee a free and secure Internet for all.