



New Paper from the Association for Progressive Communications and the Internet Society Connects Internet Protocols and Human Rights

[BERLIN and GENEVA, 13 December 2012] – “Like Internet protocols, human rights standards attempt to articulate principles that will apply universally over time, as ideas and conditions evolve,” a new paper argues. Commissioned by the Association for Progressive Communications and the Internet Society, the issue paper released today compares the standards-making processes as well as the principles underlying human rights on the one hand and Internet protocols on the other.

The technical and the legal come together in this unusual but useful exploration of the fundamental intents behind Internet protocols and the human rights framework. Co-authors Avri Doria and Joy Liddicoat, respectively protocols specialist and human rights advocate, incorporated valuable contributions by the Internet Society’s Nicolas Seidler and Markus Kummer and dialogue from the Internet Governance Forum 2012.

“There are some shared principles between Internet protocols and human rights,” the main authors say in their discussion of this interconnectedness. “They generate continuities and discontinuities which could inform and assist those who seek to defend human rights and to maintain a free and unencumbered Internet.”

The main contribution of this paper is the examination of selected Internet protocols and human rights and the discussion around the impacts of the points of convergence and divergence. “We see this discussion as a process,” said Markus Kummer, Vice President for Public Policy at the Internet Society, insisting that comments in reaction to the paper are welcome. “It is our hope that this discussion will engage human rights activists, policy makers, and the Internet technical community in a dialogue about ways that they can collaborate. It is our belief that human rights considerations are part of the DNA of the Internet and that a dialogue between these communities will be beneficial to promote a rights-fostering Internet.”

“This opportunity for human rights and technical communities to collaborate shows there is more we can do together to promote and protect both human rights and the Internet,” said Joy Liddicoat. “We are grateful for the Internet Society’s support for this research and look forward to more dialogue in 2013.” The issue paper is part of APC’s Connect Your Rights! project, the aim of which is to make the links between the Internet and human rights. The project is conducted with support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

It is also part of the Internet Society’s core mission to promote an open Internet as a

necessary foundation for people to exercise some of their key fundamental rights in the online environment, including freedom of expression and freedom of association and peaceful assembly.

The paper is available on the Internet Society and APC websites:

Association for Progressive Communications: <http://www.apc.org/en/pubs/human-rights-and-internet-protocols-comparing-proc>

Internet Society: <http://www.internetsociety.org/humanrightsandprotocols>

About the Association for Progressive Communications

The Association for Progressive Communications (APC) is an international network and non-profit organisation founded in 1990 that wants everyone to have access to a free and open internet to improve lives and create a more just world: www.apc.org

About the Internet Society

The Internet Society is the trusted independent source for Internet information and thought leadership from around the world. With its principled vision and substantial technological foundation, the Internet Society promotes open dialogue on Internet policy, technology, and future development among users, companies, governments, and other organizations. Working with its members and Chapters around the world, the Internet Society enables the continued evolution and growth of the Internet for everyone. For more information, see: www.internetsociety.org

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