

GNI Statement on Ongoing Communications Restrictions in Gaza

The Global Network Initiative (GNI) welcomes the ceasefire agreement entered into in early October 2025, and calls on all parties to honor it. GNI strongly condemns the persistent disruption of Internet and telecommunications services in the Gaza Strip, expresses its deep concern about the ongoing and repeated restrictions on freedom of expression and access to information during the Israeli incursion into Gaza, and calls on all parties to prioritize the [restoration and improvement](#) of telecommunications services in the Gaza Strip.

Nearly two years after our [November 2023 statement](#) on the same topic, GNI reiterates that these restrictions impede the flow of vital information and undermine human rights. These concerns are exacerbated by the [alarming](#) levels of [violence](#) against journalists and media workers killed while trying to document and report on the ground. Together, these actions constitute a grave [threat](#) to civilian safety, humanitarian efforts, and freedom of expression, including press freedom.

[Network disruptions](#), including via intentional damage to communications equipment, are blunt instruments [increasingly used by governments](#), especially in situations of conflict and unrest. Such disruptions unnecessarily and disproportionately impact [human rights](#). They also disrupt economic activity, threaten public safety, limit effective delivery of emergency and essential services, and help governments [evade accountability](#).

The Gaza Strip has [endured](#) more than two dozen internet and telecommunications blackouts over the past two years, including during periods of intensified military activity. Relief efforts are increasingly constrained by connectivity disruptions and escalating hostilities, leading to mounting risks to the safety of both civilians and humanitarian workers. [Evidence indicates](#) these blackouts stem from multiple, compounding factors, at times [directly coinciding](#) with Israeli military operations, including: [destruction of telecommunications infrastructure](#) during Israeli military operations, electricity and [fuel shortages](#), and deliberate technical interference.

While GNI's focus is on human rights, we have organized and participated in a range of exercises designed to understand how International Humanitarian Law (IHL) relates to the conduct of tech companies operating in the context of conflicts. This includes [work done](#) with experts in humanitarian law. In addition, during our co-chairship of Freedom Online Coalition's Task Force on Internet Shutdowns (FOC-TFIS), we helped author the June 2025 [Joint FOC Statement on Protecting Human Rights Online and Preventing Internet Shutdowns in Times of Armed Conflict](#).

GNI strongly condemns the deliberate targeting or destruction of civilian communications infrastructure and other acts that contravene the principles of [distinction](#) and proportionality under IHL, and which foreseeably or deliberately deny civilians access to communication.

GNI urgently calls for all parties to immediately end any efforts to disrupt telecommunications and internet services. In particular, GNI calls on the Israeli government as a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), among other relevant human rights treaties, as well as to the Geneva Conventions, to:

- Protect civilian critical infrastructure, including the technical infrastructure essential to the general availability or integrity of the internet, consistent with [ICRC Resolution 34IC/24/R2 \(2024\)](#).
- Refrain from targeting, interfering with, shutting down, or otherwise restricting the functionality of civilian ICT infrastructure and services;
- Protect telecommunications infrastructure from damage, degradation, or use to facilitate deliberate human rights violations;
- Facilitate urgent access to the fuel, electricity, and equipment required to sustain basic communications services for the civilian population;
- Support efforts to repair and enhance communications infrastructure.

About GNI

As a multistakeholder organization comprising many of the world's leading tech companies, academics, civil society organizations, and investors, GNI works to protect and advance freedom of expression and privacy rights in the technology ecosystem. Based on the diverse experiences and expertise of our membership, our approach generates collaboration towards a more rights-respecting legal environment for technology users around the world.