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Submissions from entities in the United Nations system and elsewhere on their efforts in 2010 to implement the outcome of the WSIS

Submission by

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 14th 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.

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

Annual Report 2010

Prepared by the IGF Secretariat

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Introduction

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) ended the first five years of its original mandate with its annual meeting held in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 14-17 September.

The meeting was generally praised for further improvements made in the IGF format. Among these improvements, the following elements were highlighted: stronger linkages between workshops and main sessions, with specifically designated 'feeder workshops' that informed the main sessions; a better involvement of children and young people; a stronger participation of parliamentarians, with a special roundtable for a discussion of parliamentarians with other stakeholders as well as an improved integration of national and regional IGF type initiatives.

National and regional IGF initiatives

The spread of national and regional IGF initiatives was found by many to be the most important legacy of the first five years of the IGF in Europe, East and West Afrca, Latin America, the Caribbean, and, in 2010 for the first time in Hong Kong for the Asia-Pacific Region and in the Russian Federation. In addition, other national IGF type meetings were held in Eastern and Western Europe, in East Africa and the US. The holding of regional and national IGF type meetings has contributed to promoting the open and inclusive multistakeholder approach as a new form of a participatory democratic process.

Many commentators felt that the national and regional IGF type initiatives had fostered a dialogue between all stakeholders, government, parliamentarians, private sector, civil society and the technical community. This had changed the nature of Internet governance in those countries and had led to moves toward cooperative models of regulation.

In the Vilnius meeting, more space was given to these initiatives to present themselves and to give their input into the major agenda items. A roundtable gave the organizers of these initiatives the opportunity to discuss among themselves on how best to improve the linkages with the global IGF. While there was a general agreement that there was merit in this kind of exchange of views and experiences, there was also a feeling that there was no 'one size fits all' approach and that each country and each region had their own priorities and specificities and that, therefore, they should be allowed to develop at their own pace, finding their own format best suited to their needs.

The preparatory process

As in previous years, the annual IGF meeting was prepared in a broad-based consultative process, based on the 'lessons learned' from the previous meeting.

After the fourth annual IGF meeting, held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, on 15-18 November 2009, the Secretariat issued a call for contributions on the IGF Web site to give an opportunity for stakeholders to give feedback on the meeting and make suggestions on what could be improved for the next meeting in Vilnius, Lithuania.

As in previous years, the IGF programme and meeting were prepared through a series of open, multi-stakeholder consultations held throughout 2010 and meetings of the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) held in conjunction with the open consultations. These meetings took place in Geneva on 9-11 February and 10-12 May 2010. A planning meeting open to all interested stakeholder was held on 28-29 June 2010, also in Geneva,

to finalize the Vilnius programme.

The discussions held in the open consultations are available verbatim on the IGF Web site while the proceedings of the MAG meetings were made available in the form of summary reports, also on the IGF Web site[1] and their email exchanges are posted in form of anonymized digests[2].

The official invitation to attend the Fifth IGF Meeting in Vilnius was issued by Under-Secretary-General Sha Zukang on 22 July 2010.

The programme was developed in form of a rolling document, prepared by the Secretariat[3].

The renewal of the MAG was announced on 5 May 2010[4].

The Vilnius Meeting

The overall theme was 'Developing The Future Together'.

The Vilnius meeting carried on the five broad key themes from the previous meetings and had the following agenda.

• Managing critical Internet resources
• Security, openness and privacy
• Access and diversity
• Internet governance for development
• Taking stock of Internet governance and the way forward
• Emerging issues: cloud computing.

The agenda attached more importance to development as an overarching priority and devoted a main session to this theme, 'Internet governance for development'. In addition, the meeting looked at critical Internet resources and the two clusters of 'security, openness and privacy' as well as 'access and diversity'. Unlike in previous years, the stocktaking session did not examine the IGF itself but looked at the broader Internet governance landscape and the evolution of Internet governance arrangements since Athens. The emerging issues session discussed cloud computing under its technological and policy aspects. An introductory session looked at the regional perspectives as they emerged from the numerous regional IGF type initiatives and meetings.

The Head of State of the Host Country, Ms. Dalia Grybauskaite, President of the Republic of Lithuania, welcomed participants to Lithuania and noted that the Internet had become an integral part of our everyday life and the development of the Internet was crucial to worldwide progress and the interests of all stakeholders.

