

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
FOR DEVELOPMENT**

**Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation**

**Contribution to the guiding questions agreed during first meeting of the  
WGEC**

**Submitted by**

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Comments by DENIC (German ccTLD Registry, .de)

1. What are the high level characteristics of enhanced cooperation?

DENIC is the registry for .de, one of the world's largest TLDs with more than 16 million registered domain names. DENIC is an active member within the ICANN community and its ccNSO. DENIC was involved from the very beginning in both the WSIS and IGF processes. DENIC is also a key supporter of the emerging network of schools on Internet Governance (SIG), as we demonstrated recently at the 11th Internet Governance Forum held in Guadalajara.

Based on the working definition of Internet Governance, as laid down in paragraph 34 of the Tunis Agenda (November 2005) and as reiterated in the Final Document of the High Level WSIS +10 Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly (December 2015), DENIC understands the concept of enhanced cooperation in Internet Governance as a broad concept, which includes various interlinked and interconnected components.

We strongly support the approach proposed by a group of high-level experts at a multistakeholder Internet Governance Symposium in July 2008 in Meissen, which defined enhanced cooperation in Internet Governance as "enhanced communication, coordination and informal as well as formal collaboration among governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in open, transparent and inclusive bottom-up policy development processes (PDP), in shared decision making and in implementation with the aim to achieve a sustainable framework for the evolution and the use of the Internet (EC<sup>3</sup>)."

DENIC further considers "enhanced cooperation" a distributed and layered mechanism, where, on the one hand, each stakeholder group is challenged to promote enhanced cooperation among its own members and where, on the other hand, all stakeholders are invited to enhance cooperation across stakeholder silos and barriers with other stakeholders and across regions.

As a member of the technical community, DENIC sees a need to enhance cooperation both among the ccTLD community and with our partners in the technical community, such as gTLD registries, registrars, ISPs, Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) and Internet Protocol Standardisation Development bodies, like the IETF, W3C, and others. At the same time we have a natural interest in enhancing our cooperation with governments, the business sector and civil society organisations, including user groups, which comprise, inter alia, the registrants of .de domains.

2. Taking into consideration the work of the previous WGEC and the Tunis Agenda, particularly paragraphs 69-71, what kind of recommendations should we consider?

The IANA transition being successfully completed, DENIC considers one of

the most controversial paragraphs of the Tunis Agenda as successfully addressed. Paragraph 69 recognised "the need for enhanced cooperation in the future, to enable governments, on an equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities, in international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet, but not in the day-to-day technical and operational matters, that do not impact on international public policy issues".

With the IANA transition being implemented, all governments within ICANN can now carry out their roles and responsibilities on an equal footing. There is no government anymore that is seen to have a "special role or responsibility" within ICANN's context. Within the GAC, each government has a potential veto right to block any consensus advice to the ICANN Board. Insofar, the principle of sovereign equality among states, which guides UN organisations dealing with Internet issues, such as UNGA, UNESCO, UNCSTD, WIPO and others, is now applied in the GAC. The GAC – with currently more than 170 members - has grown into an important Internet body and has become a key part of the empowered ICANN community. This development is welcomed by DENIC.

Paragraph 70 of the Tunis Agenda refers, inter alia, to general principles of enhanced cooperation. In this context, DENIC supports the NetMundial Principles of the Sao Paulo Declaration from April 2014. Those principles were drafted in a truly bottom-up, open and transparent multistakeholder process and supported by a great majority of governments, private sector corporations, civil society groups and technical organisations.

We would welcome more reports on how the Sao Paulo principles are being implemented and how the multistakeholder model is being further enhanced. Paragraph 71 of the Tunis Agenda proposes such reports to be submitted annually. DENIC would support any recommendation by the WGEC to produce such an annual report.

As to the WGEC, we primarily expect it to give recommendations how to further enhance cooperation on Internet governance both within and among the stakeholder groups. DENIC understands that there is no "one size fits all" solution for Internet related public policy issues. We consider the publication of best practices as a good instrument to enhance issue-based cooperation among governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. One good example is the policy development processes (PDPs) that have been worked out during the IANA Transition, where cross constituency working groups (CCWG) used an iterative process with public comment periods and involved representatives from all constituencies concerned. Such experiences, even though they are very specific, can be an interesting source of inspiration to develop innovative procedures for dealing with other Internet related public policy issues.

DENIC is aware that there are substantial differences in the political and legal nature of issues related to the "evolution" of the Internet on the one hand and issues related to the "use" of the Internet on the other. However, both layers are – as it was agreed in the working definition of the Tunis Agenda - interlinked and can neither be separated nor negotiated in isolation.

We expect the WGEC to give recommendations that provide a basis for channelling the various negotiations on Internet related public policy issues into a sustainable and flexible "Framework of Enhanced Cooperation for Internet Governance" (FRECIG), which would allow all stakeholders from government, the business sector, civil society and the technical community - on an equal footing and in their respective roles – to carry out their roles and responsibilities to enhance communication, coordination and collaboration around issues related to the evolution and the use of the Internet. We consider the global Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and the related regional and national IGFs valuable building blocks for such a "Framework of Enhanced Cooperation in Internet Governance".

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