A Vision for
An Alliance for the Future of the Internet

We are united by a belief in the potential of digital technologies to promote connectivity, democracy, sustainable development, and the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. As we increasingly work, communicate, connect, engage, learn, and enjoy leisure time using digital technologies, our reliance on an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure Internet will continue to grow. Yet we are also not naïve or unaware of some of the challenges and dangers inherent in that process.

We call for a new Alliance for the Future off the Internet that includes all governments who embrace the vision of an Internet that is open, interoperable, reliable, and secure. We further affirm our commitment to protecting and respecting human rights online and across the digital ecosystem. Alliance members intend to work toward an environment that reinforces our democratic systems and promotes active participation of every person in our democratic processes, secures and protects our citizens' privacy, maintains trusted connectivity, ensures pluralism, resists efforts to splinter the global Internet, and promotes a free and competitive global economy. This vision statement has been prepared by Alliance members who invite other governments who share this vision to join the Alliance and work together, with civil society and other stakeholders, to affirm guiding principles for governments for to chart course for future of the global Internet.

Reclaiming the Promise of the Internet

The immense promise that accompanied the development of the Internet stemmed from its design: it was an open "network of networks", a single interconnected communications system for all of humanity. The Internet's technical protocols and other key aspects were, from the beginning, and remain, governed by the multistakeholder approach. For business, entrepreneurs, and the innovation ecosystem as a whole, its interconnection promised better access to customers and fairer competition; for artists and creators, new audiences; for everyone, unfettered access to knowledge. With the creation of the Internet came a swell in innovation, vibrant communication, increased cross-border data flows, and market growth—as well as the invention of new digital products and services that now permeate every aspect of our daily lives.

Over the last two decades, however, we have witnessed serious challenges to this vision emerge. Some governments are using the Internet, and related digital platforms and tools, to repress free speech and deny universal human rights and freedoms. State-sponsored or condoned malicious cyber-activity has been on the rise, including cybercrimes such as ransomware, affecting the security and the resilience of critical infrastructure while holding at risk vital public and private assets. In this way, countries have erected firewalls and taken other technical measures, such as internet shutdowns, to restrict access to journalism, information, and services, contrary to international human rights commitments and obligations. Multistakeholder Internet governance and standard setting processes have been disputed by the concerted actions of both governments and private actors that seek

to abuse the openness of these processes to advance a closed vision. The once decentralized Internet economy has become highly concentrated, while individuals have legitimate concerns about the privacy and security of personal data collected and stored online. Online platforms have enabled an increase in the spread of illegal and harmful content, including terrorist and violent extremist content, that threatens the safety of individuals and contributes to radicalization to violence. Disinformation is used to sow division and conflict between individuals or groups in society, undermining the respect and protection of human rights and democratic forms of government.

We believe we should meet these challenges not by turning against one another, but by embracing a vision for the future of the Internet that recommits governments to defending the rules and principles that protect human rights and foster equitable economic prosperity. We intend to ensure that the use of digital technologies reinforces, not weakens, democracy and respect for human rights, offers opportunities for the innovation ecosystem, including businesses large and small, and maintains connections between our societies. We intend to work together to protect and fortify, the multistakeholder model of Internet and to maintain a high level of security, stability and resilience of the technical infrastructure of the internet so that the Internet can continue to deliver on the promise of connecting humankind and helping societies thrive.

We affirm our commitment to promote and sustain an **Internet that is open, interoperable, reliable, and secure;** to ensure that the Internet is trustworthy, and that it reinforces democratic principles and universal human rights and fundamental freedoms. An Internet that offers opportunities for collaborative research and commerce. An Internet that is developed, governed, and deployed in an inclusive way so that underserved communities, particularly those coming online for the first time, can navigate it safely and with personal data privacy and protections in place. And a global Internet that is governed by multistakeholder processes. In short, an Internet that can deliver on the promise of connecting humankind and helping societies and democracies to thrive.

VISION: The Internet should operate as a single, decentralized network of networks -- with global reach and governed through the multi-stakeholder approach, where governments work with academics, civil society, private sector, technical community and others. Digital technologies, including the Internet, will yield the greatest dividends when they operate as interoperable, reliable, and secure systems. Digital technologies should also enable trustworthy, free, and fair commerce; avoid unfair discrimination between individual users, allow for competition between businesses; promote and protect universal human rights; and, foster societies where:

- *Universally-held human rights, fundamental freedoms of all, and well-being of all individuals are protected and promoted;*
- *All can connect to the Internet, no matter where they are located, including through increased access, affordability, and digital skills;*
- *Individuals and businesses can trust they are safe online, their data is secure and their privacy is protected;*
- *Businesses of all sizes can innovate, compete, and thrive on their merits in a fair and competitive ecosystem;*

- *Infrastructure is designed to be secure, interoperable, trustworthy, and sustainable;*
- *Technology is used to promote pluralism, sustainability, inclusive economic growth, and the fight against global climate change.*

High-level principles to promote our Vision

The Governments who are members of the Alliance intend to translate these principles into concrete policies and actions and to work together to promote this vision globally, while respecting each other's regulatory autonomy within our own jurisdictions and in accordance with our respective domestic laws and international legal obligations. These principles are not legally binding but should be used as a reference for public policy makers, as well as citizens and businesses.

