



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

16 December 2013

Mr Roger Clarke
Chair, for the Board of the Australian Privacy Foundation
Chair@privacy.org.au

Dear Mr Clarke

Thank you for your letter of 17 December on the resolution considered by the Third Committee of the United Nations on the right to privacy in the digital age. I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Australia was pleased to join consensus on this resolution. We believe that the Internet and other digital communication technologies provide an unparalleled opportunity for exercise of the fundamental freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association. Technological developments have also fostered opportunities for enhanced communication and connectivity, as well as improved access to health and education services for isolated communities.

We acknowledge that with these benefits also comes the risk that digital technologies can be used to undermine the protection of human rights. Accordingly, it is essential that we ensure that the same rights and freedoms that we enjoy in our everyday lives are protected and promoted in the online environment.

Australia believes that adoption of this resolution highlights that support for and implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) remains as relevant and vital today, in the digital age, as it ever was. We understand that this resolution is consistent with Australia's long held views on the ICCPR, particularly articles 17 and 19, as well as article 2.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Noel Campbell'.

Noel Campbell
Assistant Secretary
International Organisations Branch