During the first thematic main session on managing critical Internet resources a common recurring theme was the need to further support emerging technologies. Among the issues addressed was how to maintain Internet services in times of crisis. The Haitian registry reported on the remarkable achievement of their ccTLD in ensuring continuity of

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[1]   http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/2010/MAG_email_Digests/IGF.12.May.MAG.summary.record.pdf
[2]   http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/magabout/110-magdigest
[3]   http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/2010/ProgrammePaper.09.09.2010.doc
[4]   Press release Made 05.05.10 http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2010/pi1936.doc.htm

service despite the destruction of the local infrastructure following the earthquake in January 2010. One of the lessons learned was that it was necessary to adopt best common practices regarding DNS operation.

The second thematic session was on Access and Diversity. The session focused on access to infrastructure and access to content and considered a range of issues from geo-location, the global reach of social networks and the linkages between access to knowledge and security solutions, both in terms of hardware and software. The right to a multilingual, accessible Internet was seen as a citizen's right and a government's obligation and not something to be left to market forces alone.

The session on Security, Openness and Privacy discussed issues related to social media, the nature and characteristics of Internet networks and international cooperation and collaboration on security, privacy and openness. As increased usage in social media has enabled enhanced communication and connectivity between individuals and group there has also been an increase in invasion of privacy as people are sharing more personal information through these emerging social media networks.

In previous meetings, development was treated as a horizontal priority. However, some felt that by doing so, not sufficient attention was paid to this issue. As since Athens a series of workshops were held dealing with Internet Governance for Development (IG4D), the MAG felt it would be warranted to devote a main session to this issue and, among other things, explore the linkages with the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed development objectives. In 2010, IG4D was therefore given the opportunity to be the sixth thematic session. The discussion considered the institutional processes and substantive policy outputs of governance arrangements and whether these may raise developmental concerns that have not received sufficient attention to date.

The Vilnius meeting looked at cloud computing as an emerging issue. Expert panellists looked at the many facets of cloud computing and described the cloud as a continuation of the networks that existed in the past. Within the cloud one is not only able to programme software, but also able to programme the whole infrastructure of the Internet and offer it as a service, with a considerable benefit to consumers. As the mobile world continues to expand rapidly, the cloud plays a crucial role, as current portable devices lack the storage capacities and power of full size machines and seek the cloud to provide them with their core services. A number of concerns were brought to the meeting's attention, such as whether the cloud would allow for further technological innovation or whether it would hinder progression.

The final thematic session took stock of Internet governance, trying to identify how Internet governance had evolved since the first IGF meeting in Athens. There was a general feeling that the themes defined in the first IGF were still relevant today and that discussion since Athens had matured and become more sophisticated in the five years of holding the IGF. The point was made that the Internet was always expanding and growing and that the Internet of 2005 was different from the Internet of 2010. On some issues, like internationalization of critical Internet resources speakers felt that progress had been made. The discussions had moved on from the need to explain the importance of multilingualism, to the methods of deploying Internationalized Domain Names and of user content in diverse languages and scripts. One major achievement noted was the widespread introduction of regional and national IGF type meetings that have occurred over the last two years.

There continued to be differences of views on the very nature of the IGF. While some held the view that the IGF should be more results oriented, others were pleased with the IGF, as it is, that is as a platform for open discussions, free from the pressure of negotiations. The multistakeholder model was seen as a useful vehicle in the advancement of the IGF process. This model allowed for further capacity building allowing dialogue and sharing of information and good practices, proving the IGF's viability. One thread in the discussions put a strong emphasis on rights and principles. The Brazilian Internet Principles were cited as a model that deserved attention in this regard.

The proceedings of the Vilnius meeting were reflected in a Chairman's Summary[5]. On the occasion of the Vilnius meeting, the IGF Secretariat distributed a book it had produced to document the 2009 meeting[6].

Attendance and remote participation

Special efforts were made to facilitate remote participation, relying on two pillars: real-time transcription and video webcasts. Both were made available as live webcasts from all sessions, that is seven main sessions and 109 other official meetings such as workshops, open forums, and dynamic coalition meetings. All in all, there were more than 460 hours of live webcasts. All transcripts and videos are available as archives on the IGF Web site. Remote participation relied on 32 remote hubs set up for the meeting, 27 of them were located in developing countries. Over 1300 people, representing all stakeholder groups, participated in these remote hubs set up for the meeting, in groups ranging from 20 to 40 people. These hubs were able to carry on discussions relating to the IGF proceedings to their own regions, permitting the construction of foundations for future projects and policies at local and regional levels.

The number of remote participants refers exclusively to the participants in remote hubs and does not include the individual remote participants who may have watched parts of the meeting.

