

Appendix A:

In June 2005, Human Rights Watch sent the following letter to the governments of Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates:

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June 23, 2005

Ambassador Mohamed Nejib Hachana
1515 Massachusetts Avenue NW,
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ambassador Hachana:

Human Rights Watch is preparing a report on the growth of the Internet in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Specifically, we are examining the policies of governments and Internet service providers with regard to online communications. As an independent, nonpartisan human rights organization, we will apply the standard of internationally recognized principles of freedom of expression to the subject, looking specifically at the freedom that people enjoy in each country to impart and receive information electronically.

In 1999, Human Rights Watch published "The Internet in the Mideast and North Africa: Free Expression and Censorship," which examined the same topic in several Middle Eastern and North African countries. This can be found at <http://www.hrw.org/advocacy/internet/mena/>. A summary in Arabic can be found at <http://www.hrw.org/arabic/1999/reports/internet/>. We would like to ensure that our new report also accurately reflects the official policies and perspectives of your government. We would be grateful to receive from you answers to the following questions relating to the Internet in Tunisia. All information received by August 1, 2005, will be reflected in this report, which Human Rights Watch expects to publish this November. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

[1] **LAWS.** What are the laws or regulations that govern information content and communications online (such as electronic mail, newsgroups, chat forums, online discussion boards, blogs, and other forums on the Internet)? We would appreciate it if you would provide us with a copy of that legislation or indicate where the text(s) may be found. Is online speech subject to the press code or information code in effect in Tunisia?

[2] **ACCESS.** Are individuals, organizations and corporations permitted to establish accounts with Internet Service Providers (ISPs), so they can obtain access to the Internet through a domestic telephone call or dedicated service line?

[3] **REGISTRATION WITH GOVERNMENT.** What information, if any, are individuals, organizations, or corporations required by law to furnish to government agencies or to Internet service providers before obtaining Internet access? What information are they required to furnish before posting a Web site?

[4] **GOVERNMENT APPROVAL.** Is there any sort of approval from a government agency required before individuals, organizations, or corporations may have Internet access? Is there approval required before they may post a Web site?

[5] **CONFIDENTIALITY.** Are ISPs required to provide to the authorities information about their subscribers or users, or about the content of their Internet activities? If so, what type(s) of information are they required to turn over, and under what conditions?

[6] **ENCRYPTION.** Is there legislation regulating the use of encryption in electronic communication?

[7] **CONTENT REGULATIONS.** Do authorities mandate, or require ISPs to mandate, regulations on speech content or information that is sent or received by Internet users? If so, please describe those regulations and the penalties for violating them.

[8] **BLOCKING AND CENSORSHIP.** Do authorities block or censor the content of any Web sites or of electronic communications via newsgroups, chat, e-mail, or other Internet forums?

[9] **LIABILITY.** Are there laws that hold an ISP (or data carriers) responsible for the content of e-mail messages, Web sites, or newsgroup postings that are transmitted by others (content providers) via that ISP?

[10] **INTERNET CAFÉS AND LIBRARIES.** Are there regulations specifically applicable to the operation of locations (such as Internet cafés and libraries), where members of the public can have access to the Internet?

Are those responsible for such facilities required to furnish any government agency with information about the users and use of their facilities?

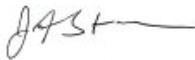
Are they considered legally responsible for material that is sent from or received at their premises?

[11] **INEXPENSIVE ACCESS.** Does your government have any program in place to help make Internet access easy and affordable to the general public?

Please feel free to add or send any additional information about the Internet that is pertinent. Once again, please contact me if you have questions or desire further information about this project or about any aspect of Human Rights Watch.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,



Joe Stork
Washington Advocacy Director
Middle East and North Africa Division
Human Rights Watch