

Grußwort von Edward Snowden an die „Rechtsanwälte gegen Totalüberwachung“

Lawyers have a special understanding of the importance of confidential communications. Discussions between lawyers and their clients are privileged. This is a cornerstone of the profession and of any modern legal system.

The reason for this is that an individual could not seek or receive honest and effective legal advice without a binding assurance that the communication would be seen only by lawyer and client. Clients trust lawyers with sensitive information that they rightfully expect will be shared with no one – in some cases, they may trust lawyers with their lives.

In the past, securing this communication may have meant locking file cabinets and not discussing legal matters outside of the office. Today, lawyers are on notice that they must do more to protect their communications.

In this new and challenging environment of governments collecting our personal information en masse, communications between attorneys and clients are vulnerable.

Lawyers have an ethical and professional responsibility to push back.

Lawyers must encrypt.

We need new professional training and new professional standards to make sure that we have mechanisms to ensure that the average member of our society can have a reasonable measure of faith in the skills of all lawyers.

Beyond protecting themselves and their clients, lawyers must join the broader political discussion and become advocates against mass surveillance. Lawyers have a unique ability – and responsibility – to explain why communication without fear of government collection is critical to their work, their clients, and our society.