



PRESS RELEASE

New report reveals lack of transparency of intelligence sharing agreements at the international level.

(June 11, 2018) – A year ago, ten members of the International Network of Civil Liberties Organizations (INCLO) launched a [global public information campaign](#), asking for our national governments to provide information about the current agreements intelligence service agencies have with other countries.

Today, INCLO releases a new report [Unanswered Questions - International Intelligence Sharing](#), summing up the responses to our Freedom of Information requests.

INCLO's attempt to shed more light on a practice largely shielded from accountability was met with inconclusive results. The records requests are ongoing, but agencies have tended to delay, reject, or not respond at all. The lack of clarity raises concerns about violations that could interfere with people's rights to privacy, access to information, freedom of expression and freedom of association.

Despite the uproar over Snowden's revelations of vast and secretive networks seriously affecting our individual freedoms, there is still no public access to agreements governing intelligence sharing anywhere in the world. Today, the only agreements that are public are historical artifacts or those leaked by whistleblowers.

In addition, INCLO's research has found that there are insufficient domestic laws that govern intelligence sharing partnerships and the way in which agencies operate. Moreover, there is insufficient oversight, review, and a lack of transparency to the existing agreements.

INCLO believes that adequate laws, oversight and transparency are the minimal requirements to preserve democracy and the rule of law.

QUOTES:

“Asking for accountability for agencies with extraordinary powers and responsibilities is not naive, it is profoundly practical. It is also necessary for trust, legitimacy and social license for our intelligence agencies,” said **Brenda McPhail, Director, Privacy, Technology & Surveillance Project of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association**. McPhail belongs to one of the nine INCLO organizations who filed the FOI request.

Elizabeth Farries, co-author with **Eric King** of the Unanswered Questions report, warns about the impact on the wider democratic processes of holding governments to account. “By continuing to shroud these arrangements in secrecy, governments have removed the public's ability to challenge their actions,” Farries said. “Our right to know the structure, content and oversight of intelligence sharing agreements is vital because of the serious implications they have for our fundamental human rights, like the right to privacy or freedom of expression.”

[INCLO](#) is a network of 13 independent, national human rights organizations from the global South and North. We work together to promote fundamental rights and freedoms.

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For more information, please see our [Report](#).