**freedom of expression and the telecommunications and internet access sector**

***QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BUSINESS ENTERPRISES***

**August 2016**

The UN Special Rapporteur on the protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression is conducting a study on freedom of expression in the telecommunications and Internet access sector. He will examine State regulation and action that affect access to telecommunications and Internet networks and services, particularly those provided by Telecommunications and Internet Service Providers (“Telcos and ISPs”). He will also analyze the relevant internal policies and practices of Telcos, ISPs and associated businesses, such as Network Equipment Providers, Submarine Cable Providers, and Internet Exchange Points.

His findings and recommendations will be published in the June 2017 report to the Human Rights Council. For more information on the Special Rapporteur’s study, please see the concept note attached.

The Special Rapporteur calls on relevant business enterprises to share information concerning **trends in laws, regulations and other extralegal measures affecting your business’s ability to respect freedom of opinion and expression**; and **your business’s policies, processes and practices to**:

1. Prevent, mitigate or challenge the human rights impact of State laws or actions requiring your business to:
   * 1. suspend or restrict access to websites or telecommunications and Internet networks; and
     2. provide access to customer data;
2. Ensure that policies and practices other than those identified in (1) (for example, policies and practices that affect network neutrality) respect freedom of expression;
3. Promote transparency about company policies and actions that impact freedom of expression; and
4. Remediate undue restrictions on access to your company’s telecommunications and Internet services and networks, or undue access to your customers’ data.

Submissions that take into account regional or local particularities are welcome. Submissions will be posted on the OHCHR website at the time of the report’s publication, except those containing a clear request not to be made public. Please send submissions no later than 1 November 2016 to [freedex@ohchr.org](mailto:freedex@ohchr.org) using the email title: “Submission to study on freedom of expression and the telecommunications and Internet access sector.” Those wishing to file securely may submit to [atoh@law.uci.edu](mailto:atoh@law.uci.edu) (fingerprint: 5C85 1D96 D604 8BE0 F983 A0DF 14CA 643A 9603 79DD).