More than 2000 people registered and 1451 participants were present in Vilnius. 36% among them were women, thus considerably improving the gender balance. Adding the number of remote participants to the physical participants brings up the overall figure of participants to over 2750, the largest participation figure of any IGF meeting. 1327 or 48.2% of these participants reside in developing countries. The participants came from 107 countries, where more than 95% of the world's Internet users are located.

The breakdown of participants underscored the broad support the IGF has among stakeholder groups, with all the major stakeholder groups being represented almost equally, with 21% of participants coming from civil society, 23% from private sector and 24% government representatives and 22% technical and academic communities.

More details on participation are available in a statistical annex, attached to this report.

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5   http://intgovforum.org/cms/2010/Chairman%27s.Summary.Expanded.pdf
6   Internet Governance: Creating Opportunities for All Edited by : William J. Drake
     The Book can also be downloaded from the IGF Web site:
     http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/images/2010/book/igf.sharm.book.final.pdf

Online collaboration

Throughout the preparatory process for the 2010 IGF meeting, all stakeholders were invited to submit contributions, like was the case for 2009 IGF meeting. Around 53 contributions by governments, private sector, civil society, the academic and technical communities as well as intergovernmental organizations were received. The contributions addressed a wide variety of public policy issues. The IGF Web site was the portal into this process. The increase in the Web site visits from the first to the fifth IGF meeting mirrored the increased interest in the IGF. The number of visited pages in 2010 has kept above the 200,000 margin, peaking on the dates of the annual meeting, with over 1390000 hits and over 448000 page views. A graphical representation of the IGF Web site traffic is available in the statistical annex.

Conclusion

Five years after Tunis, it is generally felt that the IGF has found its place in the constellation of international institutions dealing with Internet related public policy issues. There was some scepticism to begin with, but now there is a broad recognition that there is a complementarity of functions between the IGF and international organizations and institutions dealing with Internet related policy issues. While at first sight there might be some apparent overlap in terms of substance, there is no such overlap in terms of functions, as the IGF is not a decision-making body. It is more like an incubator for ideas and policy initiatives that will be brought to maturity elsewhere. In this way the IGF prepares and helps shape decisions that are taken by other institutions. This division of labour has been widely recognized and is seen as beneficial by Intergovernmental Organizations and by Internet institutions alike. In addition, the approach taken within the IGF is always to look at an issue from multiple angles and by all stakeholder groups, whereas most of the existing institutions have a more narrow focus and examine issues through the lens of one specialized group of experts.

There was no ready template to use when convening the first IGF meeting as a platform for multistakeholder policy dialogue. With hindsight, this absence of established procedures proved beneficial, as it allowed the IGF to experiment and develop a new format of an open and inclusive international meeting that allowed all interested stakeholders to participate as equals and promote dialogue, foster partnerships, exchange information and experience and share good practices and lessons learned.
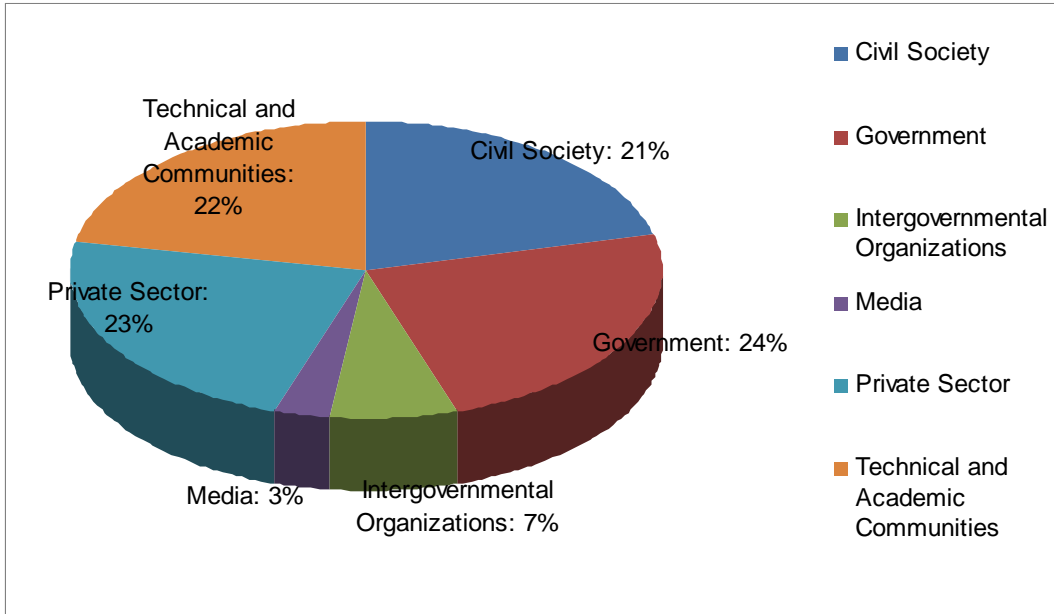
ANNEX

