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Cambridge Activists Train International Civil Rights Defenders in Sweden

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**Demonstrating NSA Internet Surveillance
Techniques, Cambridge Human Rights Activists
Train Civil Rights Defenders in Stockholm**

Posted by [Sarah Cortes](#) on Apr 8, 2014.

NeighborMedia

by @SarahCortes-121 human rights defenders from some of the world's most repressive societies came together this weekend in Stockholm, Sweden to share their stories and participate in training. Cambridge internet freedom advocates trained these international democracy activists at the [Civil Rights Defenders Conference](#) in Sweden's capital. The Swedish NGO [Civil Rights Defenders](#) supports activists in countries around the world. CRD brought representatives from 31 countries for training from legal, security and technology specialists. Andrew Lewman from Cambridge-based [Tor](#) provided training in internet and digital security to help activists who may be under surveillance from governments whose policies and activities they protest.

Defenders from activist groups representing repression based on race, gender, ethnicity, or opposition to government policies spent five days by the Swedish waterfront learning techniques governments use to target activists for surveillance. "Activists may not realize the extent to which their governments may monitor their computers, cellphones and other devices," said Lewman. "Learning to improve digital security may save their life, in some cases," he observed. CRD started another technology endeavor, which they call the Natalia Project, in memory of [Natalia Estemirova](#). Natalia was a Russian activist

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in Chechnya who was murdered in 2009 for her work on behalf of human rights. In Natalia's case, witnesses observed her abduction on July 15, 2009 outside her home, in broad daylight at 8:30am. Colleagues immediately went to her home when she failed to show up for a meeting and learned of the abduction. Despite rapid reaction, Natalia's body was found a few hours later dumped in a nearby park. Her murder had been foreshadowed by the murders of her colleagues, investigative journalist Anna Politkovskaya in 2006 and human rights lawyer Stanislav Markelov a few months earlier in 2009. It is believed by those familiar with the case that the Russian government committed the murders to silence the advocates. "When Natasha dared to speak disapprovingly that girls are almost forced to wear headscarves in public places, she had a conversation with [Chechnya President] Kadyrov [who is accused by activists of her murder]...she said that Kadyrov threatened her...Those who killed Natasha Estemirova, wanted to stop the flow of truthful information from Chechnya," according to the Russian [Memorial Human Rights Center](#).

Although the Natalia bracelet might not have helped Natalia Estemirova, the GPS technology on which it is based may help other civil rights defenders in the future," stated Lewman.

Natalia Estemirova conducted her activism publicly and was aware that Russian government agents monitored her activity. "Not everyone in every country is aware of the level of surveillance possible by the government," said Lewman, who demonstrated how the internet works and how governments can conduct censorship and surveillance, for activists attending the conference. "Hopefully we can help activists keep themselves safer by showing them how to better use digital tools and the internet."

Science & Technology

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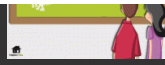
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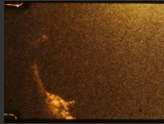
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