Alliance members intend to work together, on a voluntary basis and in pursuit of the common vision, to refine our commitments develop a set of guidelines for a "Declaration for the Future of the Internet." We believe that the principles for the future of the internet are universal in nature and as such we intend to welcome a broad range of additional members in the future who wish to join with us in affirming these principles demonstrate their willingness to implement this vision. The Alliance Declaration will take into account, and be mutually supportive of, existing processes in the UN, G7, G20, OECD, WTO, and other relevant fora. We also welcome and encourage the many civil society organizations and non-profit organizations that work to promote an open, interoperable, reliable and secure internet, and to defend fundamental freedoms and rights online, and intend to consult and work closely with civil society in carrying forward our vision.

As members, we are prepared to make a range of key commitments to each other and to the citizens of the world regarding the Internet and digital technologies, including:

- Dedicate ourselves, in conducting our own government's functions, to respect human rights, including as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the principles of the rule of law, freedom of expression, legitimate purpose, non-arbitrariness, effective oversight, and transparency, both online and offline, and call upon others to do the same.
- Promote affordable, inclusive, and reliable access to the Internet for individuals where they need it and support efforts to close digital divides around the world to ensure all citizens of the world are able to benefit from the digital transformation.
- Promote safe and equitable use of the open Internet for everyone, without discrimination based on gender and gender identity, race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority or indigenous population, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation.
- Strengthen our work to combat gender-based violence online to make the Internet a safe place for women and girls. Promote online safety for children and teenagers

- Reaffirm our commitment that actions taken by governments/ parties and digital platforms to reduce illegal and harmful content and activities online are firmly grounded in, and fully consistent with, international human rights norms, while encouraging diversity of opinion and pluralism without fear of censorship or intimidation.
- Protect and respect universal human rights across the digital ecosystem, while providing access to meaningful remedy for human rights violations and abuses, in accordance with each nation's human rights obligations.
- Support digital literacy, skills acquisition, and development so that individuals can overcome the digital divide, participate in the Internet safely, and realize the economic and social potential of the digital economy.
- Refrain from engaging in or enabling disproportionate or otherwise abusive government access to personal data, in particular mass online surveillance.
- Foster greater exposure to diverse cultural content, information, and news online. Exposure to diverse content online should contribute to a healthier public discourse, greater social inclusion within society, bolster resilience to disinformation and misinformation, and increase our citizens' ability to participate in democratic processes.
- Jointly work to realize the benefits of free flows of data with trust based on our shared values as like-minded, democratic, open and outward looking nations.
- Refrain from shutting down or degrading Internet access, either entirely or partially. Refrain from undermining the technical infrastructure essential to the general availability and integrity of the internet or from unjustifiably blocking or degrading access to our countries' content, services, and applications on the Internet, consistent with principles of Net Neutrality.
- Protect the security, integrity and privacy of individuals' personal data and ensure the confidentiality of electronic communications and the protection of information on end-users' electronic devices.
- Ensure the protection of consumers, in particular vulnerable consumers, from online scams and other unfair practices online and from dangerous and unsafe products sold online.
- Promote and use trustworthy network infrastructure and services suppliers, relying on a risk-based assessments that include technical and non-technical factors for network security.
- Foster contestable and fair online markets and ensure that firms and entrepreneurs can compete on their merits.
- Promote cooperation in research and innovation and standard setting, encourage information sharing regarding security threats through relevant international fora, and affirm responsible state behavior in cyberspace, including to not knowingly allow their territory to be used for malicious cyber-activity.

- Cooperate to maximize the enabling effects of technology for combatting climate change and protecting the environment whilst reducing as much as possible the environmental footprint of the Internet and digital technologies.
- Refrain from misusing or abusing the Internet or algorithmic tools or techniques for authoritarian surveillance and oppression, including developing social score cards or other mechanisms of social control or pre-crime detention and arrest.
- Refrain from using the Internet to undermine the electoral infrastructure or interfere with elections and political processes, including through covert information disorder campaigns.
- Refrain from undermining multistakeholder, governance of the Internet, including deployment and management of its main technical protocols and other related standards and protocols.

We invite governments, the private sector, international organizations, and civil society worldwide to work in partnership to guarantee this vision for all.