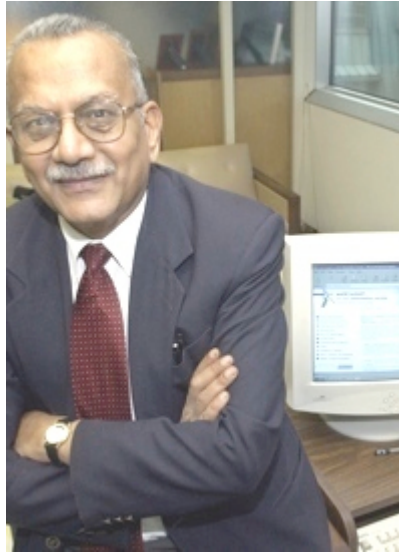




UN, Islamists & Communists Push Global Internet Regime

The United Nations and some of its most oppressive member states are clamoring for global regulation of the Internet, including possible censorship. Toward that end, the UN is working to set up an “intergovernmental task force” to figure out how to better control the web at the international level and how to “harmonize” policing of Internet content.

Led by the Brazilian delegation, headed by “former” Marxist revolutionary Luiz Inacio “Lula” da Silva, advocates for the new Internet regime include some of the most despotic governments on earth. Among them: communist China and the Islamic dictatorships of Saudi Arabia and Iran. Other regimes backing the plot include India and South Africa.



National Public Radio [quoted](#) some of the governmental representatives pushing the issue. "The governments are located in the center of this process," claimed Chinese Ministry of Industry and Information representative Tang Zicai. "This process cannot be accomplished without the meaningful participation of the governments." The regime in communist China is known for, among other things, its censorship of the Internet, brutal suppression of dissent, and even forced abortions.

The Islamic Iranian regime, which is also famous for squashing political opposition, backs the UN-led moves as well. "Developments have not been supportive of increasing the leverage of developing countries in policy issues pertaining to the Internet," [explained](#) the dictatorship's representative, Mohammed Hussain Nejad. "The few developed countries are either monopolizing policymaking on such issues or entering into exclusive treaties among themselves, while further marginalizing other countries, mainly developing ones."

The Islamic military dictatorship ruling the north-African country of Mauritania, which seized power by arresting the nation's previous despots, also expressed high hopes for global Internet censorship. During the UN talks in New York, the Mauritanian tyrants [suggested](#) that "international policy in the field of Internet should urge each country to ensure control of Internet content." The purpose of the mandated censorship, according the regime's representative, would be to prevent the appearance of internet content "not authorized by law and morality" in any other government's territory. In other words, if the government of Mauritania objects to something, Americans would be prohibited from seeing it as well.

The global regulatory efforts had help from a resolution passed by the UN Economic and Social Council which was intended to “convene open and inclusive consultations involving all Member States and all other stakeholders with a view to assisting the process towards enhanced cooperation in order to enable Governments on an equal footing to carry out their roles and responsibilities in respect of



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on December 20, 2010

international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet...”

With the UN's [Internet Governance Forum](#) set to expire soon, the rush is on to build upon what has already been accomplished in terms of Internet governance. So now, the UN's "Commission on Science and Technology for Development" is plotting the next phase of the governance scheme. And this time, it will consist of only governments.

There have been some minor protests from certain governments and industry groups. But most of those objections have surrounded the process, not the censorship and regulation, per se.

"The worst case scenario would be the imposition of U.N. types of governance over the Internet," [said](#) Coordinator of International Communication and Information Policy at the U.S. State Department Philip Verveer. "[It would] inevitably bring with it tremendous slowness in terms of reaching critical decisions, because you can't have decisions taken among nations on anything that won't take a very long time. It would potentially [slow] changes in the architecture of the Internet, the adoption of technology, or the commercial arrangements that surround interconnection."

