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

the European Union

The European Commission would like to make these contributions to the questions posed by the Chairman of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation at the first meeting held on 30 September 2016

Question 1:

What are the high level characteristics of enhanced cooperation?

The characteristics of enhanced cooperation should be clear enough to establish common understanding but broad enough to ensure that all stakeholders can commit to them. They should also be sufficiently future-proof to endure dynamic technological change. We suggest the following high level characteristics:

1. **Participatory and inclusive**
    Enhanced cooperation should be open to participation by stakeholders with all views taken into account. Participation should be inclusive of all who have an interest in the international Internet-related public policy issue, paying particular attention to the needs of stakeholders from developing countries and the principles of inclusive and sustainable development.

2. **Diverse and flexible**
    Different issues require different kinds of stakeholder cooperation and need to adapt accordingly. Enhanced cooperation should be diverse and flexible enough to enable all stakeholders to contribute according to their roles and responsibilities.

3. **Responsive**
    Enhanced cooperation should develop continuously in response to innovation and with foresight towards new developments that may have international Internet-related public policy implications.

4. **Effective and sustainable**
    Enhanced cooperation should focus on achieving mutually agreed objectives aimed at long-term sustainability.

5. **Respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms**
    Enhanced cooperation should support and foster respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, recognising that they are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

6. **Transparent**
    Enhanced cooperation should be transparent to all stakeholders. Participating stakeholders should take responsibility for their actions and should be prepared to explain them.

7. **Evidence-based**

    Enhanced cooperation should be based on a broad and robust evidence base that is accessible and to which all stakeholders are able to contribute. To that end the European Commission's project to develop a Global Internet Policy Observatory (GIPO) should help to provide a platform for storing and providing information and data.

Question 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?

In accordance with the principles proposed for enhanced cooperation, WGEC recommendations should be capable of implementation by stakeholders according to their different roles and responsibilities. To that end recommendations should technologically neutral while being sufficiently flexible and "future-proof" to withstand technological change and development. Recommendations should also ensure that inclusive and sustainable development goals are incorporated.

We suggest that WGEC recommendations could include:

- Promote best practice in **consultation and engagement**, including how stakeholders can reach out proactively to one another in an informative and easily understandable way

- Consider how stakeholders can **make information and evidence available** in an open, accessible and timely way in order to support meaningful participation and engagement

- Develop principles on how stakeholders can **open up their policy-making processes** to input and scrutiny from other stakeholders

- Make practical suggestions for enabling **participation of stakeholders from developing countries**, taking into account cultural and linguistic diversity and the capacity constraints faced by least developed countries

- Consider how stakeholder representatives are chosen, including best practice in ensuring a **balance of stakeholder representatives** in multi-stakeholder forums

- Support **sustainable development**, particularly in terms of capacity-building, education and skills, in order to help bridge the digital divide

- Promote an **enabling environment for investment**, in particular promoting cooperation and partnership between governments, the private sector and other stakeholders which promotes investment in infrastructure and increases affordable connectivity in developing countries

- Promote an **enabling environment for innovation**, in particular ensuring that the Internet remains an open environment which facilitates innovation and encouraging cooperation between stakeholders to this end

- Avoid **duplicating existing work** but instead seek to develop existing forums, including building understanding of multi-stakeholder enhanced cooperation processes in the full range of existing international organisations

- Consider how best to **build cooperation on emerging topics**, particularly new issues presented by newly emerging technology, in a way which allows all stakeholders to participate.

We expect that the discussions in WGEC, based on the contributions from all stakeholders, will help to provide the basis for a solid list of recommendations that the WGEC will be able to agree by consensus as these will have the authority and support to make an effective impact.