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*The views presented here are the participant's and do not necessarily reflect the views and the position of  
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## CSTD 2013-2014 Inter-sessional Panel

### WSIS+10 preparations and IGF stocktaking for the 17<sup>th</sup> session of the CSTD

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It is a pleasure and privilege to address you today and talk about the 2013 IGF meeting. Three key events shaped the 2013 IGF:

- The World Conference on International Telecom Regulations (WCIT) in Dubai end of 2012;
- The World Telecommunications Policy Forum (WTPF) in Geneva in May 2013; and
- The disclosures about mass surveillance.

WCIT was divisive and contentious conference. After WCIT it was felt that it would be necessary to build bridges between the two camps. When the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) started the planning process in February it chose "Building bridges - enhancing multistakeholder cooperation for growth and sustainable development" as the overall title for the event. It also decided to take up some of the issues that had been of concern to some delegations in Dubai, such as spam.

WTPF in May was positive meeting, held in a constructive atmosphere and a first step towards 'building bridges'. One leftover issue was a draft opinion put forward by Brazil on "operationalizing the role of governments". The MAG decided to take this discussion forward to Bali and devote a main session to the role of governments in the multistakeholder Internet ecosystem.

Once the programme was finalized, disclosures about mass surveillance caused a tectonic shift in the Internet landscape. The logical consequence was to take up surveillance in the agenda as a new issue.

I was not the only one who said that the 2013 IGF meeting was the best ever. The 2013 IGF was, in many ways, a defining moment. There was a strong sense of community among the participants - no stakeholder group defended their own interests, but they all stood up to defend the principle of multistakeholder cooperation.

This year's IGF reinvented its traditional agenda, mainly triggered by the events mentioned. These themes were high up on the policy agenda, and - apart from surveillance - ranged from the role of governments, to Internet governance and multistakeholder principles, human rights, cybercrime and spam to the contribution of the Internet to sustainable development and the post 2015 agenda.

Some priority was also accorded to what I am tempted to term "WCIT left overs", such as spam. The IGF dealt with these issues in some depth, documenting that there are some solutions available to address these problems and there was a suggestion to take these discussions a step further and integrate into the 2014 IGF programme some technical training workshops.

In all these debates, participants agreed to take the discussions forward, towards points of convergence. The agenda for the 2013 meeting was guided by the attempt to make the IGF more responsive to the broader policy discourse, defining the Internet governance space. The meeting proved its worth as a one-stop-shop where the community gathers to share experiences and exchange information --the inter- and intra-stakeholder dialogue (as Joe Alhadef put it this morning). It lived up to the challenge created by government surveillance and focused on the need to rebuild the trust of Internet users. By tackling surveillance head-on --the proverbial "elephant in the room" -- and by allowing for an open and frank discussion of government surveillance and monitoring, it proved its value. The IGF facilitated this difficult debate and proved that it had matured and lived up to the expectations of participants who wanted to voice and bring to the fore their concerns. It was significant in this context that the US Government was present with a fairly large and senior delegation that recognized that the IGF was the unavoidable option to face the community and discuss this issue. For the IGF, this was a win -- had the IGF avoided discussing this issue, it would have been considered irrelevant.

The open microphone session on the last day allowed to take stock. Many speakers pointed out that the IGF had matured and created a sense of community that allowed to discuss difficult issues in an open and frank manner. While agreeing to disagree on various issues, participants showed respect and listened to each others' arguments. Fundamentally, however, they all agreed that this kind of discussion would have been impossible a few years ago. The Bali meeting clearly showed that the community was rallying behind the core principle of open and inclusive multistakeholder cooperation.

A first sense of this community spirit manifested itself at the 2008 meeting in Hyderabad. The 2008 meeting took place in the wake of the Mumbai terrorist attacks when many participants for understandable reasons cancelled their attendance. This led to a solidarity effect among those who were in Hyderabad and who expressed their sympathy to the Government and people of India. It was then for the first time that the commonalities among the IGF participants exceeded their differences.

This notion of pursuing a common interest was much bigger still in Bali. The challenge this year was not a threat to the host country, but to the Internet itself. The monitoring and surveillance activities by governments and the loss of trust that followed brought the community together. The underlying theme was the necessity to rebuild the trust of Internet users. There was a general agreement that the IGF was the privileged place to pursue these discussions and that the multistakeholder format was the only way forward. One important conclusion emerged from these discussions: there is a need for an open multistakeholder debate on how to find high-level principles which can guide governments in this sensitive policy area and re-establish trust.

While the IGF has been criticized by many for not providing solutions, it needs to be pointed out that it was not created to provide solutions, but to provide a space for dialogue. In this respect, the IGF has exceeded expectations -- it has proved to be a space for discussions that could not have taken place anywhere else. It is a place for 'soft governance', for exchanging information and sharing best practices.

Thanks to the non-decision making character of the IGF we have been able to make progress on many issues we were able to identify. The non-binding nature of the IGF

provides the flexibility for having free-ranging and open discussions we would not be able to have in a rule-making and rule-enforcing environment. I agree with Mark Raymond that 'soft governance' is indeed better suited than treaties to deal with Internet challenges. Sharing best current practices on how to deal with spam is more efficient than a treaty article.

When preparing the IGF we took the recommendations of the CSTD Working Group on IGF improvement seriously. In particular,

- We aimed to shape the session in a way to provide takeaways and more tangible outputs of the main and focus sessions.
- The outcome documentation maps out converging and diverging opinions on given questions.
- We reached out and invited all stakeholders to give us input by formulating key policy questions for each session to shape the discussion.
- We improved the integration of national/regional IGF initiatives into the main programme; and
- We built a comprehensive capacity building track and introduced orientation sessions in order to facilitate the integration of newcomers.

This year's meeting managed to catalyze broad support. This energy needs to be preserved and translated into a solid funding situation of the IGF Secretariat. As many speakers pointed out this morning - there is room for further improvements, but I also agree with those who pointed out that "the perfect is the enemy of the good". Good is good enough.

However, there is an urgent need to strengthen the capacity of the IGF to prepare, run and follow-up to the annual meetings. The Secretariat is understaffed and underfunded and there is a need to put the IGF Secretariat on a stable and sustainable financial basis - we need commitments from governments, business and from civil society, each according to their means. The IGF is an indispensable part of the Internet ecosystem. A healthy IGF is necessary for a healthy Internet and the benefits it can bring to all of us.

The planning for the 2014 meeting has begun. The MAG has started looking at what worked well and what worked less well and what needs to be improved and a survey is available on the IGF website.

Many speakers this morning have pointed out the IGF's usefulness as a platform for multistakeholder dialogue. Let me conclude by stating that there is no better way to discuss important and delicate issues. It is a truism, but no stakeholder group can do it alone. Policy makers need the input from the technical community - the legal and regulatory framework needs to evolve based on a solid understanding of the underlying technology. Policy makers also need to understand what is economically viable and policy makers as well as technologists need to understand what is socially acceptable. Lastly, let's also be aware that not everything that is technologically feasible is desirable! For this reason the dialogue between all stakeholder groups is essential for the future of the Internet; and the IGF is the privileged place to have this discussion.

Thank you for your attention.