



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

STATEMENT

Brussels, 5 September 2014

Fighting for a free and open internet

Joint statement from the EU delegation to the Internet Governance Forum 2-5 September 2014 in Istanbul; signed by and Vice President [Neelie Kroes](#) and Member of the European Parliament [Pilar del Castillo](#), [Paul Rübig](#), [Sabine Verheyen](#), [Renato Soru](#) and [Julia Reda](#)

"Access to internet is critical for fundamental freedoms and economic development. Continued access to a free and open internet depends on effective governance.

In the wake of large-scale internet surveillance and reduced trust in the internet, governance of the internet must become more transparent, accountable and inclusive.

Furthermore, in light of Turkish government actions to censor social media (recent examples include the blocking of 51,000 websites including large platforms such as Twitter and YouTube) and jailing journalists, we restate our belief that restrictions on fundamental freedoms, of whatever kind and wherever they take place, are unacceptable

We have argued strongly in Istanbul for:

- Expanded internet access globally
- Maintenance of the internet as a global, open and common resource and non-discriminatory access to knowledge
- Greater accountability and transparency in the "multi-stakeholder" internet governance model (for example, in decision-making processes around .wine related domain names)
- Rejection of the idea of a state-controlled internet/s
- A stable and secure mandate for continuation of the Internet Governance Forum (with adequate resources)
- Recognition that our fundamental freedoms and human rights are not negotiable and must be protected online.

2014 is a critical year for global internet governance.

- In February 2014 the European [Commission communication](#) on internet governance called for establishment of a clear timeline for the globalisation of ICANN and the "IANA functions";
- In March 2014 the United States government agreed to begin reforms to ICANN and IANA;
- In April 2014 the NetMundial conference hosted by Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff pioneered a new form of internet governance policy development and

- Netmundial Brazil was followed by further initiatives by the United Kingdom government and World Economic Forum.

Following the Internet Governance Forum further critical meetings will be held discussing internet governance reform including in Europe at an informal Council on digital issues under the Italian Presidency on 3 October.

In Istanbul, EU representatives met with a range of internet stakeholders including Freedom House, repressed journalists, net neutrality advocates, and civil society organisations working to expand internet access in the global south, as well as industry and government leaders.

A key element of the Internet Governance Forum is the possibility for a global exchange of best practices. Europe offered methods for establishing Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs), promoting local content, and education tools for ensuring child safety online amongst many others."

Background on the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

This UN-initiated body is a multi-stakeholder, non-decision making forum of global importance for forward-looking discussions on Internet issues.

We are committed to continue financially supporting the IGF secretariat and we welcome initiatives such as the 'Tides Friends of the IGF Fund' and the 'IGF Support Association' to collect additional funds. We support renewal of the IGF mandate beyond 2015, with greater security of mandate and funding.

More information

[Internet Governance Forum](#)

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