Stakeholder Representation in Vilnius

Figure 1: Vilnius participant breakdown by stakeholder group[7]

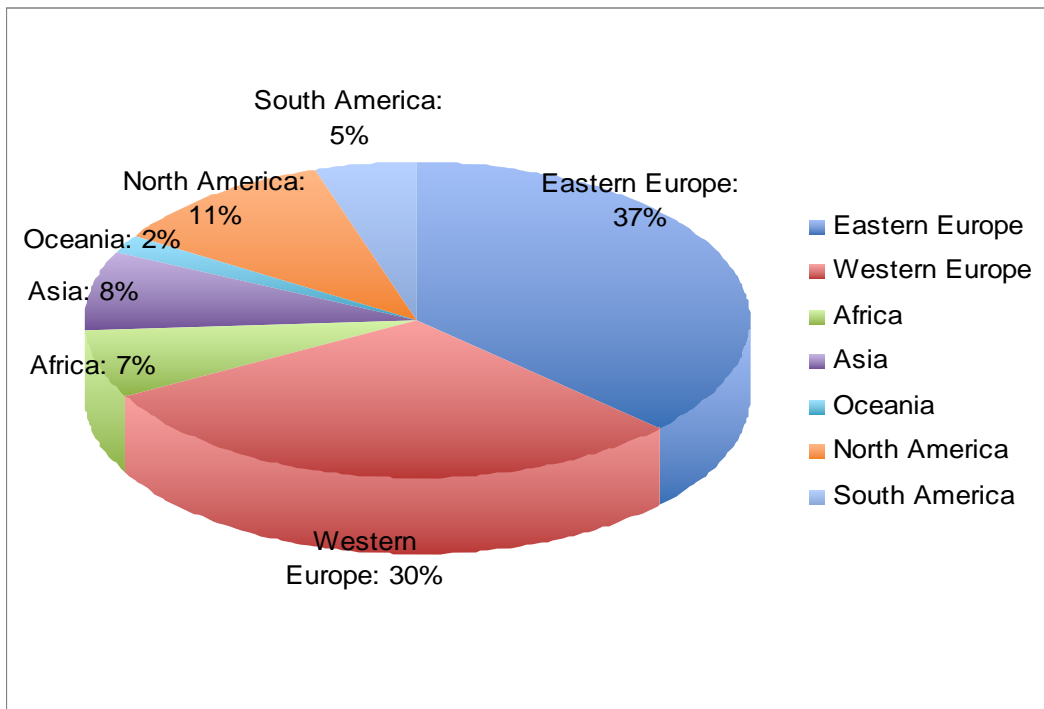**Stakeholder Representation in Vilnius by Region**

Figure 2: Vilnius onsite meeting participant breakdown by region[8]

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[7] Based on badges issued at the Vilnius meeting.
[8] Based on badges issued at the Vilnius meeting.

