THE FOURTH ANNUAL
TRYGVE LIE SYMPOSIUM ON FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

The Role of Social Media in Promoting Democratization and Human Rights: Prospects and Challenges

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1:00-2:45pm
at the
Trygve Lie Center for Peace, Security & Development
International Peace Institute
777 United Nations Plaza, 12th Floor
(Corner of 1st Avenue and 44th Street)

TRANSCRIPTION

Terje Rød-Larsen:	Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends and colleagues, good afternoon to everybody, and welcome to the International Peace Institute and this year's Trygve Lie symposium, focusing on the role of social media in promoting democratization, human rights: prospects and challenges. It's hard to believe, but this is actually now our fourth annual symposium, so I think it's now grown into an institution, which I'm very happy about.

And it is a special privilege for us to co-host this initiative with the government of Norway. I'd like to extend warm welcome to Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre, a good friend, and to his colleagues from Norway who have been working with us to prepare for this event.

Before I give you the floor, Jonas, let me say a few words by way of introduction. We've heard a lot about the role of social media in recent time. Indeed, in the wake of the Arab Spring and other events in Europe, we are trying to understand how the power of social media is transforming and shaping our everyday life. Used responsibility and constructively, these tools have been shown to be effective at promoting human rights, justice, and democratization. However, we've also seen that when they are used irresponsibly and recklessly, social media can spread negative values and undermine and suppress a democratic process. So, how can we work to ensure that social media is used as a progressive, and not a counter-productive, tool to boost freedom and democracy? How can we support civil society and social media actors working

to promote human rights in sometimes very difficult and risky circumstances? And how do we respond when social media is used in the opposite way, to spread hate speech and to undermine the democratic process? These are some questions that we'd like to discuss today. I think we have a terrific panel to help us to drill deeper into these challenges.

Let me also remind everyone that our discussion is on the record. We are also webcasting this event live today. And in terms of our own social media outreach today, we will be sharing our discussion through Twitter and Facebook, and we've also created a special Twitter hashtag--you can see it here--which is # Trygvelie in one word. We encourage everyone to share your comments and ideas about this event on Twitter. Actually, I know for a fact that the Foreign Minister of Sweden, Carl Bildt, who's with us today, has taken it a step further than using Twitter, because he has both a blog and a Twitter account. Isn't that correct, Carl? Well, I do hope that you will have a very interesting discussion, and with these words, let me now give the floor to Jonas to present our panellists and to chair our event. Jonas, the floor is yours.

Jonas Gahr Støre: Thank you, Terje, and welcome to all. We are happy to see that it's a full audience, and for those of you who didn't get a seat, I hope we can excite you so you will enjoy standing following the discussion, which I hope will be informal and close and on the subject. I would like to introduce our participants. Nasser Judeh, the Foreign Minister of Jordan, will be with us shortly. Carl Bildt, neighbor, friend, and, fellow Foreign Minister from Sweden is with us here. He's a Twitter and blogger, and I would say, a compassionate follower of communication technology and their links to politics since many, many years. Then Maria Otero, once again, happy to see you here, the Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs in the United States, and having worked on Internet freedom as an important theme. And we heard the President today speak about open society, so here the links are clear. Nora Younis, very happy to see you here, Human Rights activist, journalist, and blogger. So all that can go on your little card. From Egypt--and of course your experiences will be of great interest to this discussion. You won the Human Rights First 30th Anniversary Award in 2008 for using new media tools. So you have really been seeing how this can work in practice. And then we have And then we have Claire Diaz Ortiz, the Manager Social Innovation and Executive Leadership, from Twitter. So here we have the source of that technology, so to say. Mr. Wissam Tarif, Arab World Campaigner for Avaaz, that's a Global Movement, former Director of INSAN. And you also, Mr. Tarif, are a campaigner for the Arab world, where we now see democracy coming bottom-up, partly driven by technology.

If I may say a piece of introduction, and then I'll pass the floor on to the other panelists, and I hope we will get going, and also to engage the audience. My point here would be to say that there's a lot of focus on technology, and for good reason. Two years, or three or four years ago, when the monks of Burma went on the streets, we could follow it here during the General Assembly with pictures coming out, and it made immediately the situation in Myanmar seen at the General Assembly. Now we have the events in Tunisia and Egypt, and throughout the Arab world, which is proving how this is an important challenge for authoritarian regimes, and opportunity for people who are uprising.

But I think the point here which I would like to make is that neither Facebook nor Twitter brought down Mubarak or Ben Ali. It was people who did it. People who took to the streets, unarmed, apart from the conviction that they had their moment of opportunity. So here, I believe, as I approach it, is that social media, with all its opportunities, are tools and multipliers. For human rights defenders of

today, these tools offer a much more effective way of bringing out information, organizing, reaching out across borders, and this efficiency of course triggers repressive regimes, and they have not been slow to respond.

Today, around sixty countries are listed as exercising strong form of Internet censorship. They filter, they infiltrate, they manipulate, and they harass. So there is another technology branch growing up with those opportunities, and especially for human rights defenders, this insecurity of digitally-stored or communicated information via social media can prove to be a great vulnerability, a dilemma. So here is a double-edged or multi-edged sword. It can be a tool, and it can be used both for good and bad. I think as we try to digest what happened in Norway on the 22nd of July, when Norway was struck by terror, we find that behind the act there's a whole array of communication on that net, in which no person perceives to be a lonely wolf, because there are these artificial communities which are being created and can create frameworks also for gruesome acts.

But regardless the complexity of Internet freedom, we convened this meeting because we believe it merits to be analyzed from different angles. The main principle prevails, and that is that the same rights that people have offline-- freedom of expression, freedom to seek information, freedom of assembly and association amongst others--must also be protected online. And these are the words of Monsieur Frank La Rue in his report to the Human Rights Counsel. He's a UN Special Rapporteur on the Freedom of Opinion and Expression.

Finally, I believe and as we discussed before we convened here, that perhaps the biggest communication revolution was when Gutenberg did his printing breakthrough. That led to profound civilization and political changes, although in slow motion. Today we have kind of Gutenberg innovations happening much more rapidly, and spread much more rapidly; and we are probably just in the midst of it, or in the very early stage. And that's why we think it can be of inspiration to hear views of governments and practitioners and bloggers and Twitters, and those who have been in the middle of it. So, with those words, welcome to the panelists, and I think we will proceed. Carl, may I invite you to ask questions, share perspectives? And we will go round the table and hear what people think.

Carl Bildt: Just a couple of remarks. I share everything what you said, Jonas, that we have now gotten into a situation where social media is getting a lot of attention. That is a good thing. And that is being caused very much by what happened in Indonesia, what happened in Egypt where social media was undoubtedly important; although you could argue that even if you restrict yourself to technologies, there might have been other technologies that were even more important. I mean, direct satellite broadcast of television is something that is also turning political systems around the world upside down, then social media comes on top of that.

