



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on November 16, 2012

Secret UN Document Lays Out Plan to Seize Control of Internet

A report by a United Nations organization calls for the international body to seize control of information shared over the Internet should the governments of member nations fail to pass sufficient cybersecurity regulations.



In the document, called "[Trends in Telecommunication Reform: Smart Regulation in a Broadband World](#)," the UN's [International Telecommunication Union](#) (ITU) points to the specter of an attack on the cyber infrastructure of a country as justification for the world body's assumption of regulation and monitoring of traffic on the information superhighway.

That frightening prospect was first reported by the [News Limited Network out of Australia](#). Paola Totaro and Claire Connelly write:

A draft of the proposal, formulated in secret and only recently posted on the ITU website for public perusal, reveal that if accepted, the changes would allow government restriction or blocking of information disseminated via the internet and create a global regime of monitoring internet communications — including the demand that those who send and receive information identify themselves.

Their summary is accurate. Citing "the increased use of online applications and services to communicate and do business (such as social media, cloud services, e-payment and other m-banking services)," the ITU proposal calls on "stakeholders" (read: countries that are members of the United Nations) to increase their regulatory control over the Internet lest the threats to cybersecurity become an unmanageable problem.

In what likely comes as no surprise to those familiar with the UN's policy of consolidating power through the eradication of national sovereignty, the ITU draft proposal would grant the government of any member nation the right to throw the "kill switch" on the Internet should that government suspect that information being exchanged threatens their own or a fellow participating country's national security.

Although the document admits that when it comes to policing the Internet, "the principles of privatization, competition, and liberalization have been of central importance over the past two decades," the time has now come, the UN body insists, for government to assume "greater responsibilities" over the flow of information through the Internet.

Thankfully, a coalition of civil rights groups, labor unions, and large cybercorporations have come together to oppose the UN's plan to police the Internet.



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As reported by Common Dreams, this coalition

opposes the plan by some telecommunications companies and countries including China and Saudi Arabia. If approved, it would allow the UN's International Telecommunications Union to charge users for services such as email and restrict access to the internet and monitor activity online.

The International Trades Union Conference, representing 6.2 million union members in Britain, [wrote](#) that the proposal could "restrict political freedoms and harm civil society." Such changes would hit users from developing countries particularly hard, according to the ITUC.

The website for [Stop the Net Grab](#) warns:

The internet as we know it is at risk. Unless we act now, our right to freely communicate and share information could change forever.

In less than four weeks' time, the International Telecommunications Union (or ITU), a United Nations agency, is planning to adopt new rules to clamp down on the fundamental freedoms of citizens online.

And:

So far the proposal has flown under the radar, but its implications are so serious that we must act quickly to show the ITU and its member countries that citizens will not stand by while our right to communicate freely is undermined.

Chris Disspain, CEO of auDA, told ITWire that a drive to consolidate power is behind the UN's net grab. He also said that, "for some countries it is about a belief that they can control things more easily if they go through the UN."

Later in the ITWire piece, it is reported that Greenpeace and the ITUC sent a letter to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to "express their 'deep concern about a potentially very damaging change to the governance of the Internet.'"

As for the reaction from Congress, Common Dreams reports:

At a hearing last May of a U.S. House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee, Republicans and Democrats were united in their opposition to any move by Russia and China to transfer control of the Internet to the U.N., [according](#) to Steve Elwart of the Koinonia Institute, a subject matter expert for the Department of Homeland Security.

President Obama, as *The New American* has reported, isn't willing to wait on Congress to pass any measure addressing the alleged precarious state of U.S. cybersecurity.

Promises of the White House's imminent issuing of the edict have been coming for months. The Associated Press (AP) [obtained a leaked draft version](#) of the order, but indicated that the source of the document didn't disclose when the president would sign the order.

Greater evidence of the imminent issuing of the order came on September 19, when Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said the executive order granting the president sweeping power over the Internet is "close to completion."

[In testimony](#) before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Napolitano said that the order is still "being drafted" and vetted by various high-level bureaucrats. But she also indicated that it would be issued as soon as a "few issues" were resolved. Assuming control of the



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nation's Internet infrastructure is a DHS responsibility, Napolitano added.

"DHS is the Federal government's lead agency for securing civilian government computer systems and works with our industry and Federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government partners to secure critical infrastructure and information systems," she informed senators.

Napolitano's report on the role of DHS squares with the information revealed in the seven-page version of the order the AP has read. According to the report of their findings:

The draft order would put the Department of Homeland Security in charge of organizing an information-sharing network that rapidly distributes sanitized summaries of top-secret intelligence reports about known cyberthreats that identify a specific target. With these warnings, known as tear lines, the owners and operators of essential U.S. businesses would be better able to block potential attackers from gaining access to their computer systems.

The new draft, which is not dated, retains a section that requires Homeland Security to identify the vital systems that, if hit by cyberattack, could "reasonably result in a debilitating impact" on national and economic security. Other sections establish a program to encourage companies to adopt voluntary security standards and direct federal agencies to determine whether existing cyber security regulations are adequate.

The president's de facto re-routing of all Internet traffic through federal intelligence officers deputizes more than just DHS as cybertraffic cops. The AP reports that "the Pentagon, the National Security Agency (NSA), the director of national intelligence, and the Justice Department" will all cooperate in the surveillance — in the name of national security, of course.

Evidence of President Obama's impatience was found Thursday in [a story published by the Washington Post](#) that reported, "President Obama has signed a secret directive that effectively enables the military to act more aggressively to thwart cyberattacks on the nation's web of government and private computer networks."

Although unpublished as of press time, that directive, Presidential Policy Directive 20, reportedly "lays out a process to vet any operations outside government and defense networks and ensure that U.S. citizens' and foreign allies' data and privacy are protected and international laws of war are followed."

The citing of "international law" as authority for such an unconstitutional exercise of authority is nothing new. As has happened so frequently during the Obama administration, government — national and international — demands that liberty be sacrificed on the altar of national security.

As for execution of the UN's plan, the 193-member ITU will [meet December 3-14, 2012 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates](#).

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