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 United States of America

Contribution of the Government of the United States of America to the CSTD Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation

The United States is pleased to provide the following input to the CSTD Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation (WGEC). We believe that the WGEC continues to be the best venue for discussing the complicated, but important, issue of enhanced cooperation and look forward to working with all stakeholders to produce a positive, consensus outcome.

The WGEC commences its work in a much better position than its predecessor. Over the past decade, progress has been made to bring Internet issues to the global, multi-stakeholder community for appropriate consideration, deliberation, and action. In just the past year, the mandate of the IGF was extended for an additional ten years, the transition of the IANA stewardship to the multistakeholder community was completed, and many stakeholders, including the UN, WEF, IEEE, and World Bank, launched multistakeholder initiatives to help bridge the digital divide.

As deliberations begin in the WGEC, the United States offers the following contextual framework for considering enhanced cooperation:

- **Goal:** The goal of enhanced cooperation is to continually strengthen and improve existing institutions and processes that are discussing Internet public policy issues, so the Internet remains an open, interoperable, secure, and reliable platform where everyone can create, access, utilize, and share information and knowledge to achieve their full potential, exercise human rights and fundamental freedoms, promote sustainable development, and improve quality of life.
- **Scope**: Enhanced cooperation is focused on improving processes and institutions that develop public policy relating to the Internet. It is not, in theory or practice, a platform for developing or debating Internet public policies, and it does not include decision-making authority regarding day-to-day technical and operational matters of the Internet.

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

- **Continuous Process:** Enhanced cooperation is a process. It is continuous, ongoing, interactive, and without a narrowly defined ending or outcome.
- **Transparency:** Cooperation is dependent upon trust and a common basis for engagement. In order for enhanced cooperation to work, therefore, it must be open and transparent.
- **Participation:** Enhanced cooperation involves different types of cooperation and consultation among diverse stakeholder groups needed for different policy deliberations.
- **Range of Cooperation:** Enhanced cooperation is interdisciplinary and inclusive of many cooperative and collaborative measures, programs, and initiatives undertaken by any combination of stakeholders to achieve either discrete or broad objectives.
- **Distribution:** Due to the distributed nature of the Internet, enhanced cooperation must recognize that no single institution, arrangement, or instrument can manage the entirety of the Internet's policy demands and infrastructure.

- **Voluntary Implementation:** Enhanced cooperation depends on the voluntary implementation by a range of stakeholders and institutions concerning improvements to processes that develop Internet public policy.
- **Support for Other Processes:** Enhanced cooperation should support, enhance, and help implement decisions and outcomes from other fora, including the WSIS outcome documents, UNGA Resolution 75/125, and relevant UN Human Rights Council Resolutions, among others. It is not a platform for renegotiating those decisions and outcomes.
- **Special considerations:** Recognizing the realities and challenges facing the various processes and institutions developing Internet public policy, enhanced cooperation should give special consideration and attention to stakeholders that are often marginalized or underrepresented in these discussions, including women, developing countries, persons with disabilities, youth, and unaffiliated users.

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 WGEC should consider:
- Proposals from all stakeholders, including both members and non-members of the WGEC, that are likely to garner consensus support of the WGEC and broad acceptance by all stakeholders.
- Recommendations that enhance and support the full involvement of all stakeholders in developing Internet public policy, including at the national and local levels.
- Recommendations focused on tangible and non-binding recommendations that improve processes and institutions that are discussing or developing Internet public policy, including at the national and local levels.
- Examples of enhanced cooperation that have already been implemented by institutions and processes, including procedural and participation improvements and best practices.
- Recommendations that enhance the participation of developing countries, women, persons with disabilities, youth, and unaffiliated users in institutions and processes that are developing Internet public policy.
- The previous work of CSTD working groups (but not with absolute deference to them).

The WGEC should NOT consider:
- Policy issues pertaining to day-to-day technical and operational matters of the Internet.
- Recommendations or proposals that have been repeatedly rejected in other fora and are unlikely to garner consensus support now.
- Recommendations that attempt to promote the role or interest of one stakeholder over other stakeholders.
- Recommendations that attempt to adopt binding recommendations that could undermine the voluntary, bottom-up nature of Internet governance.
- Recommendations that undermine or contradict the principles and spirit embodied in the outcome documents of WSIS or UNGA Resolution 70/125.