



Internet Freedom and Business & Human Rights Section

Who We Are

The State Department’s Internet Freedom and Business & Human Rights (IFBHR) Section within the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor leads U.S. government policy to promote and protect human rights online as well as with business, globally.

We strive to ensure that the same rights people have offline are also protected online. This means promoting a global Internet that is open, interoperable, reliable, and secure. We work with other U.S. government agencies, governments, civil society, companies, and multi-stakeholder partners to protect Internet freedom.

We also partner with business, civil society, and governments to promote respect for human rights in business across all sectors. We lead policy efforts to disseminate and implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, engage in multi-stakeholder initiatives, and work to find solutions to urgent human rights policy issues involving business.

What We Do

Bilateral: We raise concerns about restrictions on the Internet and business and human rights bilaterally with governments.

Multilateral: We meet with government leaders through dialogues to discuss issues of

concern. We advise U.S. government negotiators working on resolutions and

statements in multilateral fora, such as the United Nations, the G-7, and the G-20. We also lead U.S. engagement in the Freedom Online Coalition, a multilateral group of like-minded governments collaborating to advance human rights online.

Multi-stakeholder: We lead U.S. engagement in initiatives, such as the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights and the International Code of Conduct Association, bringing together relevant stakeholders to develop and implement solutions to security and human rights challenges. We lead U.S. engagement with Mega Sporting Events to address human rights challenges in the life-cycle of these events, such as the World Cup and Olympic Games.

Programming: Our Global Programs support the development of innovative technologies, research, and

advocacy to strengthen Internet freedom. On business and human rights, our programs build civil society capacity to more effectively engage with business and key stakeholders.

Building awareness in the U.S. Government: We build tools and conduct training to help our State Department and interagency colleagues in Washington and overseas become more effective envoys on Internet freedom business and human rights issues.

OUR APPROACH

PROMOTE & PROTECT

Fostering implementation of international human rights law and helping develop commitments in the global internet freedom and business and human rights space with key stakeholders

CONVENE & FACILITATE

Creating a space for emerging and critical issues to be debated among relevant stakeholder groups

DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT

Establishing tools, training and guidance for U.S. government officials to be more effective envoys on Internet freedom and business and human rights

Contact the IFBHR team:
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