July 5, 2016

Access Now
718 7th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

To the leaders of the world's governments,

We urge you to protect the security of your citizens, your economy, and your government by supporting the development and use of secure communications tools and technologies, rejecting policies that would prevent or undermine the use of strong encryption, and urging other leaders to do the same.

Encryption tools, technologies, and services are essential to protect against harm and to shield our digital infrastructure and personal communications from unauthorized access. The ability to freely develop and use encryption provides the cornerstone for today's global economy. Economic growth in the digital age is powered by the ability to trust and authenticate our interactions and communicate and conduct business securely, both within and across borders.

Some of the most noted technologists and experts on encryption recently explained that laws or policies that undermine encryption would "force a U-turn from the best practices now being deployed to make the Internet more secure," "would substantially increase system complexity" and raise associated costs, and "would create concentrated targets that could attract bad actors."[1] The absence of encryption facilitates easy access to sensitive personal data, including financial and identity information, by criminals and other malicious actors. Once obtained, sensitive data can be sold, publicly posted, or used to blackmail or embarrass an individual. Additionally, insufficiently encrypted devices or hardware are prime targets for criminals.

The United Nations Special Rapporteur for freedom of expression has noted, "encryption and anonymity, and the security concepts behind them, provide the privacy and security necessary for the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression in the digital age."[2] As we move toward connecting the next billion users, restrictions on encryption in any country will likely have global impact. Encryption and other anonymizing tools and technologies enable lawyers, journalists, whistleblowers, and organizers to communicate freely across borders and to work to better their communities. It also assures users of the integrity of their data and authenticates individuals to companies, governments, and one another.
We encourage you to support the safety and security of users by strengthening the integrity of communications and systems. All governments should reject laws, policies, or other mandates or practices, including secret agreements with companies, that limit access to or undermine encryption and other secure communications tools and technologies. Users should have the option to use – and companies the option to provide - the strongest encryption available, including end-to-end encryption,

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[1] Harold Abelson et al., *Keys Under Doormats: mandating insecurity by requiring government access to all data and communications*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Technical Report (July 6, 2015).
[2] *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression*, Human Rights Council, U.N. Doc.A/HRC/29/32 (May 22, 2015) (by David Kaye).

without fear that governments will compel access to the content, metadata, or encryption keys without due process and respect for human rights. Accordingly:

- Governments should not ban or otherwise limit user access to encryption in any form or otherwise prohibit the implementation or use of encryption by grade or type;
- Governments should not mandate the design or implementation of "backdoors" or vulnerabilities into tools, technologies, or services;
- Governments should not require that tools, technologies, or services are designed or developed to allow for third-party access to unencrypted data or encryption keys;
- Governments should not seek to weaken or undermine encryption standards or intentionally influence the establishment of encryption standards except to promote a higher level of information security. No government should mandate insecure encryption algorithms, standards, tools, or technologies; and
- Governments should not, either by private or public agreement, compel or pressure an entity to engage in activity that is inconsistent with the above tenets.

Strong encryption and the secure tools and systems that rely on it are critical to improving cybersecurity, fostering the digital economy, and protecting users. Our continued ability to leverage the internet for global growth and prosperity and as a tool for organizers and activists requires the ability and the right to communicate privately and securely through trustworthy networks.

We look forward to working together toward a more secure future.

Sincerely,

Organizations

18MillionRising.org

Access Now

ACI-Participa

Advocacy for Principled Action in Government

Alternative Informatics Association

Alternatives

Alternatives Canada

Alternatives International

American Civil Liberties Union

American Library Association

Amnesty International

ARTICLE 19

La Asociación Colombiana de Usuarios de Internet

Asociación por los Derechos Civiles

Instituto Demos

Instituto Nupef

the International Modern Media Institute (IMMI)

International Peace Bureau

International Press Institute

Internet Democracy Project

IIS (The Internet Infrastructure Foundation)

Internet Policy Observatory Pakistan

Internet Society (ISOC)

Internet Society Almaty Kazakhstan Chapter

Internet Society-CAT Capítol Català de la Internet Society

Internet Society Costa Rica Chapter

Internet Society Finland

Internet Society Hong Kong

Asociatia pentru Tehnologie si Internet (ApTI)

Associated Whistleblowing Press

Association for Progressive Communications (APC)

Association for Proper Internet Governance

Australian Lawyers for Human Rights

Australian Privacy Foundation

Benetech

Berlin Forum on Global Politics (BFoGP)

Bill of Rights Defense Committee

Bits of Freedom

Blueprint for Free Speech

Bolo Bhi

Brazilian Chapter of Internet Society (ISOC-BR)

Canadian Access and Privacy Association

the Centre for Communication Governance at National Law University Delhi

Center for Democracy and Technology

Center for Digital Democracy

Center for Financial Privacy and Human Rights

the Center for Internet and Society (CIS)

Center for Media Data and Society at the School of Public Policy of Central European University

Center for Technology and Society at FGV Rio Law School

Chaos Computer Club

Città di San Benedetto del Tronto

CivSource

Coalizione Italiana per le Libertà e i Diritti Civili

Committee to Protect Journalists

Constitutional Alliance

Constitutional Communications

Consumer Action

Consumer Federation of America

Consumer Watchdog

ContingenteMX

The Courage Foundation

Críptica

DAGONIA - INCUBADORA CRIATIVA DO ALTO MINHO

Internet Society India Chennai

Internet Society India Trivandrum Chapter (ISOC-TRV)

