

May 25, 2019



Beatriz Balbin  
Chief, Special Procedures Branch  
UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais des Nations  
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Google Inc.  
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Mountain View CA 94043  
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Dear Ms. Balbin,

I am writing in response to your recent letter. We welcome the opportunity to engage on this important issue.

Since our founding, Google has sought to develop services that significantly improve the lives of as many people as possible. We are committed to respecting the rights enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its implementing treaties, as well as upholding the standards established in the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and in the Global Network Initiative Principles.

Providing access to information to as many people as possible around the world is central to our mission. From our own experience, we also recognize the significant challenges inherent in certain markets. At times, in some countries where we have chosen to make our platforms available to users, we host apps that reflect local laws, viewpoints, or norms that Google doesn't endorse. We share many of the concerns you raised in your letter, especially regarding the legal system of male "guardianship" in Saudi Arabia and its effect on women's liberty and privacy.

We remain committed to promoting access to information as well as protecting the rights to freedom of expression and privacy for our users globally.

We would like to arrange a meeting to confidentially discuss the specific questions you raised in your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Walden".

Alexandria Walden  
Global Policy Lead for Human Rights & Free Expression

Hibah Kamal-Grayson  
Human Rights & Internet Governance

Google LLC

CC:

Surya Deva

Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises

Joseph Cannataci

Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy

Dubravka Šimonovic

Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences

Ivana Radačić

Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice