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Note No. 049/14

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to refer to the latter's note dated 26 February 2014 requesting for States to provide their input with regard to issues addressed in UN General Assembly resolution 68/167 "The Right to Privacy in the Digital Age".

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore has the further honour to enclose Singapore's input.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

GENEVA

15 April 2014

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations
Geneva

ENC.



SINGAPORE'S INPUT FOR THE PREPRATION OF A REPORT ON THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY IN THE CONTEXT OF DOMESTIC AND EXTRATERRITORIAL SURVEILLANCE AND/OR THE INTERCEPTION OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS AND THE COLLECTION OF PERSONAL DATA, INCLUDING ON A MASS SCALE

1 Singapore recognises the right to privacy and has implemented measures to respect and protect this right, including in the context of digital communications. To ensure the respect for and protection of the right to privacy, all information and communications service providers in Singapore are required by law to ensure the strict confidentiality of the information that they retain. Any person who discloses information without authority would be deemed to have committed an offence and will be dealt with under relevant laws.

2 As technology has become more intelligent and pervasive, individuals increasingly have less control over the collection and use of their personal data. Singapore enacted the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 ("PDPA") to address these concerns. The PDPA is the baseline law across all sectors of the economy to ensure that there are adequate safeguards in the private sector to protect the personal data of individuals (whether in electronic or non-electronic forms). In developing the PDPA, Singapore took references from international guidelines, including the OECD Guidelines on the Protection of Privacy and Trans-border Flows of Personal Data, and the APEC Privacy Framework.

3 Singapore maintains the view that there are legitimate concerns of national security that warrant surveillance. At the same time, such surveillance must be controlled by proper safeguards. Singapore has laws in place to ensure that unlawful or arbitrary surveillance and/or interception of communications does not take place. These include the Telecommunications Act. Singapore also has stringent in-house and external oversight mechanisms for its security agencies. External oversight mechanisms include, but are not limited to, Committees of Inquiry.