Verveer, to his credit, did express some concern about censorship. "[These governments] don't like the idea of the free flow of information, and intergovernmental controls would be a way of controlling the content that passes over the Internet by requiring, by treaty if you will, other administrations to cooperate in terms of suppressing speech that they didn't like," he said. But for the most part, the regulatory process and exclusion were identified as the problems, not the principle of suppressing speech.

A representative of the Australian government [expressed](#) objections too, though not specifically dealing with the desire of dictatorships and the UN to censor the web. "My concern is that if we were to make a move to form a governmental-only body then that would send a very strong signal to civil society that their valuable contribution was not required or was not being looked for," he told the UN meeting in New York. Several other governments voiced concerns about the process as well.

Industry giants and civil groups protested too, though mostly they were upset about not being included in future Internet governance discussions.

"The beauty of the Internet is that it's not controlled by any one group," [wrote](#) search-engine giant Google on its blog. "Its governance is bottoms-up — with academics, non-profits, companies and governments all working to improve this technological wonder of the modern world. This model has not only made the Internet very open — a testbed for innovation by anyone, anywhere — it's also prevented vested interests from taking control."

Noting that numerous other groups had issued a [joint letter](#) condemning the move, including the Internet Governance Caucus, the Internet Society, the International Chamber of Commerce, and many more, Google said it was supporting a petition to stop the UN and its cohorts. "[W]e don't believe governments should be allowed to grant themselves a monopoly on Internet governance. The current bottoms-up, open approach works — protecting users from vested interests and enabling rapid innovation. Let's fight to keep it that way."

WikiLeaks revelations are one of the reasons being cited to justify the regulatory ambitions, and the leaks were specifically mentioned by the Brazilian government, which is helping lead the censorship charge. But while some elements of the U.S. government have offered mild condemnation of the proposed scheme, the Department of "Homeland Security" has been busy [seizing](#) websites over alleged "copyright violations" while the Federal Communications Commission [works](#) feverishly on enacting and



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implementing unconstitutional regulations that would stifle the traditionally free and open Internet — without even obtaining Congressional approval.

But conservative commentators in the U.S. are already jumping on the case as well. "The U.N. is reacting to concerns of member governments, including the United States, that the Internet has made companies like WikiLeaks possible, while the FCC is more concerned about conservative news outlets on the Internet that are increasingly undermining government attempts to control the news through sympathetic mainstream media outlets," [wrote](#) author and journalist Jerome Corsi. "What is at stake is the future of electronic free-speech rights, as governments around the world realize how much less control government authorities have with a robust and critical press able to operate freely on the Internet." He concluded by explaining that "the U.N. is uncomfortable with anything like the Internet that the globalists cannot control."

U.S. legislators have also [responded](#) furiously to the UN's attempted takeover of the web. Rep. Mary Bono Mack even introduced a resolution condemning the efforts and calling for the UN to back off. "[T]he Internet has progressed and thrived precisely because it has not been subjected to the suffocating effect of a governmental organization's heavy hand. The attempt of the United Nations to overtake something that is so central to our economy — like the Internet — is offensive and completely out of line," she said while introducing the bill. "We have a hard enough time keeping the Federal Communications Commission's hands off the Internet; imagine having to convince governments like Syria, Iran and Venezuela ... I call on the President and his Administration to oppose any effort to transfer control of the Internet to the United Nations or any other international governmental entity."

Tyrants of all varieties perceive an unregulated Internet as a threat to their control, so it is not necessarily surprising that they would spearhead efforts to regulate and censor it. What is even more alarming, however, is the lack of serious protest from the supposed "Free World" — which even now is working on its own schemes at national and international levels to end what could be humanity's last best hope for free speech and uncensored expression worldwide.

For freedom to survive and expand around the world, people must stop international would-be tyrants and associated national dictatorships from moving forward with this nightmarish plan.

Photo: Nitin Desai, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's special adviser to the World Summit on the Information Society, poses at the United Nations in New York, Nov. 5, 2003: AP Images



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