

Internet has no 'off switch', says web inventor

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Tim Berners-Lee, the British inventor of the World Wide Web, pictured in April 2012, warned governments that attempts to block the Internet were doomed to failure due to its scattered structure.

Tim Berners-Lee, the British inventor of the World Wide Web, on Wednesday warned governments that attempts to block the Internet were doomed to failure due to its scattered structure.

Speaking at the launch of a league table showing which [countries](#) use the web most effectively, Berners-Lee said the lack of a global internet "off-switch" meant authoritarian regimes could not stem the influx of [digital information](#).

"The way the Internet is designed is very much as a decentralised system," he explained at the London launch.

"At the moment, because countries connect to each other in lots of different ways, there is no one off switch, there is no central place where you can turn it off.

"In order to be able to turn the whole thing off or really block, suppress one particular idea then the countries and governments would have to get together and agree and co-ordinate and turn it from a decentralised system to being a centralised system.

"And if that does happen it is really important that everybody fights against that sort of direction."

Sweden came out on top of the global league table, which was calculated by the World Wide Web Foundation using indicators such as the political, economic and [social impact](#) of the web, connectivity and use.

The US came in second, ahead of Britain, Canada and Finland. France came in at 14th place. Yemen ranked bottom, closely followed by Zimbabwe, [Burkina Faso](#) and Benin.

Berners-Lee, who was honoured during the [London Olympics](#) opening ceremony, launched the first web page on Christmas Day 1990.

He is credited with creating the World Wide Web, which enables users to store and access information via the internet.

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