COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)

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Submissions from entities in the United Nations system and elsewhere on their efforts in 2017 to implement the outcome of the WSIS

Submission by

Internet Governance Forum

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 21st 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.

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

2017 Input from the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

I. Executive Summary

The 12th IGF was held from 18 to 21 December 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting marked the second gathering of the global multistakeholder IGF community since the renewal of the IGF's mandate for 10 years by the UN General Assembly[1]. Under the overarching theme: '*Shape Your Digital Future!*', the IGF provided a platform for engaged and informed discussions about policy issues pertaining to the Internet, and in particular the future of the Internet, in light of new and rapidly developing technologies and a number of policy challenges that emerged over the course of 2017.

During the four-day meeting, more than 2000 delegates from 142 countries[2] participated in over 200 sessions at the IGF, with thousands more participating online. The overall programme was developed in a bottom-up and inclusive manner in consultation with the growing IGF community and with a view to enhancing wide-ranging and diverse multistakeholder participation. The busy and productive meeting featured interactive dialogue and debate, and addressed a broad range of themes and issues including, but not limited to, the Internet and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); access and diversity; the digital transformation and its socio-economic and labour impacts; youth and gender issues pertaining to the Internet; the protection and promotion of human rights online; cybersecurity; intended and unintended global impacts of local interventions; the need to enhance multistakeholder cooperation; critical Internet resources; Internet governance capacity-building; and other issues that enhance and affect the Internet. Of note this year were 'New Technologies and Emerging Issues', the most popular subtheme in the programme gathering all sessions related to Artificial Intelligence, the 'Internet of Things', big data, blockchain technologies, virtual reality and 'Fakenews'.

The IGF is unique in the sense that it is convened by the United Nations Secretary General to be an open, multistakeholder forum bringing together all stakeholders as equals. Its UN mandate gives it convening power and the authority to serve as a neutral space for all stakeholders. Exchanges throughout the week recognized the important contribution the Internet makes in promoting social inclusion and economic growth, as well as recognized the need to protect rights online as fundamental human rights. The use of transparent and inclusive multistakeholder

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[1] http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/125
[2] https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-2017-attendance-programme-statistics

approaches continued to be critical for identifying, discussing and proposing solutions around complex digital policy issues.

With emphasis on improving working modalities, the IGF's preparatory and intersessional activities this past year have been guided by its 10-year mandate, calling for the IGF to 'continue to show *progress on working modalities* and the participation of relevant stakeholders from developing countries' and by the recommendations of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) Working Group on Improvements to the IGF[3].

Part 2: Analytical overview

The IGF has strived to build on the significant progress it has made since 2012 on fulfilling the recommendations of the CSTD Working Group on Improvements to the IGF. These are namely, increasing and improving both the tangible outcomes and the overall visibility of the IGF; the working modalities of the IGF, including open consultations, the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) and the Secretariat; the funding of the IGF; broadening participation and capacity-building; and linking the IGF to other Internet governance related entities. Created as one of the major outcomes of the WSIS process, all of the work of the IGF Secretariat aims to ensure that the IGF facilitates implementation of all the agreed action lines, including, but not limited to; C1: The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development; C4: Capacity building and C11: International and regional cooperation.

Thanks in part to a 'Digital Geneva' track within the IGF programme, which highlighted open forums organized by international and intergovernmental bodies based in Geneva, 2017 was a record-breaking year in terms of engagement in the IGF by both IGOs and Governments. Underscoring the rapidly growing relevance of digital issues in diverse policy fields and mandates, including humanitarian and environmental mandates, more than twenty different IGOs, including a number of UN System bodies, participated in the IGF through 'Digital Geneva' sessions, workshops, Day 0 sessions and side events. Among these were UN Global Pulse, the UN SDG Lab, UN Women, UNICEF, OHCHR, UNCTAD, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the International Trade Centre, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the African Union, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, European Parliament, the OECD, and the Organization of American States (OAS).

The participation of Governments and policymakers, both as attendees and organizers of sessions, increased once again in 2017, with Government delegations from almost one hundred different countries registered. This year also saw the most number of sessions organized by Governments, some of which for the first time and included Afghanistan, Brazil, Cameroon,

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[3] http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/a67d65_en.pdf

China, Cuba, Egypt, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Latvia, Lebanon, Mexico, the Netherlands, Paraguay and the United States.

As part of the collective effort to enhance the outcome-orientation of the IGF, the IGF 2017 Host Country, in cooperation with the IGF Secretariat, the MAG Chair and the co-organizers of IGF main sessions, delivered sets of key messages called 'Geneva Messages' from each of the main sessions, which were published online in real time and provided succinct takeaways on some of the IGF's major themes.