Internet Society - Italy Chapter

Internet Society Japan Chapter

Internet Society Malaysia Chapter

Internet Society Netherlands Chapter

Internet Society Portugal

Internet Society Switzerland Chapter

Internet Society UK England

Internet Society Uruguay Chapter

The InterPlanetary Networking Chapter of the Internet Society

IPDANDETEC

IT for Change

IT-Political Association of Denmark

Jonction

Jordan Open Source Association

Just Net Coalition (JNC)

Karisma Foundation

Keyboard Frontline

Korean Progressive Network Jinbonet

Kristshell Networks

Localization Lab

Mageia.Org

Media Alliance

Modern Poland Foundation

Movimento Mega

Myanmar ICT for Development Organization (MIDO)

Net Users' Rights Protection Association (NURPA)

New America's Open Technology Institute

The New Objective Collective

Niskanen Center

The Norwegian Chapter of the Internet Society

Norwegian UNIX User Group (NUUG)

One World Platform Foundation

OpenMedia

Datapanik.org
Defending Dissent Foundation
Digitalcourage
Digitale Gesellschaft
Digital Empowerment Foundation
Digital Rights Foundation
DSS216
Electronic Frontier Finland
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Electronic Frontiers Australia
Electronic Frontier Norway (EFN)
Electronic Privacy Information Center
Engine
Enjambre Digital
eQuallit.ie

Eticas Research and Consulting

European Digital Rights
Fight for the Future
Fíltrala
Föreningen för digitala fri- och rättigheter (DFRI)
Forum Tunisien des Droits Economiques et Sociaux (FTDES)
Foundation for Internet and Civic Culture (Thai Netizen Network)
Freedom House
Freedom of the Press Foundation
Freedom to Read Foundation
Free Press
Free Press Unlimited
Free Software Foundation
Fundacion Acceso
Future of Privacy Forum

Future Wise

The Global Network Initiative (GNI)

Global Partners Digital
Global Voices Advox

Globe International Center

Government Accountability Project
HackDefendr Security Research LLC
Hiperderecho

Open Net Korea
Open Rights Group
Panoptykon Foundation
Paradigm Initiative Nigeria
Patient Privacy Rights
PEN American Center
PEN International
Pirate Parties International
Point of View
Privacy and Big Data Institute
Privacy International
Privacy Rights Clearinghouse
Privacy Times
Protection International
La Quadrature du Net
R3D (Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales)
R Street Institute
Reinst8
Restore the Fourth

RootsAction.org

RosKomSvoboda

Samuelson-Glushko Canadian Internet Policy & Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC)
Security First
SFLC.in
Share Foundation
Simply Secure
Social Action Centre NGO
Social Media Exchange (SMEX)
SonTusDatos (Artículo 12 A.C.)
Student Net Alliance
Sursiendo Comunicación y Cultura Digital
Swiss Open Systems User Group /ch/open
TechFreedom
The Tor Project
Tully Center for Free Speech at Syracuse University
Usuarios Digitales
Viet Tan
Vrijschrift

Hivos

Human Rights Foundation

Human Rights Watch

Hungarian Civil Liberties Union

Institute for Technology and Society of Rio (ITS Rio)

WITNESS

World Privacy Forum

X-Lab

Xnet

Zavod Državljan D

Zimbabwe Human Rights Forum

Companies

Afekt Media

Array

BlaBlanet Social Network

CloudFlare

Computer & Communications Industry Association

DuckDuckGo

HackerOne

HasGeek

Hobbyist Software ltd

INFOSECSW inc.

Internet Association

Internet Infrastructure Coalition (i2coalition)

IPVanish

Kanawha IT Security

MediaNama

Neurocrypto LLC

PrivaSecTech

Private Internet Access

QRTalk

Raketu

Silent Circle

Sinodun Internet Technologies Ltd.

Sonic

TurnKey GNU/Linux

Xalto.net

Zygii Tecnologia

Individuals

Samuel A. Akinsola

Nadira AlAraj

Jacob Appelbaum

Collin Anderson

Satish Babu

Matt Blaze

Paul Bernal

Owen Blacker

Eva Bognar

Sara Sinclair Brody

Eric Burger

Jon Callas

L. Jean Camp

Joao Carlos Caribe

Engr Michael C Chukwu

Olivier MJ Crépin-Leblond

Ronald Deibert

Lina Dencik

Susan Landau

Frank La Rue

Timothy Libert

Rebecca MacKinnon

Morgan Marquis-Boire

Maxigas

Bailey McCann

Ben McGinnes

Andrew McLaughlin

Sascha Meinrath

Eric Mill

Arikia Millikan

Katie Moussouris

Jacobo Nájera

Antonella Napolitano

Nikhil Pahwa

Chip Pitts

Jesselyn Radack

Shearvon Devenish

Thomas Drake

Dr. Suelette Dreyfus

Nica Dumlao

David Evans

Jim Fruchterman

Arzu Geybullayeva

Mike Godwin

Matthew Green

Joseph Lorenzo Hall

Sarah Harrison

Robert Hinden

Arne Hintz

Deborah Hurley

Josef Irnberger

Birgitta Jonsdottir

David Kaye

Ephraim Percy Kenyanito

Eric King

John Kiriakou

Mwendwa Kivuva

Olaf Kolkman

Douwe Korff

Ryan Lackey

AHM Bazlur Rahman

Md Rezaur Rahman

Jesús Robles Maloof

Phillip Rogaway

Marc Rotenberg

Eleanor Saitta

Bruce Schneier

Gbenga Sesan

Micah Sherr

Adam Shostack

Kawsu Sillah

Barbara Simons

Norman Solomon

Tim Sparapani

Ritu Srivastava

Maria Swietlik

Nabiha Syed

Trevor Timm

G Craig Vachon

Kenn White

Meredith Whittaker

John Wunderlich

Dan York