ACTA: A Global Threat to Freedoms open letter

The Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) is a broad intergovernmental agreement under negotiation ranging from the key social issue of access to medicine[1] to criminal Internet regulation. We fear it could seriously hinder European innovation in the digital single market while undermining fundamental rights and democracy at large.

The negotiation process itself raises important questions of transparency and due democratic process, given that the content of the draft agreement has been kept secret for more than 18 months, although some details about the proposals recently leaked to the public. More worrying still, while the European Parliament has been denied access to the documents, US industry has been granted access to them, albeit only after signing non-disclosure agreements.

A recent analysis by the European Commission of the ACTA Internet chapter[2] proves that the topics under discussion go far beyond the current body of EU law. Most importantly, the Commission's analysis confirms that the current draft of ACTA would profoundly restrict the fundamental rights and freedoms of European citizens, most notably the freedom of expression and communication privacy. These are very much at risk, since the current draft pushes for the implementation of three-strikes schemes and content filtering policies by seeking to impose civil and criminal liability on technical intermediaries such as internet service providers. The text would also radically erode the exercise of interoperability that is essential for both consumer rights and competitiveness.

Consequently, we urge the Parliament to call on European negotiators to establish transparency in the negotiation process and publish the draft agreement, and not to accept any proposal which would undermine citizens' rights and freedoms. Furthermore, we urge the Parliament to make an unequivocal statement to the Commission and Council that any agreement which does not respect these core principles would force the Parliament to reject the entire text.

[1] See: http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressrelease/2009-07-15/criminalize-generic-medicines-hurt-poor-countries

[2] See: http://sharemydoc.org/files/philip/ec_analysis_of_acta_internet_chapter.pdf

The first signatories of this letter are:

AK DATEN E.V. - Germany
AK DATEN is a NGO focussed on civil rights, especially on informational self-determination, privacy and freedom of information. We're co-founder of the "Friedrich Schüler Library and Archive for the european civil rights movement".

April - France
April is the main French advocacy association devoted to promote and protect Free/Libre Software

ASIC - France
L'Association des Services Internet Communautaires is a trade association for web2.0 companies in France. Their members include Dailymotion, Google, eBay, Yahoo, Microsoft and Wikipedia.

Asociación de Internautas - Spain
Association working for the rights of electronic communications users.

Bits of Freedom - The Netherlands
Bits of Freedom defends digital civil rights, such as privacy on the Internet and online freedom of speech.

Chaos Computer Club (CCC) - Germany
Europe's largest hacker group, founded in 1981.

Constant vzw - Belgium
Association for arts and media

Consumers International - International
Consumers International (CI) is the only independent global campaigning voice for consumers. With over 220 member organisations in 115 countries, we are building a powerful international consumer movement to help protect and empower consumers everywhere.

dyne.org - Intenational
Since 2000 dyne hosts an atelier for digital artisans. We design software and ideas for the arts, sharing a grassroot access to technology, education and freedom.

EDRi - Europe
European Digital Rights defends civil rights in the information society

Electronic Frontier Finland - Finland
Electronic Frontier Finland has been set up to defend the citizens' electronic rights.

Electronic Frontier Foundation - International
EFF is the leading civil liberties group defending your rights in the digital world.

Exgae - Spain
La primera asesoría legal especializada en librar a los ciudadanos de los abusos de las entidades de gestión y de la industría cultural. 24 identidades, entre asociaciones y ciudadanos, están detrás de esta iniciativa que comienza respaldada por casi 8000 personas.

Framasoft - France
Endorsed by a network of cooperative websites, Framasoft's goal is the dissemination and the promotion of the Free culture in general and of Free softwares specifically. Framasoft is an open door for the larger audience toward an assisted discovery of the "Free software world" : Free software and it's frame of mind, the Free culture and also digital liberties.

Free Knowledge Institute - Europe
The Free Knowledge Institute (FKI) is a non-profit organisation that fosters the free exchange of knowledge in all areas of society.

Free Software Foundation - International
The Free Software Foundation (FSF) is a donor supported charity founded in 1985 and based in Boston, MA, USA. The FSF has a worldwide mission to promote computer user freedom and to defend the rights of all free software users.

