



**Joint Statement of the Freedom Online Coalition on Human Rights in the Context of
International Security and the Work of the UN GGE**

February 2017

The Freedom Online Coalition notes that the 2016/2017 Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (GGE) has begun deliberations on a report.

The Members of the Freedom Online Coalition welcome that previous GGE reports emphasized that State efforts to address the security of Information and Communication Technologies must go hand-in-hand with respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Freedom Online Coalition underscores that respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms is of central importance in the application of international law to State use of Information and Communication Technologies. States must comply with their obligations under international law to respect and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Therefore, the Freedom Online Coalition urges the GGE experts to consider these points, and to emphasize in their report the importance of respecting human rights for the maintenance of international peace and security.



About the Freedom Online Coalition

The Freedom Online Coalition is a cross-regional group of 30 governments that collaborate to advance Internet freedom worldwide. The Coalition provides a forum for like-minded governments to coordinate efforts and work with civil society and the private sector to support the ability of individuals to exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms online.

The mission and vision of the Freedom Online Coalition are founded upon the notion that human rights apply online as well as offline, as confirmed in resolutions 20/8 and 26/13, adopted by consensus by the UN Human Rights Council in July 2012 and June 2014, as well as resolutions 68/167 and 69/166, adopted by consensus by the UN General Assembly in December 2013 and 2014.

The Freedom Online Coalition seeks to identify best practices regarding the application of human rights in the evolving online landscape, as well as to call attention to conditions that undermine those rights.

The Freedom Online Coalition through the Digital Defenders Partnership also provides rapid response to a range of threats to internet freedom: from supporting bloggers and cyber activists who find themselves under digital attack, to helping them exercise human rights online in countries where the internet is censored, not accessible, or where freedom is otherwise restricted.

More information on the Freedom Online Coalition is available at: www.freedomonlinecoalition.com

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