**The right to privacy in the digital age: good practices and lessons learned in the ICT sector – hosted by OHCHR (3 December, 08.00 – 09.30, Room XX)**

As contemporary life is played out ever more in the digital domain, the Internet has become an ubiquitous and increasingly intimate presence in people’s lives. It is also becoming a fundamental tool to exercise civic participation and to defend human rights. At the same time, modern communications technology also enables surveillance on an unprecedented scale globally. Mass surveillance has the potential to interfere with the right to privacy – even the existence of such programmes can create an interference with privacy and have a chilling effect on rights such as freedom of expression, as reported by OHCHR (A/HRC/27/37). Where companies in the ICT sector supply services, products or data about users to governments that use it in ways that violate privacy, they risk becoming involved with such abuses. Yet ICT companies are also often legally bound to provide such data to governments.

This session will focus on strategies that ICT companies can employ to meet their responsibility to respect human rights as set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Specifically, it will explore strategies to ensure respect for human rights when faced with government demands that could conflict with privacy or related human rights, including the freedom of expression and what actions companies should take if they have become involved with adverse impacts. The session will discuss good practices, challenges, and opportunities for collective and multi-stakeholder action.

Guiding questions for the session:

* What strategies should companies follow individually and collectively to resist invasive demands for user data or to ensure that their services are not used in ways that infringe on privacy?
* What role does consultation with stakeholders and corporate transparency play?
* What role should ICT companies take in providing access to remedy when users’ privacy has been violated?

**Moderator**

Rebecca MacKinnon, Director, Ranking Digital Rights, New America Foundation

**Panellists**

* Tomaso Falchetta, Legal and Policy Adviser, Privacy International
* Dan Bross, Senior Director of Corporate Citizenship, Microsoft
* Peter Micek, Senior Policy Counsel, Access
* Ruth Davis, Head of Cyber, Justice and Emergency Services, Tech UK
* Xianhong Hu, Programme Specialist, UNESCO
* Lisl Brunner, Facilitator, Telecommunications Industry Dialogue