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PRESS RELEASE

International Special Rapporteurs for Free Expression Call for Internet Speech Rights

Budapest 01:06:11: The four international special rapporteurs on freedom of expression have today released their annual Joint Declaration on *Freedom of Expression and the Internet*.

The new declaration calls on national governments and other parties to respect freedom of expression in internet communications. It reminds governments that international human rights rules on freedom of expression apply to internet communications, and that it is necessary to develop tailored approaches which emphasises speech rather than simply applying traditional rules on media.

The declaration sets out principles in key areas of internet policy including intermediary liability, filtering and blocking of web sites, criminal and civil liability, network neutrality, and access to the internet.

“Freedom of expression on the internet must be fully protected”, says Dr Agnes Callamard, ARTICLE 19 Executive Director. *“These principles provide important guidance for national governments to meet their obligations,”* continued Dr Callamard.

The four special mandates on freedom of expression are Frank La Rue, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression; Dunja Mijatovic, the Representative on Freedom of the Media of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe; Catalina Botero, Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression for the Organisation of American States; and Pansy Tlakula, Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information for the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights. They were brought together by ARTICLE 19 in November 2010 and draft of the declaration was assisted by ARTICLE 19 and the Centre for Law and Democracy. The special rapporteurs have issued a Joint Declaration each year since 1999.

The principles were released at a press conference in Budapest at the Open Society Archive on 1 June.

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The full text of the Joint Declaration is available in English at the following link:

<http://www.article19.org/pdfs/press/international-mechanisms-for-promoting-freedom-of-expression.pdf>

For the Russian language version, please click on the following link:

<http://www.article19.org/pdfs/press/joint-declaration-on-freedom-of-expression-and-the-internet-russian.pdf>

For the Spanish language version, please click of the following link:

<http://www.article19.org/pdfs/press/mecanismos-internacionales-para-la-promocion-de-la-libertad-de-expresion.pdf>

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ARTICLE 19 is an independent human rights organisation that works around the world to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression. It takes its name from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees free speech.