THE GLOBAL NETWORK INITIATIVE, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION & PRIVACY RIGHTS

A DISCUSSION WITH JERMYN P. BROOKS, CHAIR OF THE GLOBAL NETWORK INITIATIVE AND BOARD MEMBER OF TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL

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MODERATED BY NOEL SELEGZE, DIRECTOR OF THE OPEN SOCIETY YOUTH INITIATIVE

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GLOBAL DEBATE & PUBLIC POLICY CHALLENGE

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As a new technology with extraordinary reach and potentially huge political impact, the Internet has become the focus of a series of overlapping policy debates. The global connectivity of the Internet and the dispersal of power and influence between a wide variety of different groups – from governments, international organizations, and corporations to individual users – make many of the policy questions posed by technology particularly complex. In this field of policy, more than many others, the boundaries between private and commercial decision and the public interest are blurred. What policies should governments or other groups adopt to enhance the potential of digital technology to benefit individuals and societies, domestically, or internationally, and what limits on Internet freedom are legitimate or desirable?

Drawing upon his vast experience as chair of the Global Network Initiative (GNI) and Transparency International’s Business Advisory Board, Jermyn P. Brooks will address these questions in his introductory remarks. He will discuss the contribution to Internet governance which private sector and multi-stakeholder efforts can make.

For Jermyn Brooks, a global commitment to freedom of expression and user privacy is an indispensable element of defending these human rights against illegitimate attempts by governments to censor content and to indulge in widespread surveillance of user information.

He will elaborate on the ways in which initiatives, such as GNI, use their authority and expertise to push forward the global debate on how to improve legislation and practice, in order to uphold freedom of expression and user privacy.