But at the end of the day, of course it was the people. But that was the same with the Gutenberg revolution. It wasn't the people; it was the people that were reading the books that made the transformation of Europe and paved the way for everything that happened. This is virgin territory for politics, and I would argue that so far, that has been a rather good thing. I was involved for a couple of years in something called ICANN, which most of you hopefully haven't heard of, which is called the Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers, and that is the sort of private corporation, registered in California, which really runs all of the systems that makes the Internet work. The Internet started really by sort of

nerds around the world that were running it independently of any state interference for quite some time. And ICANN is still, although it has a contractual relationship which is looser and looser and looser with the U.S. government, with the Department of Commerce, is essentially a private self-regulating authority.

So far, so good--it's been outside of politics. That is now changing, for two reasons. First, because there is a threat to the freedom of the net, as Jonas indicated, when this becomes a more and more powerful tool of communication. There are governments that are not particularly interested in the freedom of speech when it comes to the ordinary media; they are trying to restrict this particular media. And we've seen a proliferation of activities, technologies around the world, when it comes to filtering, and grade firewalls, and all of those things that you are aware of. That made it necessary for us to take up this issue on the political agenda. We have, from the Swedish side, put Internet freedom high on our Foreign Policy agenda. We've been working with Frank La Rue, with the report that he has been introducing or producing, and together with forty other nations, we now have a plan to bring that work further within primarily the Human Rights Counsel, but also in other international fora together with like-minded governments, notably the U.S. government, but also broaden that coalition in the world.

The second factor that has changed the equation is of course the threat not to the freedom of the net, to the security of the net. Cyber security, cyber war, you name it, it's all over the media--and it is a reality that the security, the safety of the net, is under constant threat, and that the net is used also by those that have evil or not particularly good intentions of different sorts. And what I do see is a risk that policy-makers should be aware of is that we have us, the good guys, speaking about the freedom of the net, and then we have other guys--also good, I hope--talking about the security of the net and doing their things. But that there develops two different cultures that are looking at the net and doing different things, from different perspectives.

At the same time as we emphasize the freedom of the net agenda, we need to bring it together with the security of the net agenda, because if they start to diverge and go in different directions, I think we'll go into difficulties. And we do have, of course, the difficulties inside our different governments, that we have different types of people and different agencies doing freedom things, and different agencies doing security things.

Bringing them together is not entirely easy, but that I think is a big task for policy-makers. We are sometimes asked, people like Jonas and myself, to indicate which are going to be the big policy issues five or ten years down the road. And, of course, essentially we don't know, because the world is a fast-changing thing. But I think it is virtually certain that these issues--the freedom of the net, the governance of the net, and the security of the net--are going to be much higher up on the international policy agenda five, not to speak about ten years from now, than they are today; and that it's important that we early on, as we go from this self-regulatory freedom stage--which I think has been very good and extremely beneficial for global development--as we go into the next stage of development, that we make certain that it is the values and the interests of the democratic societies and the open nature of our governing structures, that it is those values that also comes to dominate the entire discussion.

And that we can also develop the legal and political, and to a certain extent also the technological instruments, to counter those that want to restrict the freedom of the net. I'm happy to say, I think, that in this battle between those that want to

control and those that want to keep it free, you sometimes get the impression that those that want to control have the upper hand. I do tend to believe that it is going to be the other way around. It is very difficult to control completely. That's a good thing, but that is not an argument for us not being extremely vigilant, extremely offensive, and forward-looking when it comes to these particular issues. The net, you can say, is the new frontline for defense of freedom across the world, and we much treat it as such. Thanks.

Støre: Thank you, Carl. You may applaud. I think I'll turn to Nora Younis, and of course, Egypt is an attraction for us to understand what happened and what may happen. And what is important about Nora's work is that she clearly was a part of the movement that brought about change, but now she's challenging the Counsel which is ruling Egypt and attempting to put restrictions on the freedom of expression and putting on media restraints. So Nora, will you share with us, please?

Nora Younis: Thank you so much, and I couldn't agree with you more that the social networks had this major role in what happened in Egypt, but I don't want to overplay it. The revolution did not happen by coincidence or due to some hashtag or some Facebook group or something. It's been a lot of work done on the ground by even generations. Like before my generation, there has been a lot of constructive dissent happening over years and years and decades that led to this moment. I think that social networks expedited an explosion that was predestined to happen, and if I can a little bit look at the tools that we were using. I'm very proud to be long to a generation that believed in change and saw it really happening.

When we started using the social networks, it was just as it was portrayed by the western media at this time, the English-speaking, Cairo-based bloggers and activists. But the movement changed, and the social networks became used by average Egyptians who do not speak English, and outside, of course, the capital. But the western media continues--and I think this is one of its failures--to look at the dissent from the Cairo English-speaking gang point of view only. So one of the main factors of success was the localization and the decentralization that happened in Egypt, and I believe in the rest of the Arab world. And thanks to this today, we in Egypt can communicate via Twitter with police offers who are in service, but Tweeting in Arabic without hashtags, because they don't know how to use hashtags, they are unhappy with the situation of the police situation from inside, and we are communicating with them to see how to reform the police. And for years and years, I think the million dollar question was how to make a dictatorship regime less dictatorship, or give up its dictatorship.

And the way I saw it happening really was, of course the social media played a role, as I said, of expediting things, and especially when they come in a moment of civil courage. I mean, you see Iran. Iran has the biggest online community and the largest groups using social media. But I think in Egypt, it was more a moment of hopelessness, where things were really going to change something. And I think also that these moments of civil courage that we saw are still facing a lot of challenges, especially with the Supreme Counsel for Military Affairs, what we call the SCAF, and currently the SCAF--and you will see on Twitter the hashtag Noscaf the hashtag Nomiltrials, are like our own popular hashtags on Twitter. Because now the online community is trying to organize and arrange against the emergency status that the SCAF is actually bringing back to Egypt, and the military trials which 12,000 civilians have to stand.

So the battle continues, actually, to drag, and of course there are pressures on the mainstream media, again, by the SCAF, and after announcing there will not be a Minister of Information, now we have a Minister of Information. Because I ran an online news portal, I think the online has still a bit margin of freedom over the print in Egypt, but it's not what we're hoping for. There is still a lot and lot to do. And as I saw one of the questions we should be discussing today, by Ambassador Terje Rød-Larsen, some of the questions deal with the security or the abuse of the social networks. I think it's our role to protect the social networks by keeping them as-is, and ask the governments to stay actually out of it. Because in all our countries, we have seen state security apparatus that turned to be dictatorship security apparatus, so Internet security does not help the privacy of the online activist, but actually helps monitoring and tapping and following the activities, and endangering their lives and their work. So my pesonal recommendation to this would just be like, leave the Internet alone. It's doing very well, and we are very happy with it the way it is. Thank you.

