

# Press Release

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## **"The public has a right to know what Internet content is being removed"**

### ***Statement by Secretary General of the Council of Europe Thorbjørn Jagland***

Strasbourg, 21.04.2010 – The Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Thorbjørn Jagland, today welcomed the [initiative by Google](#) to release data concerning requests to remove or censor content:

"The public has a right to know what their governments are requesting to remove from the Internet. Transparency is essential in order to protect freedom of expression. I therefore urge European governments to refrain from filtering Internet content for reasons other than those laid down in Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Their actions must be prescribed by law and necessary in a democratic society.

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right, whether content is critical or not of the State. However, the right carries with it the responsibility to ensure that the dignity and rights of others are respected and that vulnerable groups, such as children, are protected. Only dialogue and cooperation between state actors, non-state actors, international organisations and civil society can provide for solutions that benefit everyone.

An "Internet for all" is a legitimate aspiration, which must go hand in hand with a maximum of rights and services subject to a minimum of restrictions".

[Link to the fact sheet on freedom of expression and information](#)

[Link to the fact sheet on cybercrime](#)

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.