

Global Policy Weekly - April 16, 2013

by [Emily Barabas](#) [1]
April 17, 2013



CDT's Global Policy Weekly highlights the latest Internet policy developments and proposals from around the world, compiled by CDT's Global Internet Freedom Project.

FREE EXPRESSION

The House of Commons is debating proposed UK libel reform legislation this week and will be [considering](#) [2] controversial amendments introduced by the House of Lords. Critics have [raised particular concern](#) [3] over a proposal by Conservative MP Sir Edward Garnier regarding cases brought by corporations. Garnier wants to remove language that would require companies to demonstrate financial damage before they can sue journalists, academics, and other parties for libel. In an [analysis](#) [4] of the proposed legislation, a coalition of advocates emphasizes that while they strongly support libel reform, some of the provisions of the bill could have unacceptable consequences for freedom of expression.

The government of Kuwait is considering a [draft bill](#) [5] that would allow the government to fine journalists more than \$1 million for insulting the Emir and imprison citizens for up to 10 years for religious offenses. According to local news sources, the proposed law would apply to both traditional and online media and would include [monitoring of social network sites](#) [6] for offending material. Kuwait's Information Minister [defended the draft legislation](#) [7], arguing that the bill does not allow prior censorship of media and protects speech by replacing jail sentences with financial penalties for certain offenses. Reporters without Borders has [spoken out](#) [8] against the bill, saying, "We are outraged by the government's desire to use this draconian law to control information and restrict freedom of expression."

A Canadian organization called the SecDev Foundation has [developed a tool](#) [9] to monitor availability of critical infrastructure in Syria, including Internet and telecommunications disruptions. The Syria Digital Security Monitor leverages crowd sourced data to collect information on outages at the local level. Syria [experienced](#) [10] an Internet blackout in late 2012 that cut off nearly all Internet service to the country. While the Syrian authorities deny responsibility for the blackout, security experts say that it was likely the result of government action.

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) president Fadi Chehadi [announced](#) [11] at ICANN's 46th meeting in Beijing that the organization will be expanding operations to locations in Singapore and Istanbul. ICANN is moving forward efforts to internationalize by opening offices that serve Asia-Pacific, Europe, Middle East, and Africa regions. ICANN has faced criticism in Internet governance discussions over an institutional structure that some stakeholders consider too US-centric. Chehadi, who took office in March, is directing a series of [changes in the organization](#) [12] to promote greater transparency and balance.

SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE

US Secretary of State John Kerry [announced](#) [13] that the United States and China will form a joint working group on cybersecurity. According to Kerry, the issue "affects the financial sector, banks, financial transactions, every aspect of nations in modern times are affected by the use of cyber networking and obviously all of us - every nation - has an interest in protecting its people, protecting its rights, protecting its infrastructure". The new cooperative effort follows a series of accusations

exchanged between the two countries over alleged cyber attacks.

Research by Kaspersky Lab and Citizens Lab found that Tibetan activists are [threatened](#) [14] by targeted malware that sends personal information from computers and mobile devices to attackers. Kaspersky Lab first [found an instance of Android malware](#) [15] in late March that compromised the email account of a prominent activist. Soon after, Citizens Lab found a [second instance of Android malware](#) [16] that reports user GPS location, contacts, and other data to attackers. While the exact source of the attacks is unconfirmed, researchers say the malware originates in China.

COMPETITION

The European Commission and Google have [agreed on a settlement](#) [17] following an antitrust investigation by EU authorities. Under the agreement, Google will clearly label search results that promote its own products and services. It will also adjust its algorithm to show results from other search engines in certain cases. The agreement will last five years and will be monitored through third-party audits. If Google complies fully during that period, the company will avoid charges of any wrongdoing.

- [Global Policy Weekly](#)

The content © 2013 by Center for Democracy & Technology. CDT can be freely copied and used as long as you make no substantive changes and clearly give us credit. [Details](#).

Source URL: <https://cdt.org/blogs/emily-barabas/1704global-policy-weekly-april-16-2013>

Links:

- [1] <https://cdt.org/personnel/emily-barabas>
- [2] <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2013/apr/11/defamation-bill-faces-fresh-attack>
- [3] <http://blog.indexoncensorship.org/2013/04/12/libel-reform-under-threat/>
- [4] http://www.senseaboutscience.org/data/files/Libel/Libel_Reform_Campaign_Defamation_Bill_Briefing_April_2013.pdf
- [5] http://www.arabianbusiness.com/kuwaiti-journalists-may-face-fines-of-up--1m-497362.html?utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=twitterfeed
- [6] <http://www.omantribune.com/index.php?page=news&id=141867&heading=Middle>
- [7] <http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2304667&language=en>
- [8] <http://en.rsf.org/kuwait-journalists-could-be-fined-a-10-04-2013,44363.html>
- [9] <http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/2013/04/09/secdev-foundation-to-monitor-syrias-digital-security/>
- [10] <https://www.cdt.org/blogs/kevin-bankston/0312stark-lesson-syria-un-must-condemn-not-condone-internet-blackouts>
- [11] <http://www.ip-watch.org/2013/04/09/icann-ceo-wants-to-shift-centre-of-gravity-away-from-us/>
- [12] <http://www.ip-watch.org/2012/10/12/new-icann-ceo-promises-more-transparency-and-balance/>
- [13] <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/13/us-china-us-cyber-idUSBRE93C05T20130413>
- [14] https://threatpost.com/en_us/blogs/malware-arsenal-targets-tibetan-activists-040213?utm_source=Home+Page&utm_medium=Top+Graphic+Bar+Image&utm_campaign=Position+3
- [15] https://www.securelist.com/en/blog/208194186/Android_Trojan_Found_in_Targeted_Attack
- [16] <https://citizenlab.org/2013/04/permission-to-spy-an-analysis-of-android-malware-targeting-tibetans/>
- [17] <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/15/technology/google-and-europe-reach-deal-on-search-results.html?pagewanted=all&r=1&>