Støre: I'll turn to Maria Otero. I think one issue we can, when I turn the floor to you, is really how can the international community help in a situation where clearly this is vulnerable. I mean, you can perform now, but you feel something is coming. There's the Ministry of Information. There is stricter scrutiny, and how can we keep the light on that? Maria, please.

Maria Otero: Thank you. Thank you very much. It's wonderful to be on this panel and to be invited back. Thank you. Building on what we've heard already, and thinking that certainly the Internet will be, and continue to be, one of the central areas as fundamental to the way in which we operate--as we are seeing the Internet freedom issue be so central as we look ahead, it is important to be absolutely reminded, certainly in our, why it's become a foreign policy priority for us. Why Secretary Clinton has really coined this phrase, "freedom to connect", because really the Internet freedom is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It's grounded in the International Convention of Civil and Political Rights. And these are precisely the kinds of ways in which we can all agree that the question of whether it should be open, free and accessible to all is really one that is hand-in-hand with democratic systems and systems that are open to free expression, which is I think what we all seek. So, really relating the Internet freedom to a declaration created in 1948, when nobody even believed that there was anything of this sort, makes all the sense in the world, because it is really grounded in that. So that's, I think, one very important point of departure.

The second one is, again, to pick up from the two comments made before--and really, there is no question that it is the people that make the events happen, not the technology, and we've heard this from everybody that's speaking here--but it's something that we need to also keep track of, because it isn't really just a question of putting the technology, putting the social media, before a group to really make the kind of changes happen that for example have happened in Egypt. I think your observations are enormously important because it really shows the rigor, the discipline, the vision of people who understand a work from trying to achieve their own individual rights and their own sense of being able to participate in their society, and the technology becomes one tool that they can use that accelerates the process, and that may allow them to do things that they couldn't do before. But the centrality of the individual, and the liberty for that individual, continues to remain again central to any movement and to any process that we move forward. So I think this is important. It reminds me, I was in Tunisia and in Egypt last week, and I spoke with a lot of civil society groups and bloggers and others.

And in Tunisia, one young man said to me the obvious, but it really stuck with me. He said, "The advantage of the Tunisian revolution is that it was started by the Tunisian people." The statement is obvious to here, but when you think about the fact that that is really what we are looking to do, is to really empower people to be able to do their own work, this is one of the pieces that I think is very important. It leads us to, I think, a couple of other issues.

One is--and I'll just put a couple of additional issues here--and that is that as the social media has become a tool, the degree of harassment, the degree of threats, and the degree of vulnerability as we've talked about of people that are using social media and that we're seeing throughout the world, has increased. And part of our own role as we protect the human rights of people is to help protect those courageous people, and to see them as the human rights defenders of today and of the future. So I think part of our role is to work closely with the private sector, because the private sector can also help us create technologies that will help these human rights defenders circumvent some of the problems that they are facing, or be able to address some of the problems that exist when we're seeing all kinds of ways of denying the them opportunity to be able to both protect themselves and protect the work that they're doing. So technology and technology companies can help create firewalls so that governments can limit the freedom of Internet, or they can create tools that can help us enhance the freedom of the Internet. So I think the importance of being able to work across, and to form partnerships, is enormously important.

And then, in talking also about, when I gave the example about Tunisia, I would also say that in Egypt--and it's very good to hear this--Egypt, every one that I spoke with showed a great deal of concern that really the movement, the revolution of Tahrir, was being derailed, and that it really was not going to be able to move forward. But you also see here a difficulty or a challenge in how it is that those that were involved in online activism and that achieved what they've achieved through Tahrir Square and through bringing people to express their position, how it is that they are transitioning from that to being engaged in electoral activity, because that becomes the next step in a transition. And that, we think, is one of the issues that I certainly heard a great deal of concern about in Egypt.

And then finally I would say, some of you might have noted yesterday that the President of Brazil and the President of the United States launched the Open Government Partnership which Norway is very involved in. But this Open Government Partnership is an effort to move governments themselves to become more transparent and more accountable, and to be more responsive to their own citizens, but to do it through the use of technology, and to use Internet freedom and to use technology itself as one way in which one can make governments more accountable. So it's not just a revolutionary movement which, you know, in the Arab Spring have attracted our attention. But it's also how we use these tools in order to advance governments towards becoming improved in the governance that they carry out. So, let me just stop there.

Støre: Thank you, Maria. I'll turn to Mr. Wissam Tarif, and I think you know, as a Human Rights campaigner and working for democracy, we are particularly keen to hear you, because you have followed countries that we now follow with great interest--Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Yemen--kind of behind closed walls, but a lot is happening. What do you see?

Wissam Tarif: Thank you. Well, I will start talking basically about Syria and what is going on, and how people are using social media tools, and the change that's taking place.

When I first started to do Syria it was in 2001. I remember we were trying to work on a development project in rural areas where people would have access to computers, Internet, and learn English or another foreign language. No one was thinking about revolutions back then. I think very few people in Syria in particular, like human rights defenders and activists, most of them were in jail, so no one really was thinking that the change will happen, especially international community. They were convinced this guy would never leave. Unfortunately, some still do think the same until now. Social media tools--when the uprising started in Syria, I totally agree with Nora, that it happens with people. In Syria, it's happening very much with the flesh and the blood of the Syrian people. The death toll is tremendously high. We see an army that is killing its own people.

How did the people organize this, and what stands behind it? Definitely the regime has been telling us that a western conspiracy has been again behind the uprising in Syria. I've been there three times since the uprising, in different areas in Syria, and the only thing that stands behind this uprising is the Syrian people's will, because they want to be free and they want to live in democracy. They used Facebook to organize themselves and to spread the word. They used Twitter. And when the violations, when the army started to attack the population, we've seen it from Daraa up to Hama, up till Deir ez-Zor very much up in the north, using social media tools to document the violations. Part of what we do is death tolls and trying to recognize the victims, to give them a name and put them in a list. Most of that work has been done via social media tools. But of course the regime switched off the button in many places in different occasions, and tried to do what Mubarak did--no Internet, no SAT, no mobile phones in specific areas. Part of the social media, part of the Internet, as civil society, were not isolated. We were able to bring SAT phones. We were able to bring SAT modems, put it on a router and give people Internet access, and the activists Internet access, when the regime decided to switch it off. When they cut off the cell phones, well, SAT phones did it. So we continued to document; people continued to report what is going on.