Capacity Building

To maximize capacity building and to promote extensive stakeholder inclusion, transcripts and webcasts from all of the sessions were made instantly available throughout the meeting. Workshop reports and summaries of the more than 200 sessions held throughout the week-long meeting will also be published on the IGF's website. To complement these outputs, the Geneva Internet Platform[4] published once more its detailed and coherent reporting from all sessions, which has proven especially useful for first-time participants given the IGF's large and varied programme.

Providing even further opportunity to participate and enhance institutional memory of the dialogue that took place, all sessions were live streamed, and session videos were instantly uploaded for online viewing. Both the IGF's and UN Office at Geneva (UNOG)'s social media channels such as Twitter #IGF2017 and Facebook were also particularly active during the busy week, and facilitated additional platforms for dialogue. Several official UN press releases were produced over the course of the meeting in English and French and were made instantly available to the media. These helped to extend the IGF's impact beyond the annual meeting to those hoping to learn more about digital policy issues, particularly in developing countries. In order to strengthen media engagement and make more content from the IGF available to the general public, for the first time in 2017 daily press conferences with high-level IGF participants were organized for accredited media outlets.

Trends and experiences on main theme(s) of WSIS outcomes:

The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Houlin Zhao, emphasized in his opening remarks at the IGF that 'ICTs have transformed people's live around the world, and they have a critical role to play in helping to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. The 12th IGF saw delegates recommit themselves to policy processes and proposals that channel the immense potential of the Internet for achieving the SDGs. Among the discussions to take place in this context were those on e-commerce for development, digital literacy and cyber capacity building, and governance as applied to the gig or sharing economies.

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[4] https://dig.watch/events/12th-internet-governance-forum

Many sessions were organized around digital trade, including within international and regional trade agreements. Participants acknowledged closer transnational cooperation would be needed to ensure these are equitable and in line with the principles and spirit of the Sustainable Development Agenda. Big data for the SDGs was also a recurring theme, with a special session on 'Data for Sustainable Development Roadmaps' outlining how data helps experts to weigh the feasibility of goals, provides clarity on the nature of the problem and facilitates statistic-based supervision and evaluation of development progress. It further focused on policy initiatives in relation to data production, sharing and use, as well as the enabling environment to ensure data quality, interoperability, security and protection.

Cybersecurity was once again a notable and highly visible topic at the 12th IGF. The many related sessions from Day 0 onward focused in particular, on cybersecurity capacity-building, including in the context of the SDGs; exploring enhanced and more effective avenues for cooperation; and on preliminary steps for developing cybersecurity norms. Cybersecurity also saw a growing intersectionality, especially with Internet of Things-related issues. The recent 'Call to Protect the Public Core of the Internet' by the Global Commission on the Stability of Cyber Space was cited at different security-related sessions throughout the IGF. In addition, several sessions moved forward discussions on a proposal from Microsoft for a 'Digital Geneva Convention' on cybersecurity. The proposal aims to address the need for "new rules to protect and defend civilians against nation-sponsored attacks".

The IGF continues to be an important platform for the discussion of digital rights issues, whose distinction with human rights offline is increasingly blurring. The 2017 programme featured diverse issues such as privacy, data protection and blocking. This year also saw a specific focus on freedom of expression in relation to the predominance of 'fake news'. A vibrant digital rights session organized by National and Regional Initiatives emphasized the importance of access as a precondition to enjoying rights online and the equivalence of fundamental human rights with digital rights.

Balancing the benefits and tremendous development opportunities with the challenges presented by new technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things, was a predominant theme of the 2017 IGF. Security and interoperability remain fundamental aims in the evolution of the Internet of Things, while approaches to Artificial Intelligence must take into account labour impacts and emerging phenomena like 'fakenews' or new online disinformation. Many participants underlined the essential role of the IGF in fostering the necessary cooperation and partnerships across sectors for undertaking these issues.

II. Part 3: Brief description of innovative policies, programmes and projects, plus future actions with regard to issues raised in part 2.

One tangible way for the IGF to enhance and increase the participation of developing countries is through the National, Regional and Youth IGFs (NRIs) which have been emerging spontaneously ever since the IGF was convened in 2006. They are independent in their work, and organized in accordance with the core IGF principles of being multistakeholder, bottom-up, inclusive, open, transparent and non-commercial. Since the 10th IGF, the number of NRIs has

grown tremendously and the total number of officially recognized initiatives has more than doubled from 43 NRIs at the end of 2015 to a current record of 97 recognized NRIs. The NRIs are active and immensely useful contributors to the IGF community's intersessional activities. The linkages between the NRIs and the IGF have increased significantly, due to many joint work activities such as the organization of sessions held during the 11th and now 12th IGF; work on organizing collaborative sessions; developing publications containing guidelines and best practices on how to establish and run a successful NRI; as well as a publication that reflects the value of existing Youth engagement at the IGF supported by the NRIs. Records from the NRIs regular fortnightly meetings also serve as valuable and tangible inputs to the global IGF; providing more local and issue -perspectives to policy challenges.

