



The Global Network Initiative

Our Impact

In the past year the Global Network Initiative put its principles into action, harnessing the power of its diverse membership—companies, civil society organizations, investors, and academics—to advance freedom of expression and privacy rights worldwide. Highlights include:

- **Seeding a global standard on free expression and privacy rights** in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector, with the GNI principles reflected in draft European Commission guidance, proposed U.S. legislation, and in key investor tools including the Dow Jones Sustainability Index.
- **Defending the open Internet** through multi-stakeholder policy engagement:
 - Collaborating with companies and civil society to block Pakistan's procurement of a massive Internet filtering system.
 - Meeting with government officials in Thailand to advocate against the onerous application of intermediary liability.
 - Slowing the rush to pass the Communications Data Bill in the United Kingdom, overbroad legislation that could undermine UK support for free expression and privacy internationally.
 - Raising our collective voice in support of legal reforms in India, Russia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the United States, and on network shutdowns and blocking in India, Syria, and Tajikistan.
- **Deepening relationships with companies across the ICT sector:**
 - Forming a new two-year collaboration with eight global telecommunications companies: Alcatel-Lucent, France Telecom-Orange, Millicom, Nokia Siemens Networks, Telefonica, Telia-Sonera, Telenor, and Vodafone.
 - Working with new companies Websense and Evoca.
 - Welcoming observer companies Facebook, the world's largest social network, and Afilias, a key provider of back-end Internet infrastructure.
- **Internationalizing our membership**, adding new civil society participants from Azerbaijan and India, and translating our core documents into Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish.
- **Advancing accountability** by creating the first independent case review assessment process for ICT companies and accrediting the first set of GNI assessors.
- **Influencing the global debate on human rights in the technology sector:**
 - Commissioning "Digital Freedoms in International Law" a report by Ian Brown and Douwe Korff.
 - Contributing to European Commission consultations and influencing the development of CSR standards for the ICT sector.
 - Convening policymakers and experts from government, companies, academia, investors, and civil society at our first Annual Learning Forum.

About GNI

GNI is a multi-stakeholder group of companies, civil society organizations (including human rights and press freedom groups), investors, and academics, who have created a collaborative approach to protect and advance freedom of expression and privacy in the ICT sector. GNI provides resources for ICT companies to help them address difficult issues related to freedom of expression and privacy that they may face anywhere in the world. GNI has created a framework of principles and a confidential, collaborative approach to working through challenges of corporate responsibility in the ICT sector.

"Voluntary groups such as the Global Network Initiative are exploring new ways for companies, investors, human-rights groups and academic experts to minimize the potential for human-rights abuses while maximizing the spread of communications technologies."

Bloomberg

The Benefits of GNI Membership

- Build global public trust in your brand by demonstrating that you care about users' rights around the world.
- Manage company risk exposure and improve decision-making through the GNI Principles, guidelines, and accountability process.
- Work through complex issues in a safe space, gaining insight from other companies, civil society, investors, and academic participants.
- Engage in public policy on a pressing global challenge with a unique and diverse coalition of experts.
- Build a global standard for corporate responsibility in the ICT sector.

“While individual GNI member companies may make different business decisions, we are united in our commitment to these principles and are working together to support and grow the important work of the GNI.”

Steve Ballmer, CEO, Microsoft

“By creating a trusted space for such ‘shared learning,’ GNI facilitates the exchange of knowledge and ideas, both of which are foundational to the development of socially responsible corporate practices.”

Leslie Harris, Center for Democracy & Technology

Participants

ICT Companies

Afilias (observer)
Evoca
Facebook (observer)
Google
Microsoft
Websense
Yahoo!

Civil Society Organizations

Bolo Bhi
Center for Democracy & Technology
The Center for Internet and Society
Committee to Protect Journalists
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Human Rights First
Human Rights in China
Human Rights Watch
Index on Censorship
Institute For Reports Freedom and Safety
International Media Support
Internews
Movements.org
World Press Freedom Committee

Investors

Boston Common Asset Management
Calvert Group
Church of Sweden
Domini Social Investments
F&C Asset Management
Folksam
Trillium Asset Management

Academics and Academic Organizations

Christine Bader, Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University (personal capacity)
Berkman Center for Internet Society & Society at Harvard University
Center for Studies on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information at Universidad de Palermo
George Washington University Law School
Rebecca MacKinnon, New America Foundation (personal capacity)
Deirdre Mulligan, UC Berkley School of Information
Nexa Center for Internet & Society at Turin's Polytechnic University
Research Center for Information Law, University of St. Gallen
Ernest Wilson, USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism (personal capacity)

“The Global Network Initiative ... is a growing forum where companies can work through challenges with other industry partners, as well as academics, investors, and activists.”

Former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

“And we could stimulate EU companies to develop self-regulatory approaches (or join existing ones, such as the Global Network Initiative) so we stop selling despots their ICT tools of repression.”

Neelie Kroes, Vice-President of the European Commission