And as you know, in Syria there is no foreign media--actually, there is no media. The few who were allowed to get into the country, they were in Damascus. No one in like Hama, or--all except the American ambassador, I think, he went to Hama, and the French one, that is right. So, what do we do with all the information, and why it's important to get the information out using social media tools?--Because we need to lobby you, lobby other states, tell them what's going on, bring numbers. A lot of politicians, a lot of people at the international community, very much question sometimes the numbers because they were collected via social media tools. So yes, it is a vague area, and there are a lot of questions, and perhaps very few answers come from decision-makers when it comes to how we're using these tools.

I heard Nora talking especially about the process now in Egypt, and her concerns and lots of activists' concerns about legislations and about where the country is going to. Part of what I do, I do Iran and Yemen. What I know, what I've experienced so far, there is one thing in common in all these countries. When you do not let people talk freely and express what they want, they become creative; and that sphere, Internet, is full of potentials and of possibilities, and that's what Yemenis now are doing, very much people from the Green Movement in Iran are doing.

And last example--In Avaaz, part of what our campaigns was also Palestine, and we managed to collect a million signatures via Internet, asking countries to recognize Palestine as an independent state. So yes, Internet is full of

potentials, of bad things and of good things, and I think like many people in the Middle East so far, especially activists and people who are very revolutionary style and want change, have been using it to do good things.

Støre: Thank you. And last speaker on the panel believes that we can change the world one tweet at a time. Is that right?

Claire Diaz Ortiz: That is right.

Støre: That is right, and that's the title of a book that she published back in August. We're very happy to have you here, Claire Diaz Ortiz, you have the floor.

Ortiz: So, I'm very glad that I'm giving my intro at the end of all of these great speakers, because I want to be clear about what I do and what I don't do. I lead Social Innovation at Twitter, the company, so that means that I work with individuals and with organizations who want to use this platform. You can call it a social media platform. I call it a real-time information platform. People who want to use this platform to change the world. But I don't change the world. I just listen to other people who do it. Everyone on this panel has talked about how, you know, Twitter or other forms of social media, new media, are tools for activists who are really making a change, and I must echo that whole-heartedly. At Twitter, every day I listen to individuals and organizations who are using Twitter in crazy, new, innovative ways.

When I was writing my book, *Twitter for Good*, I was overwhelmed by the incredible work that people out there are doing. But we need to remember--and I know everyone on this panel agrees with what I'm about to say--people are always going to do amazing work. People are always going to be activators. And right now, new media and social media are excellent ways to multiply those messages. But these people and these activators and these change-makers have always existed, and they will always exist. They will just different tools. A year ago, Malcolm Gladwell wrote a piece called "Why the Revolution Won't Be Tweeted". I think that was the exact title, right? And, oh man, there was so much controversy around it, if you work in social media like I do. And I remember, for a few months after that piece, every conference I went to referenced his article. And at the time it was this big question, "Is he right?" you know. Can the revolution not be tweeted, really? And now a year later, there's no question. We all know people are tweeting revolutions. 2010, the year we're in, has clarified that.

But what Nora is saying is right--hashtags don't make revolutions--and that's clearer than ever. I remember last year, I was at Personal Democracy Forum and one of your colleagues, Alec Ross, was there, and he said something about this that really struck me. It was again in reference to a question about the Malcolm Gladwell piece, and someone asked him, "So, Mr. Ross, what do you think? Can revolutions really be activated through social media platforms? Can we really make change through that?" And he said, "You know, social media is one more tool, and let's look at the 1960's Civil Rights Movement in America, and look at how television shaped and multiplied that movement. And then let's make a comparison to how social media is affecting the change-makers and movements of today." So, that's all. I'm here to listen. Thanks.

Støre: Well, we won't let you listen immediately. You have to answer questions.   Carl Bildt was kind of saying the thing that politicians do say, that we cannot say ten years down the road what will be the main theme. We can guess on some trends, and I agree with Carl that this is going to be one of those trends. But

from your platform, in a double sense--you are on the social media platform, but you also have an overview of these technological developments--can you speculate what you see five or ten years down the road in terms of trends coming out of what is technological--I mean, we hadn't heard of Twitter and Facebook five years ago.

Ortiz: Sure. I think one of the things we're all going to seeing is we're going to be seeing more localization of new media and how that really changes things. And I think some of the sort of on-the-ground activists that we have on this panel will probably echo that statement, but certainly in the last year-and-a-half, that's one of the big shifts we've seen in new media. Certainly people are getting more engaged with images and video and that, but localization is where it's really, really changing.

Støre: What do you mean by localization?--Physically, or?

Ortiz: Well Nora, do you want to answer that, I feel?

Younis: I have one thing we need. I can put on top of the list, we need Arabic hashtags. It's going to make a huge, tremendous difference. We need Arabic hashtags for Twitter, because all the activists, you know, they stay day-and-night, going crazy, just trying to trend globally, and it's not usually very successful. But if we have Arabic hashtags, it's going to be, I think, our own thing then.

Ortiz: No, by localization, what I mean is, we're still in a situation where Twitter is five years old, but Twitter was always started by a company in San Francisco. It started out in the West, and it has increased its influence certainly over the years, but the tools of new media need to be localized by the participants in the different individuals' countries, etc.

Støre: But why do you need that? I mean, I use Twitter in Norway. I don't care it was developed on the West Coast. It's very much present in my daily life in Norway and in the life of my kids and on the media.

Ortiz: Well, one thing is, you're very lucky you speak English.

Male: It even works in Norwegian.

Støre: We have Norwegian hashtags. Maria.

Otero: I would say a couple of things related to that, which is that I have absolutely no idea what technologies will be created. I am old enough to have to be running pretty fast just to keep up with things and to try to understand one from the other. I mean, when I wrote a Master's thesis, I did it on a Smith-Corona typewriter, where you had a little piece of paper to block out the errors that you made. There's people here in this room that remember that. So clearly, how the technology moves forward is really going to happen with inventions, some of which are going to be just coincidental.

What I think is going to be very important, the kind of trends that we should drive to move forward, is how we expand the use of this technology and of this social media so that it is used not only to protest or to demand, which is what it is doing now so incredibly. But also to help shape the ways in which governments are able to carry out their own work in response to the needs that their citizens make clear. I think that's one way. And the second one is to begin to answer to the great challenges of hunger and malnutrition and the poverty that we see in many

parts of the world, where the use of social media could really help us advance in being able to provide services, being able to provide information, being able to help mothers who don't know how to take care of the newborns be able to do it. So there's many different ways, that I think the challenge is on us to be able to take this technology and move it towards the same goals that we have today, but to advance it better and in a more responsive way.

