



September 28, 2022

To: Amazon, Apple, Google, Microsoft and Digital Ocean:

On behalf of the National Iranian American Council and all members of our community who are concerned by the Iranian government's ongoing human rights abuses and internet shutdowns against protesters in Iran, we write to encourage your companies to restore services for Iranians that may have been unavailable due to sanctions compliance but which have now been authorized to proceed thanks to new sanctions licensing issued by the Biden administration.

The Iranian people, led by the nation's women, have sustained weeks-long countrywide protests following the killing of 22 year-old Mahsa (Jhina) Amini by the nation's so-called "morality police." They are demanding an end to mandatory hijab, government repression and the systems that uphold them. The Iranian government has responded brutally with violence, mass arrests and internet shutdowns.

The quicker your companies move to re-enter and expand internet services for the Iranian people, the faster they will have new tools for free and safe communication. As companies committed to connecting populations around the globe and dedicated to upholding principles of free expression and human rights, we expect that you will move quickly and clarify any existing questions with the US Government to facilitate an expansion of services available to Iranians, including cloud technology.

General License D-2 was published on September 23, 2022, replacing prior licensing from 2014. Amid the escalation of sanctions under the Trump administration, many firms began to restrict services to Iranians, including restricting cloud technology that is vital for Iranians to run anti-surveillance technology like virtual private networks (VPNs). The publication of new licensing by the Biden administration should allow a significant expansion of the services available to Iranian citizens, thanks to an elimination of ambiguities and a clarification of the scope of US exemptions from sanctions.

We encourage you to work with your compliance teams to take advantage of General License D-2 and authorize an immediate expansion of services for the Iranian people. If there are any uncertainties, we encourage you to contact the State Department and Treasury Department for clarification or to seek an expedited license. The National Iranian American Council also offers our assistance, whether by providing information regarding the situation and needs of Iranians seeking to communicate freely or by disseminating any relevant information to our communities. The Biden administration has indicated that they intend to be proactive in encouraging tech firms



like your own to resume services for Iranians. Iranians on the ground and allies across the world are hopeful that you will follow suit.

Time is of the essence and we strongly encourage you to take advantage of new licensing in General License D-2. The faster you move, the quicker Iranians will have new and vital tools available as they demonstrate for justice, dignity and basic rights. Please act without delay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jamal Abdi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a distinct "Abdi" at the end.

Jamal Abdi  
President, National Iranian American Council