



UN Seeking Global Internet Surveillance for Terror, Propaganda

The United Nations and a [broad coalition of its totalitarian-minded member governments](#) are [increasingly demanding](#) that a global regulatory regime be imposed over the Internet, with supposed concerns about “terrorism” becoming just the most recent argument advanced to support the controversial scheme. In a [massive report](#) released this week, the UN claimed a planetary agreement on surveillance, data retention, and more would be needed for “terror” purposes.



Of course, the latest round of UN scheming drew swift criticism from Internet-freedom advocates. But as the effort by governments to seize control over the World Wide Web gains traction, activists from across the political spectrum argue that the Internet should remain free and unregulated in the hands of citizens and the private sector — certainly not under the purview of a scandal-plagued international organization composed largely of dictatorial regimes.

Unveiled at a recent conference in Vienna, the 148-page UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report, entitled [The Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes](#), presents a broad wish list of powers that self-styled international “authorities” believe are needed. It was prepared in collaboration with the UN “Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force,” which includes the World Bank, Interpol, the World Health Organization, and the International Monetary Fund as members.

However, the dubious document quickly sparked global concerns. Among the most alarming claims in the report, according to critics, is that “one of the major problems confronting all law enforcement agencies is the lack of an internationally agreed framework for retention of data held by [Internet Service Providers].”

In other words, the UN wants a planetary regime to force companies to spy on their customers, keep the data, and hand it over to authorities. The international organization noted approvingly that entities such as the European Union were already working to impose the measures. However, not all governments are on board yet, the report complained.

Social networking services such as Facebook and Twitter were specifically highlighted as potential tools for “terrorists” to spread “propaganda” and “extremist rhetoric.” Apparently now “terrorists” are able to “abuse” free speech by spreading their messages more easily, according to the report, which also notes that search engines have made it easier to find “terror propaganda” online.

“Content that might formerly have been distributed to a relatively limited audience ... has increasingly migrated to the Internet,” the UN observed in what analysts [ridiculed](#) as “sort of obvious.” It also added, unsurprisingly, that “such content may be distributed using a broad range of tools.”

So, the UN and its members must take action, the report claims. “Terrorist use of the Internet is a transnational problem, requiring an integrated response across borders and among national criminal



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justice systems,” the global body argued, echoing similar calls for UN empowerment on everything from finance, taxes, “climate change” (formerly known as “global warming” and “global cooling”), mental health, food markets, oceans, sustainability, and virtually every sphere of human existence.

There is much more where that came from, however. The report also claims, for example, that websites and services such as Skype should keep records of users’ communications. Mobile phone services should also keep tabs on consumers’ locations, it added. Even publicly accessible wireless (WiFi) Internet providers should work to abolish anonymity because some potential criminal or “terrorist” might try to use the Web anonymously.

“Potential terrorists use advanced communications technology, often involving the internet to reach a worldwide audience with relative anonymity and at a low cost,” UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov [said](#) in releasing the report, citing arguments long-relied upon by the ruthless Communist Chinese dictatorship to justify its Orwellian censorship of the Internet. “Just as internet use among regular, lawful citizens has increased in the past few years, terrorist organizations also make extensive use of this indispensable global network for many different purposes.”

To deal with the alleged problems, the UN highlights multiple proposed schemes. The document touts certain “legal instruments” adopted by regional regimes in the fight to rein in the free Internet, for example. Also promoted in the report is the adoption of “model legislation” around the world. “While model legislation provides advisory guidelines, rather than legally binding obligations, it plays an important role in harmonizing legal standards among States,” the report observed.

One of the primary UN entities being [groomed to become the global Internet policing authority](#) is the International Telecommunication Union, which dictators around the world have been working hard to empower in recent years. “ITU has developed the Toolkit for Cybercrime Legislation (2010) to promote harmonized national cybercrime legislation and procedural rules, including with respect to acts of terrorism committed by using the Internet,” the latest report explains.

Ironically, all of the efforts to allegedly deal with “terrorists” using the Internet would be made more difficult by the fact that the UN has not even defined terrorism. “There is currently no comprehensive United Nations treaty on terrorism, nor is there an official definition of the term ‘terrorism,’” the document acknowledges on page 133. What exactly the UN means by “propaganda” and “extremist rhetoric” is also unclear, but [communist regimes hope to ban criticism of their own autocracies while Islamists hope to criminalize criticism of Islam.](#)

Analysts, however, said the UN plot to take over the Internet and expand its powers has essentially nothing to do with either terror or propaganda. Instead, critics of the scheme argued, the establishment is getting nervous about the Internet — possibly the final bastion of true free speech in the world — and is working to crack down on it now, before the people of the world wake up and remove the shackles of tyranny.

“The powers-that-be have decided that they need to track user details on the Internet to prevent crime.... The ultimate goal is world government and it is being built via ever-more authoritarian means,” [noted](#) analysts at the liberty-minded *Daily Bell*, which has been vigorously defending Internet freedom as the potential key to advancing human freedom throughout the world.

In essence, then, the UN hopes to facilitate tyranny. “What we call the Internet Reformation has made it more difficult for the power elite to utilize dominant social themes — fear-based promotions — to frighten middle classes into giving up wealth and control to globalist institutions like the UN,” the



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analysts observed. “As a result, the elites wish to attack and control the Internet.”

Heavyweight defenders of free speech and an open Internet, however, insist that the fight must go on. “For the first time in human history, supporters of liberty around the world can share information across borders quickly and cheaply. Without the filter of government censors, this information emboldens millions to question governments and promote liberty,” [wrote](#) Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas), a hero to freedom activists around the world. “This is why liberty-minded Americans must do everything possible to oppose — and stop — government attempts to censor or limit the free flow of information online.”

While the coalition of [communist and Islamist tyrants try to rein in Internet freedom at the global level](#), the United States has also seen an unprecedented federal assault on the open Internet as well. The Department of Justice, various special interests groups, and lawmakers in both parties, for instance, have been fiendishly working to adopt everything from a federal “cybersecurity” regime to data-retention schemes similar to the plan outlined by the UN.

For Internet freedom activists, though, government regulation or control of the Internet is off the table and non-negotiable. First of all, the U.S. Constitution does not allow even the federal government to regulate the Web, much less the UN; and if either gets its foot in the door, restoring liberty online would be extremely difficult. Even if it were constitutional, however, activists say letting any government regulate the Internet would be a terrible idea for numerous reasons.

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