



Monday, September 16, 2013

**Mr. Christopher L. Avery
Director
Business and Human Rights Resource Centre
1-3 Charlotte Street, 3rd Floor
London, UK
W1T 1RD**

Dear Mr. Avery:

Thanks very much for your letter and follow-up emails regarding Netsweeper. I regret the delay in responding. I read with interest the information that you provided on the Centre, which I know is held in high regard. I am hoping that I might visit the Centre and meet with you and your colleagues on a future visit to London.

With respect to the Canadian company Netsweeper, while we cannot speak about the affairs of any one firm due to privacy constraints, we do routinely encourage Canadian company clients to behave responsibly and in accordance with international best practices regarding respect for human rights, including freedom of expression.

More broadly, Canada expects Canadian companies working overseas to abide by the laws of those countries and to act in accordance with applicable Canadian laws, ethical standards, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices. The Government of Canada has no legal authority to take action in the case of any alleged violations.

The Government of Canada actively promotes internationally recognized CSR performance and reporting guidelines, for example the OECD's Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, which include provisions that direct companies to respect human rights and assist them in doing so.

The Government encourages voluntary initiatives, such as the Global Network Initiative, that assist and support companies to act with due diligence in order to respect human rights in their operations abroad.

Canada is pleased to work with its partners in the Freedom Online Coalition to better safeguard freedom online. We are encouraged by the progress made last year with the adoption of the first United Nations Human Rights Council resolution calling for the protection of human rights online.

Canada has supported human rights and democracy advocates, including through the provision of training to bloggers, citizen journalists and activists, to help them to safely use connection technologies.

Canada is committed to working cooperatively with our partners to ensure that the Internet is kept open, safe and accessible, and to protect and promote human rights in the digital arena.

Yours truly,



for

Sarah Fountain Smith
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