French Data Network - France
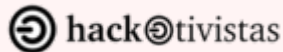FDN is the oldest Internet access provider in France. It is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization.

Fundació privada per la Xarxa Lliure, Oberta i neutral - Spain
guifi.net is an open, free and neutral network built through a peer to peer, agreement where everyone can join. It has about 8,500 working nodes across 12,000 kms of network links providing self service and low cost broadband access, including rural areas and people with risk of exclusion.

Gleducar - Argentina
NGO that promotes freedom in education and access to knowledge supporting Free Technologies and distributed networks

Hacktivistas - Spain
An open technology enthusiasts collective focusing on free culture, free society and privacy.

Internati0nal Association of IT Lawyers (IAITL) - Denmark
The International Association of IT Lawyers (IAITL) is an international association constituted primarily of lawyers and legal practitioners who have an interest in Information Technology law. The International Association of IT Lawyers seeks to promote study and research in Computer Law through international conferences, networking, publication of member

Knowledge Ecology International - International
Attending and mending the knowledge ecosystem

La Quadrature du Net - France
La Quadrature du Net is a citizen group informing about legislative projects menacing civil liberties as well as economic and social development in the digital age.

netzpolitik.org - Germany
netzpolitik.org is a blog and campaigning-plaatform for digital rights.

Open Rights Group - United Kingdom
The Open Rights Group exists to preserve and promote UK and EU citizens rights in the digital age.

Open Standards Alliance - Hungary
The Open Standards Alliance is a broad coalition of industry, public service, government, research organizations and private individuals focused on establishing fair and open markets predominantly in the Hungarian governmental and public service sectors.

Opendata Network - Germany
German based NGO to promote open access, open data, open government, transparency and participation.

OW2 Consortium - International
OW2 is an independent industry consortium dedicated to developing open source code infrastructure (middleware and generic applications) and to fostering a vibrant community and business ecosystem. OW2 federates more than one hundred organizations and 6000 IT Professionals in Europe, Asia and the Americas.

Public Knowledge - United States
Public Knowledge is a non-profit public interest organization devoted to protecting citizens' rights in the emerging digital information culture and focused on the intersection of intellectual property, and technology. Public Knowledge seeks to guard the rights of consumers, innovators, and creators at all layers of our culture through legislative, administrative, grass-roots efforts, and legal efforts, including regular participation in copyright cases that threaten consumers, trade, and innovation.

Scambio Etico - Italy
A grassroots movement to defend citizens' rights on the Internet, promote access to knowledge and preserve Net Neutrality.

The Julia Group (Juliagruppen) - Sweden
The Julia group is a non profit organisation working for a free and open internet.

The WeReBuild clusters - Europe
We Rebuild is a decentralized cluster of net activists who have joined forces to collaborate on issues concerning access to a free Internet without intrusive surveillance.

U.S. PIRG - USA
U.S. PIRG, the federation of state Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs), stands up to powerful special interests on behalf of the American public, working to win concrete results for our health and our well-being. With a strong network of researchers, advocates, organizers and students in state capitols across the country, we take on the special interests on issues, such as

product safety,political corruption, prescription drugs and voting rights,where these interests stand in the way of reform and progress.

This letter is also signed by:

AdmiNet City - Canada, Burkina Faso, France
Défense des droits civiques dans le domaine des technologies et de l'éducation, agissant par des blogs (Cawailleurs etc.) et de la formation (compétences numériques). Advocacy of civil rights in the filed of technology and education, acting through blogs (CawAilleurs etc.) and teaching (digital literacy). Logo : http://www.adminet.ca/logo_AdmiNet-City.png

AFUL - France
The french speaking libre software users' association (AFUL) is an association for the promotion of free software, free content, interoperability and open access.

Associazione scambio etico - Italia
associazione no profit per una libera diffusione culturale

Assoprovider - Italy
First Internet Service Provider (ISP) association in Italy with 200 members.

digitalrights.gr - Greece
digitalrights.gr is a Greek citizen initiative to provide information and support activism efforts about citizen rights online.

FACIL - Canada
FACIL is a not-for-profit organization which aims to promote Free Software in Québec. FACIL also organizes or participates to other events related to Free Software and open standards.

