

Egypt bans international Internet voice calls

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An Egyptian man tries to access a website at an Internet cafe in Cairo. Egypt has banned international calls made through mobile Internet connections, one of Egypt's top three mobile phone operators said on Tuesday, which would include internet Skype calls.

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"The National Telecom Regulatory Authority issued a decision to stop VoIP ([Voice over Internet Protocol](#)) and we stopped it on Saturday," Vodafone Egypt's external affairs director Khaled Hegazy told AFP.

The ban applies to Egypt's three mobile operators, Vodafone, Mobinil and Etisalat.

Egyptian law states that all [international calls](#) must pass through state-owned Egypt Telecom, which recorded lower than expected earnings in 2009.

The ban has not been extended to international voice calls made over fixed-line Internet, such as through DSL.

[Skype](#) and other providers offering VoIP services bypass standard telephone networks by channeling voice and video calls over the Internet, allowing users to make calls free of charge.

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