Støre: I'll pass the floor to the Swedish Foreign Minister. I'd just like to ask you, the three of you, to ponder what are your expectations of governments?--I mean, assuming we are democratic transparent governments. Do you expect governments to do things, or don't do things, in relation to this technology?--If you can think about that. I'll pass the floor to Carl. You will have the opportunity to ask the question, and then I'll open the floor. Carl.

Bildt: I would like to ask how things are going to be in ten years' time, and the basic answer is, of course, haven't got a clue! But just in order to be provocative and to illustrate the point, Twitter will be dead. And I'm not saying that because I know that Twitter will be dead. I only know that in ten years' time, technology will give us completely different possibilities, so that it, in all likelihood, will be something that we can't even dream of now, because technology is developing so fast that it's difficult to think too much ahead. It is dependent upon a couple of factors. One is, of course, the networks, that the networks are deployed all over the world, that they are reasonably secure, reasonably safe, and it's booming. I only know the statistics from Stockholm, but in Stockholm, the bandwidth requirement is doubling every six months. I mean, the exponential growth of bandwidth requirement for the networks. U2 investments are going into this. It's happening all over the world.

In other parts of the world, somewhat less advanced, but look at Africa, what is happening there. I mean, most Africans have never had a telephone, and they will never have a telephone. The telephone for them is a museum piece in the western world. I mean, the telephones, the land-line things. They go directly to these new technologies. It is mobile. It is smart phones. It is bandwidth. They do banking in remote villages of Kenya, which gives market possibilities to farmers, and give them access to political information that was never there, with technologies that were only dreamt of five years ago. None of us could do it. That's why I'm saying, where we are five or ten years from now--we don't know. But it's going to be as different from what we discussed today as what we are discussing today is from what was there ten years ago.

So it's somewhat provocative to say that Twitter won't be there, but that's just to sort of focus your minds on the sort of revolutionary pace of change all over the world. But what will remain? If we manage to deploy the networks all over, and the bandwidth, it could be space-based. It could be cables. It could be whatever. We are dependent upon them, while these two sort of values that are important-- safeguard the freedom, the values that we have in our open societies should be safeguarded, whatever the technology is; and then of course, the stability and the security of the system, so that no one can interfere duly with them. That's going to be increasingly important, whatever the technology brings us.

And then, third factor, or fourth factor or whatever it is--much is going to be dependent on the ingenuity, the innovative ability of individuals to find new things. And for all of the discussion we have in the U.S. and Europe about us being overtaken by China and whatever, we might be. But never forget that free societies are societies of free spirits, and at the end of the day, it is free spirits that create all of the opportunities that these technologies make possible. So

	from that point of view, I'm rather optimistic about the prospect of our western and free societies.
	We don't know if the Twitter will be the telefax of 2021. Forgotten. But there will be something new. Would you like to make any intervention before we pass it to the floor?
Ortiz:	Sure. I want to follow a little bit of what was just said in terms of access in Africa in particular. I began tweeting while living in an orphanage in Kenya, and I began tweeting simply because I knew people out in Silicon Valley. I was certainly one of probably the first few hundred people on Twitter from Kenya, certainly at least within my region of Kenya at the time. And because of my connection to east Africa, I've been very interested in Twitter's use in east Africa and throughout all of Africa in the last few years, and I think that one of the saddest things to be seen--yes, mobile technologies can afford for mobile payments on Impasa and all sorts of other tools in Africa, but overwhelmingly, the penetration of tools like Twitter is incredibly low, and something that will change within five years and ten years, and whether it's Twitter or whether it's something else, that increased access is really going to change what we know about how Internet changes people's lives in the world. So I think we just need to be clear that it's, you know, a tiny, tiny percentage of where it should be in a lot of those areas.
Tarif:	Yeah. I think governments actually should do something about Internet and about legislations, and basically it's for government to use it to become more transparent, to tell us citizens what they are doing and what they are not doing. It's the first time that we don't have to be democratic only when we go to vote. We can enhance that process. We can access change and communicate with our representatives and our governments on a daily basis. And I think that is where democratic and transparent countries should invest in, in the future.
Younis:	Maybe just a little personal reflection on the future. Actually this is the first trip outside Egypt I go without a laptop. I decided this time only to depend on my mobile phone, and it's much more convenient and lighter. So maybe more hand-held democracy, or direct access to democracy, in the future, is where we are heading. And here we have to remind ourselves a bit, because as you see in Egypt, we've got rid of Mubarak, but all his system is still there and we still have to fight with them. So maybe we have to look back at some of their old ways, because I feel they are going to rebuild themselves and face us again with it. How did they used to stop these human rights defenders? There was this online censorship and there was this offline retaliation of certain people, earmarking some prominent human rights defenders by like kidnapping, beatings, torture, without anything on record at the end of the day. We even came to learn, when the files were opened, how our previous Minister of Interior was possibly engaged in the church blow-up in Egypt. So they would actually make up some terrorist acts in order to entrench their violations against human rights. And even now there is an interpretation that there was some sort of facilitation into the invasion of the Israeli embassy, which was followed immediately by the bringing back of the Emergency Laws. So we have to stay alert, not just for online censorship, but also for the, I'm sorry to say, offline dirty games by the regimes. And, God be with us.
Støre:	Please. I open the floor with you. There will be microphones, and if you can introduce yourself, that will help, and perhaps turn so that the camera can get your face and not only your neck. Madam, in the first row, please.

Carroll Bogert: My name is Carroll Bogert. I'm the Deputy Director of Human Rights Watch. On the question of what is the future of the technology and where we are in ten years, I think it does seem clear, as you suggested, that different capacities merge, that the computer and the television become closer together; that the telephone and the computer and the television become closer together, and that the capacities of each device is multiplied. And in terms of the images that it carries, for example, Twitter being a rather quaint text-based service--I think we can expect that to change.

Along those lines, as you asked what governments can do to help, we are talking now with people who use the technology in defense of human rights, but you have to also look at the people who are human rights' defenders, who struggle to use the technology. Traditionally, communications at NGOs is treated as a kind of a PR function rather than as a central element of the methodology of making change. This has to change, and those of you who are in a position to help NGOs to develop this aspect of their work, need to do so.

Finally, I think there's a slightly strange lacuna on the panel. Well, we have a representative from a private company here, but it must be said that the Internet is not just created by people and by activists, and it's not only the people and the politicians who deal with it. It's private companies who shape the way the tools are used. What happens when Facebook makes a joint venture with Baidu in China? What happens when I post a Tibet video on my Facebook page, and my friend in China clicks on it and watches it, and gets arrested? What are the standards for private companies in the new era? There is something called the Global Network Initiative, the GNI, Human Right's participant, many of us are. It's an attempt to set standards for private industry. Private industry is responsible and responsive when they are publicly embarrassed and forced to become so, and when they are hauled in from of the United States Congress to make testimony about what they're doing. So, these are things that government can do to help push this issue forward.

