

**COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR  
DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)**

**Eighteenth Session  
Geneva, 4 to 8 May 2015**

**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system and elsewhere on  
their efforts in 2014 to implement the outcome of the WSIS**

**Submission by**

**Internet Governance Forum (IGF)**

**This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the UN Secretary-General on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (to the 18<sup>th</sup> session of the CSTD), in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2006/46, to the UN Secretary-General to inform the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS as part of his annual reporting to the Commission.**

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UNITED NATIONS

NATIONS UNIES

**Report on the Implementation of the Outcomes of  
the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)**

**Internet Governance Forum (IGF)**

**I. Executive summary**

Since its first annual meeting in 2006, the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) has provided a unique multistakeholder platform for discussions on public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance, in order to foster the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet. The IGF has held nine (9) highly successful annual meetings, bringing together thousands of thought-leaders in the Internet governance field, from all stakeholder groups, including governments, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, Internet technical community, civil society and academia. The IGF works year-round consulting these stakeholders, conducting outreach and carrying out important capacity building activities. More than 30 national and regional IGF initiatives have also been established around the world with a focus on issues that are mostly relevant at national and regional level, allowing multistakeholder Internet governance discussions to take place year round.

The IGF has embodied the multistakeholder model for Internet governance, responding to the Tunis Agenda. The continuing growth of the Internet, across all technology platforms, has reinforced the need for open policy dialogue that brings all stakeholders together on an equal footing. It is this kind of dialogue that gives strength to the IGF and consolidates its relation with the various other Internet governance institutions and processes, not only by bringing their representatives together at the same discussion table, but, more importantly, through picking up from these discussions and feeding them into decision making processes that are shaping the future of the Internet.

**II. Analytical overview**

The ninth Internet Governance Forum (IGF) took place from 2 to 5 September 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey. More than 2000 onsite participants from all continents representing different stakeholder groups (governments, intergovernmental organizations, private sector, civil society and technical community) participated in this annual international gathering exclusively devoted to Internet governance. More than a thousand more stakeholders participated remotely through a global network of remote hubs. As well as onsite participation and remote participation, social networking platforms such as Flickr, Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr were widely used by participants.

With the IGF having been created as one of the major outcomes of the WSIS process, all of the work of the IGF Secretariat strives to ensure that the Forum facilitates the implementation

of the agreed action lines.

**- C1: The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development; C2: Information and communication infrastructure; C3: Access to information and knowledge**

Throughout 2014, public governance authorities continued to use the IGF platform to engage with one another and all stakeholders in discussions on how to best promote the use of ICTs, in general, and the Internet, in particular, in development activities.

Three of the eight sub-themes agreed for the ninth annual IGF were related to: “policies enabling access”, “Internet as an engine for growth and development” and “content creation, dissemination and used”. These issues were discussed by the various stakeholders within multiple IGF sessions. For example, participants in the main session on “Policies enabling access, growth and development on the Internet” (among which governmental representatives from developed and developing countries, officials from intergovernmental organizations such as the ITU and UNESCO and representatives of private entities and civil society organizations) discussed about means to facilitate the connection of the next five billion currently without access. In line with the IGF’s mandate to “advise all stakeholders in proposing ways and means to accelerate the availability and affordability of the Internet in the developing world”, the participants in this session made a strong call to increase the emphasis and inclusion of ICTs and Internet access in the post-2015 development agenda of the UN, as a catalyst for economic growth. Another issue highlighted during the session was that broadband access should be considered as a universal right and key to digital social inclusion. Other sessions had discussions on possible actions that could be undertaken by public authorities in order to expand affordable Internet access and to address existing challenges. Recommendations were also made on the need for stakeholders to develop policy guidelines, best practices and case studies for successful deployment of Internet infrastructure and promotion of Internet use.

**- C4: Capacity building**

One of the items included in the IGF mandate is to “contribute to capacity building for Internet governance in developing countries, drawing fully on local sources of knowledge and expertise”. In fulfilling this mandate, the IGF contributes to capacity building efforts in a number of ways. On one hand, the annual meetings of the forum include sessions dedicated to discussions on means of developing and promoting programmes addressed at empowering people to take part in the information society and to fully benefit from it. On the other hand, the IGF engages stakeholders, including those from developing countries, in debates on Internet governance issues, thus allowing them to build the knowledge and skills meant to facilitate their participation in other existing Internet governance institutions and arrangements.

The schedule of the ninth IGF meeting, intended to make the IGF a ‘one-stop-shop’ on Internet governance issues, included a comprehensive capacity building track, aimed at those participants who wanted to learn more on specific Internet governance issues. A capacity building round table was also held during the meeting, gathering individuals and organizations engaged in capacity building initiatives, in order to discuss about such initiatives and ways to further strengthen them.