While a strong majority of physical participants were from Eastern and Western Europe (77%), the participation in remote hubs presented a strong presence from developing countries, with 81% of all remote participants coming from these countries.
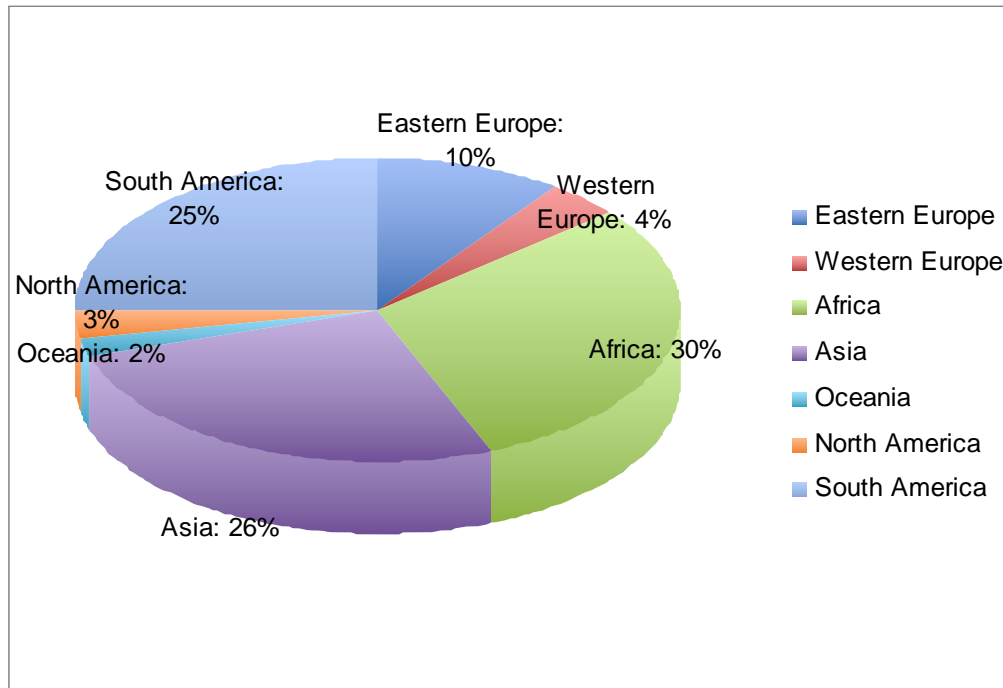
Remote Representation in Vilnius by Region

Figure 3: Vilnius meeting remote participant breakdown by region[9]

Overall Representation in Vilnius by Region

Combining the figures of physical and remote attendance present a different geographical balance, with participants from Eastern Europe coming first with 24% of the total, followed by those from Africa and Western Europe with 18%, Asia with 16%, Latina America with 15% and North America with 7%.

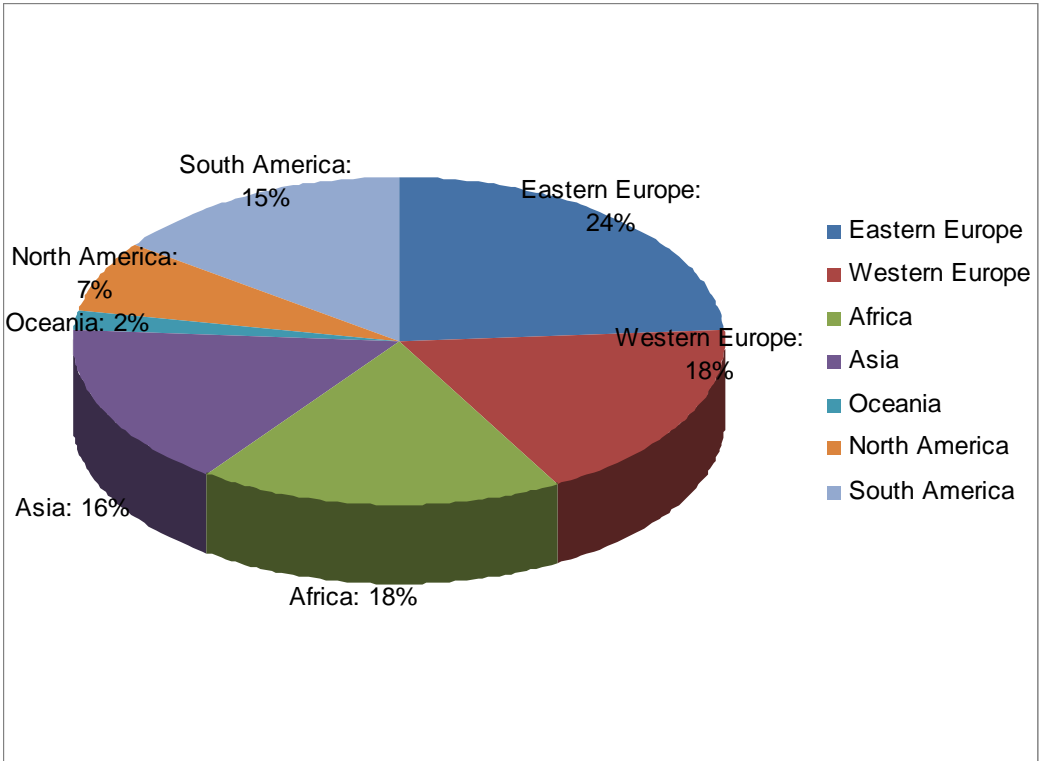[9]   Based on Remote Hub proposals

Figure 4: Vilnius meeting overall breakdown by region[10]

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10   Based on remote hub proposals and badges issued at Vilnius meeting.