

WikiLeaks exposés a "wake-up call for powerful regimes" APC

JOHANNESBURG: The WikiLeaks Cablegate affair is making it clear to governments that they cannot so easily control what is secret and what is not, said Anriette Esterhuysen, executive director of the Association for Progressive Communication (APC).



If governments respond rationally, they will realise that it is cumbersome and expensive to keep information secret in a connected networked world and that they should only incur this expense when really necessary, she continued.

Exposing lack of evidence for war

Esterhuysen pointed to the so-called evidence on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. When government documentation was released in WikiLeaks, it was exposed that the UK and the US did not have substantive evidence of such weapons. Yet both governments had implied in information released to the public that they had evidence, and used it to justify going to war.

"We citizens need both carrot and stick approaches in demanding and enforcing accountability and transparency from our governments. WikiLeaks is a useful stick," said Esterhuysen.

How the WikiLeaks scandal will pan out is still unclear, but the state of affairs "is a healthy development and a useful wake-up call for powerful regimes," she added.

The APC released a [report on WikiLeaks](#) on 7 December 2010.