

Microsoft's Response to Access Now's May 18, 2021, Letter

We appreciate Access Now's May 18, 2021 letter on Microsoft's scoring in the Ranking Digital Rights [2020 Corporate Accountability Index](#), which assesses Microsoft's policies and reporting on privacy and freedom of expression protections and also suggests possible enhancements. Microsoft has engaged with Ranking Digital Rights since its inception. We are grateful for the on-going collaboration with the organization, as well as Access Now and other civil society organizations who play an essential role in advancing protection and respect for human rights online and offline.

As articulated in Microsoft's [Global Human Rights Statement](#) we work to ensure that our business activities respect and promote human rights to ensure that technology plays a positive role across the globe. We have a responsibility to operate our business in ways that respect universal rights, including privacy, freedom of expression and the right to access information. Respecting human rights is a core value of Microsoft. It is inseparable from our mission to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more with our technologies. By focusing on human rights, our employees have a framework for approaching problems and assessing risks, and which requires us to seek out and engage external perspectives, and to design solutions that achieve more by leaving no one behind. But, perhaps more importantly, it helps us consider difficult decisions with agreed principles, consistency, and accountability.

Our approach is aligned with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) as the authoritative global standard for business and human rights. We are a founding member and serve on the board of the Global Network Initiative (GNI), a multi-stakeholder collaboration between information and communications technology (ICT) companies, civil society organizations, socially responsible investors, and academic institutions to protect and advance freedom of expression and privacy in the ICT sector.

Regarding Access Now's suggestion for a *"one, timely, and achievable, objective based on [Access Now's] insights into the most acute issues facing at-risk users: 'Microsoft should improve its transparency reports by explaining how it enforces its own policies and how it fulfills third-party demands to remove content and accounts'"*, we would like to note that Microsoft's [Content Removal Request Report](#) contains FAQs that provide information on our policies and practices on content removal. These FAQs cover a range of topics related to how Microsoft responds to content removal requests and are regularly updated.

Further information about our policies and practices to respect customers' privacy and freedom of expression is available in our [Reports Hub](#), [Privacy Statement](#), and [Corporate Social Responsibility Reporting](#).

We value ongoing opportunities to learn from all stakeholders and look forward to continuing the important dialogue with Access Now and other members of the human rights community.