Støre: Last year here, at this Trygve Lie Symposium, that was the theme--Corporate Social Responsibility at Large--and I think you know this year, Maria, we could have added this on in a much more forceful way. Interesting. Good point.

Otero: Well, I did bring it up. I mean, the role of the private sector is essential. We agree completely on that.

Robert Kesten: I'm Robert Kesten, Executive Director of the People's Movement for Human Rights Learning and Integration. On your point of bringing things for women into Africa, it's happening on cell phones. People are sending videos on breast-feeding, and all that's being done. On your point when you opened, one of the problems with the Internet and all of these things is that there's no difference between good and bad. I can say "I love you" where I'm taking out the garbage, Tweeting, or via texting, and it doesn't mean anything. So it's the how you use it, as you said, that becomes vitally important, because the words themselves are equal. On human rights defenders, if every human being knew and owned and could act upon their human rights, everyone would be a human rights defender, and there is safety in numbers. The more people who are out on the streets, the safer the streets are.

So it's very important for all of these communities--and I've just spent the last three or four months between Egypt and Tunisia--and I will tell you, the more people who are out on the streets, the more people who are organizing themselves, the more people who are learning, the safer those communities will

be, and the less manipulative some of those governments will be. I'm just trying to go quickly. In Egypt, for example, a big part of that revolution was labor, and when labor came out, and labor wasn't dependent on the Internet and wasn't dependent on any of those things. It was word of mouth and the old-fashioned union organizing, so there were many, many elements and there are still many elements. So technology has a role and plays an important role, but it really has to be put in perspective, and kept in perspective, because otherwise we get carried away with something that doesn't really exist. And the important thing is that the tool as a tool really needs to move the issues forward and the transparency, as you said, forward, because otherwise it becomes just a tool. And the tool is affective when the mass understanding of what democracy is, what human rights are, what freedom is and how it can be integrated into everyday society, that will really make a huge difference in how those tools can be used in a positive way.

Allan Jacobs: I'm Allan Jacobs, President of B'nai B'rith International. A question to the panel-- the coming of what is happening in the explosion in not only the Internet, but in all the social media--how do we protect the human rights of people? What is the role of the governments, for those of you who are in government, and what is the role of social media to protect the human rights, since it's an open door to those who want to violate human rights as well?

Bildt: I think the answer to that is what Jonas said in the beginning--the same laws, regulations, and rules that apply everywhere else should apply on the social media. We have, Sweden and Norway are the same, extremely protective of the freedom of speech and the freedom of information, but there are limits. I mean, incitement of hatred would be illegal if you have it in a newspaper. Same things apply on others' media. So the legislation is technology neutral, but that is an important point. But the same things could happen in the newspaper. It could happen somewhere else. It could happen in the social media. The policy approach should be the same. It should be technology neutral.

Støre: I agree. My sense is, however, that what we have seen in recent years that you can be anonymous on the net, and say things that people wouldn't ever say--not in writing, if they wrote a newspaper piece, and not directly in person. Others pick up that message and develop on it, and you get these kind of virtual communities. And you know, this is what we see, again coming back to what we have been through in Norway, where the man who committed this terrible crime obviously had been in that kind of virtual community on the net, which across borders and across lines, creating that sense of community.

And again, as Carl said, there's a very, very tall limit here to restrict freedom of speech, but at least we should start by understanding what this means, what these phenomenon are. I mean, from the way we deal with our kids, that's a theme now when we go to meet teachers in the class--how do we deal with the tone on the SMS, on the Facebook, on the Twitter, you know? There's an atmosphere there which can be bad. So we go back as parents and tell our kids, you know, "You must not be bad on the net." But it starts there, and it's a new phenomenon, and I think the point is that everything which was a challenge without this technology is a challenge with the technology, and that we have to understand. Man in the back.

Monzer Fathi Selim: My name is Monzer Selim. I'm with the Mission of Egypt here in New York, and I actually have a few questions to the panelists, the first of which is referring to the issue between that balance of freedom speech, between the freedom itself and the responsibility associated with it. In the time where the region is witnessing a

lot of change motivated by social media, and where flipping the switch didn't work--and I think it will never work in that region because of the power of the people--but at the same time, we're witnessing that in a lot of democracies, well-established democracies, there are federal and national legislation for sort of preserving the security, but at the same time it might be infringing on the privacy of the individual in the net. So how do you draw that sort of intricate balance between the security versus the freedom?

My second question is, we've been talking about the power of the people, we've been talking about the corporate social responsibilities, but where is the responsibility of the media? Governments are accountable to their people, but at the same time I think the media should be accountable to their population as well. Is the media, or should the media--should there be a code of ethics? Should the media be aware that the spread of the information does affect the dynamics of the society to a great extent, and the spread of uncertain information might be harmful?--The spread of hate speech. The spread of other forms that could negatively affect the society. That's another question. Does the media have a responsibility, and what that responsibility is?

My final question is, when it comes to the forward-looking, I think at this stage in time, with what's going on all over the world, not just in the Middle East, there is a need that, as his Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden pointed out, we need to look into the future, and get ourselves from the straightjackets of the present or even of the past. We need to innovate our way of thiking to deal with these issues as they will present themselves now and even in a couple of years. I wouldn't put it five years in the future. Thank you.

Støre:	In the second row?
Henry Jackelen:	Hi. Henry Jackelen, Director of the Private Sector Division at UNDP. Reflecting on Minister Bildt's opening statement, and also Maria, what you've been saying, there's something that just strikes me as an opportunity with this entire discussion and this entire theme, and it goes back to the end of the last century when a lot of people were struggling with the concept of global public goods, for the environment especially. But it never really took off because there wasn't enough clarify, specificity, and the overarching nature of it is not as convincing to all people as this is. There is nothing like what has happened, and retaining the freedom of invention that created the Internet, and allowing the invention to continue, means that the private sector has to be a continued engine, not just for the Twitters and the Facebooks, but for the innovations that are already happening, and helping penetrate in markets that have never been touched. But this is really a challenge. If we can find first principles of what people have been trying to define as a global public good, this could be the precedent for a different kind of international participation, collaboration, alliance between public and private; but it could be like the Internet itself, like the whole invention, a one-of-a-kind that could also influence us in other areas, such as environment even.

