Introduction

Democracy relies on their participation in the market economy.

Given increasing global reliance on the internet, we believe that the UN Global Digital Compact should focus on how an open and accessible internet is fundamental to the success of democratic societies worldwide. An open and inclusive internet enhances democratic processes in the following ways:

- " Increases access to information, including news, analysis, and research, that can help individuals make more informed decisions in the democratic process.
- " Strengthens political engagement by enabling individuals to easily contribute to political discussions and debates with others, regardless of geographic location.
- " Improves transparency in government decision-making by providing a platform for government agencies and officials to share information with the public in real time.
- " Encourages civic participation by allowing individuals to easily find and connect with community groups, political parties, and advocacy organizations that align with their interests and values.
- " Fosters government accountability 612M poligdus(o)-3( )easilacyrtnt s ts and

    Enables remote voting in some cases, which can increase accessibility and participation in the democratic process, particularly for individuals who have mobility or accessibility issues, or who are living in remote or rural areas.

While noting the importance of the internet in democratic societies, we also need to acknowledge existing online threats and harms, including the continuous violation of human rights online, attacks on information integrity, cybercrime and data breaches, violence against women online, as well as widening gaps in the digital divide. These challenges, among others, have impeded the advancement of democratic participation both online and offline.

5. Regulation of Artificial Intelligence

Multistakholderism has proven to be the most effective model for internet governance and accountability. There must be action and adherence from all digital actors, both public and private, in order to secure a free and inclusive internet that benefits all of humanity. Given the vital importance of multistakeholder participation in the development of global norms and standards that help shape the future of the internet, this document outlines how diverse stakeholder groups can work together to protect democracy in the digital age. Under each key theme, we provide recommendations on how stakeholder groups such as government, civil society, media, and the private sector can engage with one another to ensure the advancement of a democratic digital space.
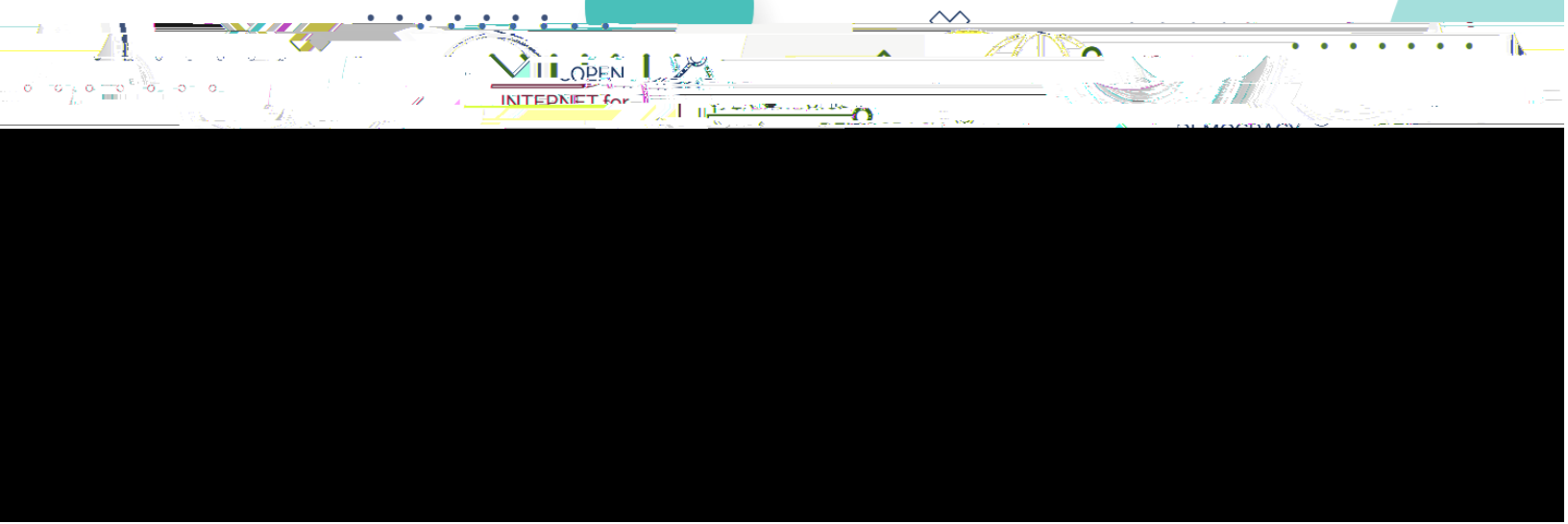
We welcome the opportunity to contribute our input to the Global Digital Compact. Our goal is to share experiences from grassroots communities, democratic reformers, youth, and other stakeholders who have been working to advance digital rights