FAIFE - Finland
IFLA/FAIFE - International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions / Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression. FAIFE works to protect intellectual freedom and freedom of expression within library field.

FoAM - International
FoAM is committed to growing inclusive, resilient and abundant worlds by providing a context and a structure to research, design and reflect on transdisciplinary creative practices.

Föreningen fri kultur & programvara - Sweden
FFKP works in support of a society built on free exchange of knowledge, ideas and culture. The foundation works through collaboration and gathers in its yearly conference FSCONS experience and expertice from several different groups: Wikimedia, Creative Commons, Free Software Foundation Europe, and many more.

Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska - Poland
Modern Poland Foundation is a non-profit working in the field of Open Educational Resources and promoting idea of free and unrestricted access to knowledge. We run programs such as "Free Textbooks" (teachers write textbooks for schools in an open, participatory production model), "Free Readings" (innovative internet school library with public domain books served in a rich, inter-textual manner) and "Reading by listening" (audio-books of obligatory school readings read by professional actors). All software and content produced in a Foundation programs is released under one of the free licenses.

Gnutiken - Sweden
Gnutiken is an international free software cooperative, working to promote free software and related ideas such as transparency, openness and sustainability.

Isaac Hacksimov - Spain
Hacktivist collective

Nature Care - Thailand
We work mainly on environment preservation and community development

OpenOffice.org Español - Mexico
Free and Open source software development NGO that contribute to the development of open productivity applications across Spain and Latin America.

Ouvaton - France
Ouvaton ... is a web-hosting cooperative company. Each hosted is hostong. One man = one voice.

P2P Foundation - International
Research organisation in favour of peer production and social innovation

p2pnet.net - Canada
p2pnet.net went online in August, 2002. It was the first Internet web page to carry daily, frequently updated news, stories, features and commentaries on digital media, distributed computing and associated technologies and events which haven't been spun, filtered and pre-digested by vested corporate interests. It places special emphasis on freedom of speech.

Piratgruppen - Denmark
Piratgruppen started as an opposition to AntiPiratGruppen - The danish anti-piracy outfit. Piratgruppens activities range from supporting people who have been threatened with lawsuits by AntiPiratGruppen to advocating free file-sharing in the media, trying to create public debate on the question of copyright in the digital age.

Revolución con Letras - México
Un espacio para que artículos informativos y de opinión creados por y para los mexicanos ayuden en un futuro a personas necesitadas a través de la venta de una revista impresa.

SCIDERALLE - France
SCIDERALLE, association issue du projet AbulÉdu, soutient des projets visant à fournir à tout public des logiciels et ressources libres pour l'éducation populaire : logiciels, ressources et services d'intérêt collectif et d'utilité sociale.

Société française de l'Internet (SFI) - France
Dans le cadre du « dialogue entre tous les partenaires » défini par le Sommet Mondial sur la Société de l'Information (SMSI), la SFI a pour vocation d'être une interface active de la société civile dans les débats concernant le développement et la gouvernance de l'Internet. In the frame of the "multistakeholders dialogue" defined by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), SFI aims to play an interface part in the debates of civil society about Internet development and governance. Logo : http://www.refondation.org/logo_SFI.png

Tech Liberty NZ - New Zealand
Tech Liberty (NZ) is dedicated to protecting people's rights in the areas of the Internet and technology. We make submissions on public policy, help to educate people about their rights, and defend those whose rights are being infringed.

Telematics Freedom Foundation - Italy
The Telematics Freedom Foundation was set up to bring in the age of telematics, Internet, mobile phones and the web, all those freedoms and rights that the Free Software Movement has already brought to PC users worldwide. To achieve this purpose, we promote the consolidation and widespread adoption of models for development and deployment of telematic services which are under the full control of their users. We are also developing software for remote democratic organization, which will constitute a touchstone for the model of production, sharing and full control outlined by the idea of Telematics Freedom we are defending.

Utopia - France
Group of independant cinema theatres

Vrijschrift/Scriptum Libre - Netherlands
Vrijschrift/Scriptum Libre promotes cultural freedom and privacy.