The IGF 2014 programme also included five best practice forums aimed at discussing, in a multistakeholders environment, some of the best practices that have been adopted with regard to key IGF themes, in general, and to the development and deployment of the Internet, in particular. The following areas were identified as themes for the five best practice forums:

- Developing meaningful multistakeholder mechanisms
- Regulation and mitigation of unsolicited communications (e.g. spam)
- Establishing and supporting Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRT) for Internet security
- Creating an enabling environment for the development of local content
- Online child protection

Drawing together the knowledge, wisdom and expertise of stakeholders, these forums provided a space for sharing relevant information and experiences around best practices and produced outcome documents for the use of all stakeholders, thus strengthening the IGF capacity building activities.

Throughout 2014, the IGF continued to support national and regional IGF initiatives, which contribute to strengthening the capacity of stakeholders to participate effectively in Internet governance arrangements, at national, regional and global level.

#### **- C11: International and regional cooperation**

Enhancing international and regional cooperation on Internet governance is also a primary goal of the IGF community. In 2014, the IGF continued its interaction and communication with Internet governance related entities, encouraging them to participate in and contribute to the IGF process and sharing information with them about the IGF outcome documentation. The Forum also carried forward its efforts to promote and enhance linkages with the increasing number of national and regional IGF initiatives, through maintaining a yearlong communication with them and through providing them with opportunities to actively engage and feed into the IGF annual meeting. As an example, the already traditional Inter-regional Dialogue Session was held during IGF 2014 and it focused on identifying commonalities and differences in the issues being discussed within the national and regional initiatives and on examining ideas and perspectives for how these initiatives can further collaborate with, and influence the global IGF, while contributing to the Forum going forward.

A number of trends and experiences demonstrating increasing international and regional cooperation on key Internet governance issues were featured during the four days of Internet public policy debates at the 2014 Internet Governance Forum. A main session on the sensitive issue of network neutrality was held, with the aim of fostering a common understanding of this complex issue; recommendations were made on how the debate on network neutrality can be taken forward and it was indicated that next year's IGF is expected to feature a more developed discussion. Organizers from a selection of the almost fifty workshops at IGF 2014 that focused – directly or indirectly – on human rights issues met for a roundtable and endorsed a message document to be brought to the Human Rights Council Panel on Privacy in the Digital Age, which was held in September 2014, after the IGF.

Many participants at the IGF emphasized that there is a need for increased interaction between government entities and all other interested stakeholders in ongoing and future deliberations on enhancing trust in cyberspace. Youth representatives emphasized the need to strengthen existing mechanisms that empower youth in attending and engaging in the Internet governance ecosystem.

The African Declaration on Internet Rights and Freedoms - a pan-African initiative to promote human rights standards and openness principles in Internet policy making on the continent - was launched at the IGF 2014. The International Telecommunication Union and the United Nations Children's Fund took advantage of the wide participation of stakeholders in the IGF meeting and released an updated version of their Guidelines for Industry on Child Online Protection. And, finally, a multistakeholder group of participants drafted a statement to send to the United Nations (UN) to request a renewal of the IGF mandate and a longer cycle for each mandate given to the IGF.

### **III. Brief description of innovative policies, programmes and projects, plus future actions with regard to issues raised in part II**

Increasing the participation of stakeholders from developing countries in the IGF process and, as a consequence, in the various policy-making fora and discussions on Internet governance issues is one of the priorities of the IGF Secretariat in 2015. Given the complimentary role of Internet in delivering basic education, health and public administration services, considerable efforts will be made to strengthen capacity building for the IGF community through increasing participation of developing countries in the entire IGF process including inter-sessional work, the preparatory processes and consultations, the 2015 IGF and national and regional IGF events.

Looking forward, 2015, the last year of the second five-year mandate of the IGF, will certainly be a busy one. IGF Open Consultations and MAG meetings will make pivotal forward-looking decisions in programming the tenth IGF, which is scheduled to take place in Brazil in November 2015.

Inter-sessional work leading up to the Brazil meeting is also envisioned, as suggested by the chair of the ninth IGF: "Based upon the wide ranging and forward looking discussions that took place throughout the week, the Chair invites the IGF MAG, in consultation with the entire community, to consider and discuss some issues at their earliest convenience that could be taken forward through inter-sessional work leading up to IGF 2015 in Brazil. The chair asks the community to consider concentrating inter-sessional activities around themes of a developmental nature. Using best practice forums or other modalities, such inter-sessional work could be brought forward through the national and regional IGF initiatives; the dynamic coalitions and other ad-hoc working groups within the IGF structure."