But I think it's something that has to be treasured and put into a space that lives all on its own. I love that you start with the Gutenberg, but really, there is nothing in civilization that we can look at that has this kind of permeation at this speed, and that has the possibilities for changing societies. And this is just a moment in time, what we're talking about in North Africa. I mean, if we talk about villagers in Africa, then we start talking real revolutions. So I just think that it deserves a space that doesn't exist and--semantics never solves anything. But the original concepts around global public goods were very intriguing, because they challenge a different kind of association, alliance. And certainly when ICANN was

being discussed in the UN framework, I died. I said, "No way", you know, that was not the place to put it. But where do you put it, you know? It should retain the freedom that it has. So anyway, I just put those thoughts out for your consideration.

Støre: Perhaps there's a hash "globalpublicgoods." We can work on that.

Massimo Tommasoli: Thank you. I'm Massimo Tommasoli, permanent observer for International IDEA to the UN. I think that the underlying theme that has been addressed is the new fact that there is connectivity, and these are tools that improve this connectivity. In fact, the very action of democracy-building institutions should be rethought in line of these. The example of cell phones in Africa can be applied to electoral observation, and in fact, the case of Kenya is a good example of how such technologies have been used in that respect. There is one element that I think you may perhaps deepen a little bit more. These new agency and social mobilization tools, in a gender perspective, have they addressed some fundamental issues of inclusiveness in the Arab Spring?

Støre: Can you repeat just the last question?

Tommasoli: I've asked whether these tools have been used in a way that have increased the possibility of access and the voice for parts of the population that have traditionally excluded, and therefore in a gender perspective, whether agencies for women's groups, women's movements, have been improved.

Younis: Yes, for the last question, of course the answer is yes, and we are seeing more women engage on the Internet than men, as per the recent statistics. And as I'm saying, that the decentralization and going outside of the capital is what moved forward the democratization and human rights movement in Egypt. It's exactly because of this widespread access of the social network and tools. So I totally support this. And actually, in responding to the gentleman from the Egypt Mission about his question about the media accountability point of view, we have recently seen the Egyptian authorities shutting down the satellite channels of Al Jazeera Live, and here, when we were talking about media accountability, we have to examine the Egyptian media scenes. There is a press syndicate in Egypt, and of course there is a code of ethics for the Egyptian journalists. But what we have seen is Egyptian authorities trying always to manipulate or influence any elections that take place. They had an appointing heads for the newspaper who are lobbying or loyalists for the Egyptian bad regime, and many other things. We have a journalist who disappeared several years ago and who's still – Reda Hilal-- nobody can find him. So we have a systematic attempt, or a systematic way, of cracking down on the media, and then we speak about media accountability.

I think the best way to speak about media accountability is just read the circulation statistics in the streets. The worst newspapers in Egypt are the least selling newspapers, and many of them are government papers and they are losing a lot of money; and now after the revolution, they are struggling to survive. So I think, let the reporters, let the journalists work, give more space and freedom, and don't start looking about borders and limitations. The scene will do its own filtrations. The Egyptians will do their own filtration, and they will only choose the best. You can trust this. And if we are talking security versus freedoms, again, whose security are we talking about? We should be talking about security of the individuals, security of the users, not security of the regimes and of the governments. As a journalist and as a blogger, as an activist, I was very, very alarmed by the British authority's statements about the London rights

and their blaming of Twitter, and it's like, "What is this?" It was really, really shocking to me, and I hope that not only our governments, but all the other governments, are always careful, especially those who are portrayed as, you know, countries with good record on human rights, or with good prisons, or good police facilities. You must be very careful about what image do you export to our part of the world. Thank you.

Støre: We have time for two or three more questions. Yes. Third row. You with the yellow sheet.

Kai Peter Stabell: Yes. My name is Kai Stabell, with BDP. I have a question, and it might be unfair because we only have one person from a private company, but going back to what was raised on the front row initially, if you look back at how we can use social media--in March 2011, Twitter removed the ability to access archives, so that we could see tweeted archives to conduct analysis, and this was very important with concern to the Arab Spring. You would see where did the tweeting take place. Did it take place inside, outside the country? If you could just elaborate a bit on where does the transparency then end, when the company that's providing this tool--because that's what it is in the end. It's a tool that people choose to elevate their ideas, to move their ideas forward. I mean, it's not necessarily people tweet and then something happens, and I think that goes back to what was pointed out with Britain, where people were using it as a tool to organize flash mobs to rob a store. So I'm just curious why--you might not be the one to answer it--but why Twitter disallowed the ability to go back into tweeted archives, for people to do research?

Ortiz: Sure. I mean, I'm definitely not the person to answer question. I don't know the answer. What I can say, though, is that we heard about five minutes ago the good quote that legislation is technology neutral. I think by the same account, technology should be politically neutral--politically neutral in the sense that it shouldn't bow to the pressures of local governments. And I, as an individual actor on the stage of this world, like you all, think there's a problem when a private company is bowing to the pressures of a government.

Støre: Last question. Gentleman here.

Jordi Torrent: Thank you. I'm Jordi Torrent from United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. I think that one of the questions and issues that was brought to the table is what can governments do to this flow of information and to this facility that the truth or reality, or fake representations of reality and truth, is so easily accessible by populations or people. So, one thing that I would propose to policy-makers is to actually bring media and information literacy curricula to the school systems at the early age, as soon as possible, so actually to empower children, but citizens in general, to use critical thinking skills when it comes to media representations of themselves and the others. Thank you.

Støre: Thank you. Short remarks by the panel in the end? Maria, would you like to begin?

Otero: So many different questions have come up, and I found myself really writing two words to sort of summarize many of the questions, the nuances, the different issues that we face as we look at social media. The first phrase is freedom of expression. I mean, this is one of the fundamental individual liberties that we seek to retain, that we believe in as the absolute core value of democracies. And so as we look at the way in which these tools are used, and we look at the way that they play a role in enabling people to utilize them, the freedom of expression

has to be at the core. Now issues that have to do with to what degree do you create any restrictions, or to what degree do you look at ways in which you can sort of protect society from predators or from others that are using these tools-- we can do that. We can do it through a rules-based approach that lays out some of the ways in which this can be done. But it has to be done absolutely maintaining that freedom of expression. That access to full expression is a key issue.

The other one is this question, as you think of public good and you think of what governments should be doing, some of the issues that you've raised, is this issue of transparency that we haven't talked so much about in the use of social media. But the question of how it is that governments themselves can make themselves more accountable to citizens, one of those ways is by being more transparent, and that can make use of technology in a way that we are way underutilizing. We are beginning to see on the part of some governments, a real interest in figuring out how to do this. This is not something that I'm lecturing as if no one was looking at. There are many governments. The open government partnership yesterday brought forty-six governments to the table to commit themselves to try to figure out ways to use technology, to make information about how they run their governments more available, whether it's relaying how budgets are put together; whether it's relying--which the Brazilian government is doing on a daily basis--how their funds are spent, and anybody in Brazil can access that; whether it's making data available from which hospitals are resulting in more debts from heart surgery than others. I mean, you could just go across and find many, many different ways in which this can be a very important way in which we can move towards a public good, which is really bringing governments towards a much improved and strengthened way of carrying out democracies.

