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ORAL STATEMENT

UN Global Digital Compact
Multi Stakeholder Session Rev 1

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Thank you co-facilitators for providing Access Now the opportunity to address Rev 1 of the UN Global Digital Compact. Access Now advances human rights in the digital age.

We particularly welcome references to international human rights law. We **cannot** have a Global Digital Compact that does not center on human rights. With that, I would like to address 5 main points:

First, we welcome para 24 which supports the SG’s call for a UN Digital Rights Advisory Service within the OHCHR. Norms applying human rights to digital activities have not taken root in law and practice. This service will advance action globally.

Second, we welcome the reference to internet shutdowns in para 28(d) and call to strengthen references to internet shutdowns throughout. In 2023, Access Now and the #KeepItOn coalition recorded **283 internet shutdowns in 39 countries worldwide**, the highest number since we started tracking. The GDC must address evolving threats and trends of internet shutdowns worldwide, taking note of the OHCHR report on shutdowns.

Third, while we welcome the reference to surveillance and encryption in para 30(d), we note that such references must be stronger, particularly in the wake of the misuse of intrusive hacking tools like commercial spyware.


Fourth, we call for strengthened references to the **multi stakeholder approach**. All those affected by digital policies deserve power over them. Open internet governance must continue; thus the IGF requires renewed mandates and sustained financing. Since the IGF has broad based support, it is important to build on the IGF and use it for GDC follow up and review.

Lastly, we underscore the need to address gender and environmental sustainability and call for strengthened references throughout the text.

Thank you.



Access Now (<https://www.accessnow.org>) defends and extends the digital rights of people and communities at risk. As a grassroots-to-global organization, we partner with local actors to bring a human rights agenda to the use, development, and governance of digital technologies, and to



intervene where technologies adversely impact our human rights. By combining direct technical support, strategic advocacy, grassroots grantmaking, and convenings such as RightsCon, we fight for human rights in the digital age.

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