**FORUM:** Human Rights Council

**QUESTION OF:** Measures to provide equal access to the internet

**SUBMITTED BY:** Germany

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL,

*Recalling* that internet access was declared a human right in a United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council (HRC) resolution in 2016,

*Bearing in mind* that the internet is a tool used for self-expression, and that therefore the blockage of internet access can be seen as a direct violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948,

*Taking note* that, in order to meet UN standards for free internet access, net neutrality must be guaranteed by the Internet Service Provider (ISP) when accessing the internet,

*Noting with regret* the large number of individuals without internet access due to poverty or lacking infrastructure, especially in rural areas,

*Deeply concerned* by the censorship and governmental restriction of internet access in countries such as China, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea,

*Alarmed by* the decision of the United States (US) Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to repeal net neutrality laws put in place by the Obama administration in 2015,

*Noting with satisfaction* that the percentage of the population with internet access is ever growing, to 55.1% as of June 2018,

1. Requests that the UN funds development of free Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), and consequently helps make them available to a larger portion of the global population in order to:
   1. provide an encrypted and secure access to the internet, bypassing government censorship of certain websites
   2. allow for user anonymity when using the internet, and therefore guarantee equality of all users
   3. allow the bypass of geo-blocked content, as geo-blocking discriminates users based on their geographical locations;
2. Calls upon further UN funding in order to help make internet access possible for areas that either lack the infrastructure for internet access or where the population lacks the financial capabilities for internet access by measures such as:
   1. the laying of fibre optic cables in developing third world nations, which provide the benefit of:
      1. increased bandwidth when compared to conventional copper cables or wireless connections
      2. increased speed compared to all other methods of connection such as Direct Subscriber Line (DSL), wireless or copper cables
      3. increased security as optical fibre cannot be tapped, unlike copper wires
      4. a long life cycle and low energy use, making it by far the most sustainable option for wired internet access
   2. the financial support of Non Governmental Organisations (NGO) initiatives such as the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, which uses microfinance loans in order to allow people with low incomes to buy their own mobile devices, increasing the fraction of the population with capabilities to connect to the internet
   3. the establishment of Wi-Fi zones within larger cities and towns, allowing an increased fraction of the population to have access to the internet, even when they do not have a connection at home;
3. Endorses the creation of programs for local communities to be educated on technology and the internet, including ways to access and utilize it, in ways such as, but not limited to:
   1. hiring trained specialists in the field of technology, approved by local councils, to conduct non-compulsory seminars and workshops every week in areas with little internet usage to provide communities with an option to access it at one’s own will
   2. Provide financial support for developing technological firms in small communities with the aim of an efficient way to distribute technological devices such as Wi-Fi routers;
4. Encourages national governments to consider a ban on so called ‘fast lanes’ by ISPs, as they charge services and websites for faster customer access, which serves to discriminate smaller platforms and harms net neutrality;
5. Recommends the creation of a UN organization that monitors the state of internet accessibility globally as well as within specific countries, and annually publishes a report on the issue of internet accessibility that:
   1. summarizes the largest hinderances on the way to providing equal access to the internet for the global population
   2. suggests further measures that could be taken, both by the UN and individual member nations, to solve theses problems
   3. highlights individual countries who are not taking necessary steps to work towards a free internet access, or actively working against this, by measures such as government censorship;
6. Condemns all member nations who are not complying with the regulations previously set by the UN, whether this be limiting the internet access in general, censoring certain websites which do not support the countries agenda or undermining the principle of net neutrality;
7. Further calls upon the UN Security Council to consider sanctioning member states who actively work against equal and free internet access, as defined by clause 5, and therefore are showing disregard for human rights;
8. Wishes to remain actively seized upon the matter.