Støre:	Thank you. Mr. Tarif.
Tarif:	Thank you. One of the questions was about security issues, and I think Nora has answered very much to that. I think we're quite sensitive when it comes to the term "security". We have spent the last fifty years worried about the security of the state, in the Middle East. So many people were sentenced to years and years of jail, or people who disappeared, etc., because of the security of the state. And I think somehow we feel rushed, as if after the Egyptian revolution, democracy is there. Or after the Tunisian one. I think if we look at the Middle East in twenty years from now, and democracy is there, then we would say we have done some good job. But when it comes to social media tools, and the integration with what has been the traditional media, I think at this stage it's very difficult--and this is a lesson, I think, from perhaps Yemen and Syria and Egypt and Tunisia, at this stage--that it's very little what actually the state can do if people have the will and if they have the tools. It's very little that what the state can do. And about the gender participation, I think the gentleman asked that.

Actually it's not only women, even it's like LGBT people, because with social media tools, especially like Facebook or Twitter, a lot of LGBT people are able to provoke for their rights before they announce their sexual identity, because in the Arab countries, most of LGBT people, if they don't announce their sexual identity and if they are saying things which is popular and reasonable, you know, people like it. But if they say he's or she's gay, then people stop hearing what he or she is saying, and they see the gay person. So I think in that sense also, yes, social media tools have given a lot of minorities a big chance to contribute and to have their say. Thanks.

Støre:	Claire?

Ortiz:	I'm going to pass.
Støre:	Nora?
Younis:	Thank you. Just to answer Carroll from the Human Rights Watch--in Egypt, we have a nice experience. Maybe we should export to some other places. We have the National Front to different Egypt protestors that was formed before the revolutions started, a few months, like when the demonstrations were taking over a lot in Egypt. It's a group of human rights defenders together with Internet activists, and a large group of lawyers who would anticipate the crackdown on democracy activists and then support them in different ways. Now this network has worked on two ways. One of them is educating NGOs, human rights centers, NGOs, and the human rights defenders on using Internet tools and creating Twitter accounts for them, and really making the right use of their online presence rather than just PR of a conference or something. And the other thing they have worked on very effectively is create a plan B. So when the Internet is cut off, they use Bluetooth, for example, to spread videos and information. So this was one very successful experience we had, due to the need, as actually you invent things when you really need them.
	And I couldn't agree with you more about the labor role in the uprising, and I think Egypt is going to witness probably another revolution soon, because of the poverty. The poverty problems and the economic problems have not been responded to, and if the previous uprising was led by the middle class and was targeting the more democracy and human rights, the next uprising is going to be targeting more food, fuel, and jobs, and housing of course. So we have to be alarmed, and if the government and the SCAF cannot respond to the people's needs, we have to really watch out from what's going to happen next. Today we have a strike. The teachers are striking. The bus drivers are striking. We have strikes all over Egypt, and it's not just Cairo, it's all over the country. Really, something is happening, and I think the media and the SCAF are to blame in this, because they are portraying to the people, and the state television and most of the mainstream media, is portraying to the people that, "Bravo! You finished your revolution. You are the greatest people on earth. Now go home and everything is okay. We have a democracy. We're going to have elections." That's not true. Change did not really fully happen, and we don't have a full revolution. We still have to work hard on it. I think that's it. Thank you.
Bildt:	Yeah, just a couple of comments on some of the questions, or one or two of the questions that have been asked. One was, how does it function, what's the role of politicians in the entire system? What's the role of governments in all of this? Well first, as said, the Internet in the beginning, I mean, there was a beginning in sort of U.S. Defense Research, but after that, it's essentially private sector-driven thing. But you can argue that the Internet is a public-private-global partnership, and it is self-regulation. The Internet, the structure of the Internet, is regulated and governed by those who are governing the Internet, and it's essentially more private than public. We are now sort of, the UN is over there, and a lot of us have been active or are active in the UN system. There was a move for a while to take the Internet into the UN, ITU or something like that. I was among those that fought vigorously against that, because that was a move driven by, say, the Chinese, the People's Republic of China, and I don't need to be too explicit of what we feared were their particular interests for bringing into the normal, multi-lateral, global machinery. We kept it outside; but there are some intermediary forum. There is something that is called, I think you saw the Internet Governance Forum, that brings together governments and private sector and other interests.

As a matter of fact, it's meeting in Nairobi next week, if I remember it rightly, which has an element of more public and governance element to it. But I think we should keep--don't mess too much with something that has worked so well, or they might not be that much in conformity with the principles that we are talking about elsewhere when we deliver speeches over here. What more can we do? Well, I think the discussion that we have now started on the human rights and freedom of the net is, as said, very important. The report by Frank La Rue is worth reading. It is highly detailed. It goes through the arguments and the regulations that are there, your next numbers of countries, and of course there are very, very difficult balancing issues. I mean, we discussed hate speech. Even more difficult is the issue of child pornography. What do you do about that? And some countries or some cultures are more sensitive and somewhat over sensitive, in our opinion, to what they consider defamation. That's a discussion we have elsewhere in the UN system.

And then some governments, for more political reasons, want to regulate somewhat more. It's a very difficult line to draw, but I think it's important that we have that discussion on the international level, so that we can then also take international political action against those that are interfering too much. But as said, there are borderline cases that are not entirely easy. And my aim is, anyhow, that we should be able to build from that discussion what you can call a Global Internet Freedom Alliance, of those countries, those governments, those parts of the world that have these same values, and see the Internet as one of the key enablers for building a better future, but also the necessity of now focusing more both on the freedom of the net and building alliance for that, but also, as I said, on the security and stability of the net. Because there are those that have other designs, even evil designs, disrupting the net, using it for evil purposes, and we must take that into account and not only be the usual do-gooders. We must also be somewhat realist in what we are doing, because this is going to be extremely important in the years to come.

Støre:

Thank you. I think there's one theme that we can address next time we meet, and that is really to try to understand the social consequences of a new technology, and the social consequences of a communication revolution. We touched on Gutenberg, what that did to Europe, and this, what this is doing to the world. It is doing something to the Middle East, to the Arab world. It's going to do something to Iran. It's going to do something to China. I think that the force of this spread is such. But coming down to our societies, we have societies that are not that different to understand what it does to our social organization. What it does to the communication among our kids, relations between people and governments. It's a huge agenda. So perhaps next year, we do the Trygve Lie Symposium on fundamental freedoms, and there's more to discuss. Thank you for all of you who came, and thank you for your time.