



General Assembly

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Human Rights Council

Twenty-sixth session

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council

26/13 The promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and relevant international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

Recalling all relevant resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council on the right to freedom of opinion and expression, in particular Council resolution 20/8 of 5 July 2012, on the promotion, protection, and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet, as well as resolutions 12/16 of 2 October 2009, on freedom of opinion and expression, and 23/2 of 13 June 2013, on the role of freedom of opinion and expression in women's empowerment, and also recalling General Assembly resolutions 68/167 of 18 December 2013, on the right to privacy in the digital age, and 68/198 of 20 December 2013, on information and communications technologies for development, and Human Rights Council decision 25/117 of 27 March 2014 on the panel on the right to privacy in the digital age,

Taking note of the Global Multi-stakeholder Meeting on the Future of Internet Governance, held in São Paulo on 23 and 24 April 2014, which acknowledged, inter alia, the need for human rights to underpin Internet governance and that rights that people have offline must also be protected online,

Noting that the exercise of human rights, in particular the right to freedom of expression, on the Internet is an issue of increasing interest and importance as the rapid pace of technological development enables individuals all over the world to use new information and communication technologies,

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Noting also the importance of building confidence and trust in the Internet, not least with regard to freedom of expression, privacy and other human rights so that the potential of the Internet as, inter alia, an enabler for development and innovation can be realized,

Emphasizing that access to information on the Internet facilitates vast opportunities for affordable and inclusive education globally, thereby being an important tool to facilitate the promotion of the right to education, while underlining the need to address digital literacy and the digital divide, as it affects the enjoyment of the right to education,

Recognizing that, for the Internet to remain global, open and interoperable, it is imperative that States address security concerns in accordance with their international human rights obligations, in particular with regard to freedom of expression, freedom of association and privacy,

Taking note with appreciation of the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, submitted to the Human Rights Council at its seventeenth and twenty-third sessions,¹ and to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session,² on freedom of expression on the Internet,

Considering the key importance of government engagement with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, private sector, the technical community and academia, in protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms online,

1. *Affirms* that the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online, in particular freedom of expression, which is applicable regardless of frontiers and through any media of one's choice, in accordance with articles 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

2. *Recognizes* the global and open nature of the Internet as a driving force in accelerating progress towards development in its various forms;

3. *Calls upon* all States to promote and facilitate access to the Internet, and international cooperation aimed at the development of media and information and communication facilities and technologies in all countries;

4. *Affirms* that quality education plays a decisive role in development, and therefore calls upon all States to promote digital literacy and to facilitate access to information on the Internet, which can be an important tool in facilitating the promotion of the right to education;

5. *Calls upon* all States to address security concerns on the Internet in accordance with their international human rights obligations to ensure protection of freedom of expression, freedom of association, privacy and other human rights online, including through national democratic, transparent institutions, based on the rule of law, in a way that ensures freedom and security on the Internet so that it can continue to be a vibrant force that generates economic, social and cultural development;

6. *Stresses* the importance of combating advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination or violence on the Internet, including by promoting tolerance and dialogue;

7. *Calls upon* all States to consider formulating, through transparent and inclusive processes with all stakeholders, and adopting national Internet-related public

¹ A/HRC/17/27 and A/HRC/23/40 and Corr.1.

² A/66/290.

policies that have the objective of universal access and enjoyment of human rights at their core;

8. *Encourages* the special procedures to take these issues into account within their existing mandates, as applicable;

9. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights, including the right to freedom of expression, on the Internet and other technologies, as well as of how the Internet can be an important tool for development and for exercising human rights, in accordance with its programme of work.

*38th meeting
26 June 2014*

[Adopted without a vote.]
