

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves will chair a panel consisting of representatives from government, civil society, the private sector, international organisations and the IT community around the world formed by the international organisation Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). The objective of the panel is to discuss global Internet-related challenges and maintain cyberspace as a borderless space for the free movement of information.

The panel, whose members will meet for the first time in December in London, will release a high-level report outlining Internet-related global challenges and potential perspectives and principles for the development of cyberspace.

According to President Ilves, the diverse panel will help find general directions and solutions to ensure Internet freedom and maintain and develop the global borderless virtual space in future. The Estonian Head of State has repeatedly emphasised the importance of global Internet freedom, including freedom of speech and accessibility of information, and he has mentioned the wish of authoritarian countries to create and implement regulations restricting Internet freedom.

"They claim that restrictions in cyberspace are necessary for fighting cyber crime and cyber terrorism, but in reality they will restrict the freedom of their own citizens," President Ilves said.

In addition to cyber crime, the recent exposure of intelligence scandals is now presented as justification for restricting freedom of information, but people offering such arguments also do not often support freedom of speech outside of the Internet, the Head of State said. According to President Ilves, it is important to find a balance between the free movement of information, privacy and security in the light of recently revealed issues; however, technical solutions as well as legislation adjusted for the digital age, within states and internationally, are required.

"Estonia's ID-card and X-road based system has pioneered in the world as a solution that is secure without limiting freedom, which is why there is a great international interest in Estonia's solutions," added he.

A panel consists of 19 members, whose activities will be independent of their organisations, including for example Fadi Chehade, CEO and President of ICANN; Vint Cerf, Vice President of Google; Mitchell Baker, Chair of Mozilla Foundation; Jimmy Wales, one of the founders of

President Ilves to chair a global panel dealing with Internet governance

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Wikipedia; and Mohamed al Ghanem, founder of the UAE Telecommunications Regulatory Authority.

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