In the resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 24 August 2017 [on the recommendation of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (E/2016/21)][5], member states welcomed the continuous progress made with regard to the intersessional work of the Internet Governance Forum in the different modalities of connecting and enabling the next billion online, dynamic coalitions and best practice forums, as well as the contributions being made by both national and regional Internet governance forums.

In 2017, the IGF furthered its work on Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion(s). This year, the intersessional initiative aimed at supplementing the recommendations made in Phase I and II with concrete case studies to highlight how projects on the ground help to make progress in key sustainable development goals. CENB Phase II focused on three SDGs: Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning; Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; and Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. Meanwhile, the policy recommendations that came out of the CENB Phase I and II served as a starting point for this year's Best Practice Forum on Cybersecurity.

The IGF's Best Practice Forums (BPFs) continue to offer unique platforms to investigate topical Internet policy challenges by collecting community input and experiences in a flexible and bottom-up manner. The BPFs gather knowledge that exist with different groups, organizations, experts and individuals, made available as a useful resource for the broader community in the form of tangible Best Practice outcome documents. The BPF processes create temporary platforms for people to discuss, interact and collaborate on one specific Internet governance issue. They foster interaction between existing stakeholders and stakeholder groups and community members from all geographic regions.

Through their substantive outreach efforts and continued calls for input and contributions, the BPFs enabled more diverse and varied participation in IGF processes, including from a richer variety of regions and stakeholder groups. By continuously involving new people in their work, the various BPFs also contributed to enlarging the global footprint of the IGF. As a part of the 2017 community intersessional activities, the fourth cycle of BPFs focused on Cybersecurity,

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[5] http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/RES/2017/21

Gender and Access, and Local Content. BPFs worked throughout the year in an open and inclusive way via open mailing lists, regular virtual meetings and BPF workshops during the 12th IGF meeting.

Extending and developing on a process which began in 2015 with their first-ever main session at the IGF, IGF Dynamic Coalitions coordinated their efforts throughout 2017 leading up to the annual meeting. Through their regular monthly virtual meetings and adoption of common work standards (open archives, open membership, open mailing lists), their activities have become more synchronized, all while coalitions continue to work independently as multistakeholder expert discussion groups on a variety of topics. A majority of DCs presented substantive issue-specific papers to the IGF Community for review and comment before, during and after the 12th IGF. This substantive work also culminated in a multi-themed and engaging main session, following up coalitions' joint main sessions held in 2016 and 2015. As with other parts of the IGF Community, DCs are growing steadily, with two new coalitions in 2017 and three more proposed for early 2018.

Some specific efforts undertaken to improve working modalities included:

In order to help orient first-time participants to the IGF and to help them understand the organizational processes, as well as to foster their integration into the IGF community, a set of continuous activities throughout the 2017 programme was developed under the Youth and Newcomers Track by the MAG and the IGF Secretariat.

During the IGF workshop proposal process, proposers were invited to define their workshops with thematic tags, including write-in tags of their own choosing. As part of an approach to structuring the programme in a bottom-up way, the most popular tags were used to determine the programme of the 2017 meeting. Cybersecurity emerged as the most popular standalone tag. The Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence and 'Fake news' were also frequently used.

As an ongoing initiative of the MAG Working Group on New Session Formats (WG-NSF), and with support from the Secretariat, 24 lightning sessions were selected for open-air talks after being successfully introduced as new session formats last year. Taking place in a 'boundary-less' space in the IGF Village, the 20-minute talks allowed presenters to have up-close and informal engagement with the participants. They were held every day of the meeting during lunch breaks and covered a wide variety of topics, among which algorithms, data transparency, smart cities and community networks.

Important for the IGF's longer-term efforts to improve its processes will be two new MAG Working Groups which have been active intersessionally and were established in early 2017: the MAG Working Group on a Multi-year Strategic Work Programme (WG-MWP) and the MAG Working Group on IGF Improvements (WG-IMP). Critically, the former aims to deliver a multi-year 'living programme' for the IGF, covering expected major areas of work as well as the IGF's community intersessional activities, and including the related support requirements and expectations.