



April 23, 2018

## Open letter to Google, Amazon, Microsoft and Apple

### Condemn the internet crackdown in Russia

The undersigned members of the International Network of Civil Liberties Organizations (INCLLO) ask Google, Amazon, Microsoft, and Apple to condemn the Moscow court ban of the encrypted messaging service Telegram LLP.

This is one in a series of attacks on people's fundamental rights to privacy and freedom of expression in Russia. Banning Telegram has prompted a wider internet crackdown. The government is now blocking millions of Amazon and Google Internet Protocol addresses, affecting even more users.

INCLLO member Agora International has argued in court on behalf of Telegram that accessing the messages of people in Russia has no legal or constitutional basis. Agora Executive Director Pavel Chikov describes the resulting mass communications interference in Russia as 'cyberwarfare'.

Russia is setting a dangerous precedent that may reach beyond its borders. Restrictive state actions such as these undermine democratic structures in countries where the rule of law is challenged by rights-infringing surveillance regimes. The right to privacy and to freedom of expression must be rigorously protected as they underpin the fundamental values of free and fair societies.

INCLO therefore supports encryption as a legitimate protection for anonymous communication between users. Encrypted messaging services like Telegram help to safeguard people's enshrined constitutional privacy rights in Russia.

INCLO stands with its member Agora in condemning the court ban on Telegram as well as the wider internet crackdown in Russia.

Signed,

Agora International Human Rights Group (Russia)  
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)  
Association of Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI)  
Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA)  
Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS, Argentina)  
DeJusticia (Colombia)  
Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)  
Human Rights Law Network (HRLN, India)  
Hungarian Civil Liberties Union (HCLU)  
Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL)  
Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)  
Legal Resources Centre (LRC, South Africa)  
Liberty (United Kingdom)

*[INCLO](#) is a network of independent, national human rights organizations from the global South and North working to promote fundamental rights and freedoms.*

*[Agora](#) is an association of more than 50 lawyers working on landmark human rights cases.*

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