

## **Terms of Reference (ToR)**

Consultant for producing report on the use of technologies and personal data for purposes of surveillance and/ or other repressive and authoritarian practices in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region.

## **Background**

Privacy International (PI) has been exploring the trends in the use of technology in both authoritarian and democratic states and for authoritarian purposes around the world, and the human rights, privacy and data protection implications of these practices.

One area of concern is how states and state actors are utilising technologies to increasingly stifle dissent as well as democratic processes and values and undermine fundamental rights and freedoms, both in civil and military contexts, often leading to an escalation in state surveillance and monitoring of citizens both within and beyond state borders, which can be facilitated by policy and legislative frameworks, or lack thereof.

Some examples of the technologies in particular that we have so far observed being used to such ends include social media intelligence (SOCMINT), facial recognition and other biometric technologies, spyware, Mobile Phone Extraction (MPE) , communication surveillance such as bulk interception or IMSI catchers, automated decision-making software and aerial surveillance technologies. These technologies are invariably deployed by political and corporate actors often with no democratic accountability, no public debate and little to no involvement or scrutiny from civil society.

This work is part of a broader programme of work within PI aimed at resisting authoritarian technology, and striving to ensure that technology is used as a tool for empowerment and the realisation of fundamental rights, rather than weaponised in order to undermine these rights as well as democratic processes and values.

## **Purpose of the Consultancy**

The aim of the research is to build up on the work PI has been doing on this topic to provide further in-depth case-studies on the authoritarian use of technology in the GCC region, with a particular focus on the following states: Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Kuwait and to document the major emerging trends in the use of particular types of technologies or data driven practices in the region that risk, or are, infringing upon human rights, as well as laying out the main ways in which the rights of individuals and specific groups (e.g. human rights defenders and activists, political opposition figures, lawyers, journalists, protestors, migrant and refugee communities, minorities) are being impacted as a result, with a particular focus on the right to privacy.

The consultant will have an understanding of the GCC region in a human rights and political context, as well as fluent or native knowledge of the Arabic language, including Gulf dialects. They will have a background in research, law/policy, or academia and have a demonstrable ability to collect, interpret, and summarise law and policy from a wide variety of sources, and present evidence-based case-studies.

The consultant will also:

- ensure that only clearly lawful methods of research are used;
- provide documentation and/or references to support your analyses which can be verified by PI; and
- ensure that any information obtained from fee-based online databases is done so in line with the database's terms of service.

### **Specific Tasks to be Performed by the Consultant**

- i) Research and document case-studies on the use of specific technologies and personal data for surveillance and/or other repressive practices, as well as how policies and legislation govern this use, by three or more countries in the GCC.
- ii) Document, as relevant, the companies involved in the provision of such technologies.
- iii) Map the key emerging trends of technology use in the GCC.

### **Outputs, Timelines, and Remuneration**

This report which is to be based on primary and secondary research and analysis are to be delivered by 30 September 2024 (at the latest) as per a schedule of deliverables to be agreed between PI and the selected consultant. All the data and evidence mentioned in the memos should be free to publicly use without constraints.

The consultancy shall last a total of 5 days. Remuneration is £250 per day, and the total fee to be awarded shall not exceed £1250.

***Please send your proposal outline and CV to: [recruitment\[at\]privacyinternational\[dot\]org](mailto:recruitment@privacyinternational.org) by 1800 BST 31 July 2024. To see how we handle your data see [here](#).***