To provide a comprehensive and informed response, we have also engaged with our networks working on internet governance topics, to capture additional insights and perspectives. By incorporating their feedback into our submission, we have enriched the breadth and depth of our analysis, ensuring that our response is both inclusive and reflective of diverse perspectives.

Through our submission, we seek to contribute to the global discourse on the open and democratic internet, advocating for its continued protection and promotion. We believe that an open internet is essential to the realization of fundamental human rights, the promotion of democratic values, and the advancement of social, economic, and cultural progress. As such, we are honored to present our submission to the Secretary General, and we remain committed to working tirelessly towards the preservation and advancement of an open and democratic internet for all.
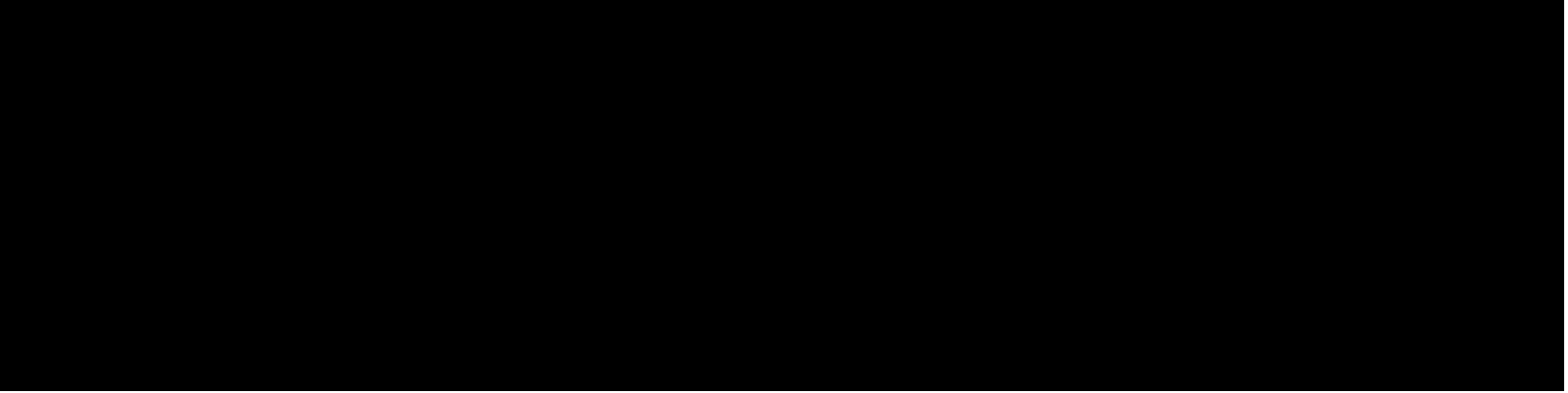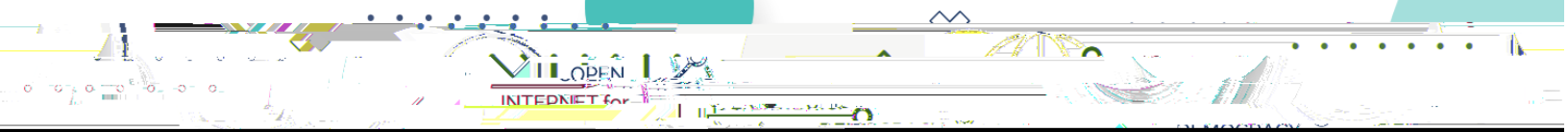
Private sector:
- " Develop and promote technical standards that foster global internet interoperability.
- " Develop internal policies towards the promotion of international human rights standards, including access to the global internet
- " Engage governments on how internet fragmentation affects business, such as impacts to cybersecurity, digital inclusion, e-commerce and electronic transactions, or trade facilitation
- " Advocate within business-focused forums, such as the World Trade Organization, to ensure that an open and inclusive internet is a component of international and other national trade deals

Media:
- " Improve media reporting on digital rights and internet governance including the negative impact of internet fragmentation
- " Advocate for the power of a global, interoperable internet for independent media nationally and internationally at internet governance bodies

invest in infrastructure (broadband networks, cloud computing services, etc.) that support online collaboration and sharing

Media:
- ” Make use of resources in the digital public commons for reporting and dissemination of news
- ” Promote access to information on the digital commons

more important than ever to ensure that data protection and privacy are prioritized. Without these protections in place, there is an increased chance of unethical hacking, data interception, and identity theft which erodes trust in the digital space.
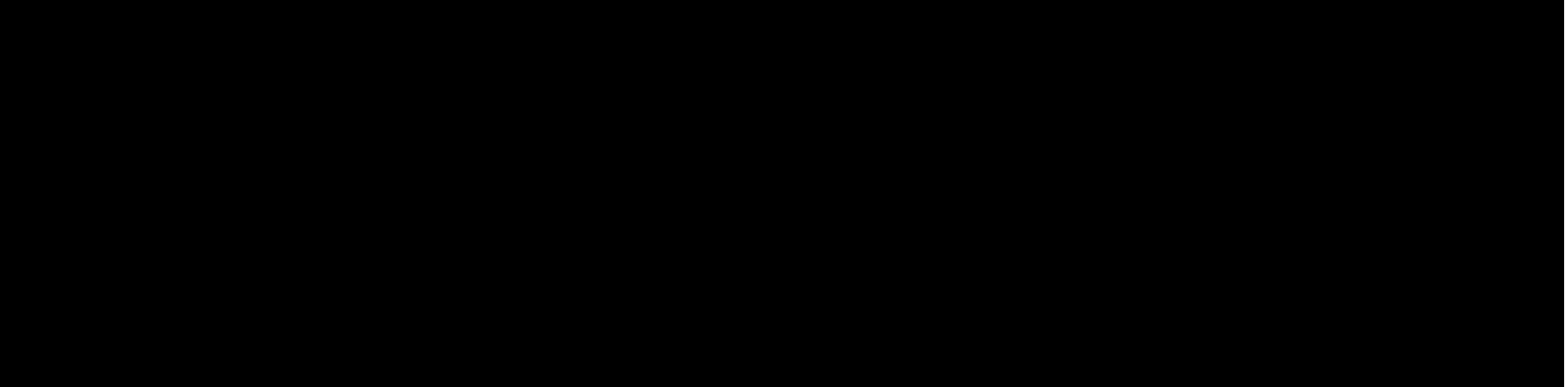
Key principles

- " Prioritize the privacy rights of internet users
- " Provide safety and security measures within technologies that help protect personally identifiable and sensitive information
- " Build transparency and accountability across stakeholders including governments and businesses on how data is collected, processed, stored, shared, and disposed Recommendations

Governments:
- " Engage with civil society, the private sector, and independent media to develop and implement data protection policies that follow a human rights centric approach and align with international standards
- " Implement a process or mechanism that ensures any collection, usage, or storage of personal data is necessary and aligns with international human rights frameworks
- " Repeal laws or provisions that criminalize encryption
- " Create legislation and safeguards that prohibit governments from undertaking unjustified mass surveillance

Civil Society:
- " Raise awareness on data protection, and tools and practices for data protection such as data recovery systems, data backup systems, firewalls, and anti-virus software
- " Review proposed data protection frameworks to ensure adherence to human rights standards
- " Collaborate with technologists to inform the development of new technology that prioritizes data protection and privacy by design
- " Raise awareness of best practices for digital safety and security, especially for high-risk users like journalists, human rights defenders, and activists

to ensure antidiscriminatory and noiprejudiced AI-based applications

" Train policymakers and media professionals on the need to appropriately regulate AI
"