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Submissions from entities in the United Nations system, international organizations and other stakeholders on their efforts in 2019 to implement the outcomes of the WSIS

Submission by

Internet Governance Forum

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 23rd 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.

**Report on the Implementation of the Outcomes of the
World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)**

2019 Input from the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

I. Executive Summary

The 14th annual IGF meeting is scheduled to be hosted from 26 to 29 November 2019 in Berlin, Germany. This meeting will mark the fourth gathering of the global multistakeholder IGF community since the renewal of the IGF's mandate for 10 years by the UN General Assembly[1]. Under the overarching theme, *'One World. One Net. One Vision.'*, the IGF provides a platform for advancing critical Internet policy discussions through several annual workstreams and more than 200 different sessions during the annual meeting itself, focused on three key themes: 1) Data Governance; 2) Digital Inclusion; and 3) Security, Safety, Stability and Resilience.

Over the course of 10 months of active preparation for the 14th annual IGF meeting, the process noted the so far highest interest of stakeholder's into attending the annual meeting with close to 5000 submitted registrations. Many process improvements were made related to the IGF working modalities, stakeholder engagement and capacity development, all in a response to objectives set under the IGF's mandate, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)'s Working Group on Improvements to the IGF[2], as well as direct advice of the United Nations Secretary-General and the IGF's community.
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This year's intersessional work of 18 multistakeholder Dynamic Coalitions and 4 Best Practice Forums (BPF), worked for months with stakeholders from around the world on developing an analytical output overview of best practices globally and suggestions for improvements.

The programme agenda for the annual meeting was developed in a bottom-up and inclusive manner in consultation with the growing IGF community and with a view to enhancing wide-ranging and diverse multistakeholder participation. At the upcoming IGF meeting in Berlin, the multistakeholder community will addressee a broad range of timely themes and issues, among them: trust in the cybersecurity context; future of work; data protection; emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things and blockchain technologies; role of digital technologies for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); digital inclusion; human rights online.

II. Analytical Overview

The IGF has strived to build on the significant progress it has made since 2012 on fulfilling the recommendations of the CSTD Working Group on Improvements to the IGF. These are namely: increasing and improving both the tangible outcomes and the overall visibility of the IGF; the working modalities of the IGF, including open consultations, the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) and the IGF Secretariat; the funding of the IGF; broadening participation and capacity-building; and linking the IGF to other Internet governance-related entities. Created as one of the major outcomes of the WSIS process, all of the work of the IGF Secretariat aims to ensure that the IGF facilitates implementation of all

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[1] http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/125
[2] http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/a67d65_en.pdf

the agreed action lines, including, but not limited to; C1: The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development; C4: Capacity building and C11: International and regional cooperation.

Improving the IGF Process, Outcomes and Visibility

During the previous IGF cycle, several objectives for improving the overall process for the 2019 year were set. This relates to advancing the working modalities, particularly in regard to the work of the intersessional activities and the IGF annual meeting, as well as related to strengthening the stakeholder engagement and raising inclusiveness and visibility of the IGF.

Specifically, for this year, the MAG has undertaken efforts to improve the overall structure of the IGF's programme and based on a public call for thematic inputs to the community, decided that the overall programme should be streamlined and structured along the three main themes of the IGF: *1) Data Governance; 2) Digital Inclusion; 3) Security, Safety, Stability and Resilience*. A public, open call for session proposals was launched on these themes, corresponding narratives and policy questions. The overall process resulted in receiving close to four hundred (400) proposals, with three hundred (300) workshops evaluated by the MAG and rest of thematic sessions cleared by the IGF Secretariat.

The IGF improved its website's automated system for receiving session proposals to allow for a more visible overview of received proposals and related statistics the IGF Secretariat has prepared. It also made it technically set to have all post-session reports and transcripts available shortly after each session concludes in a structured manner with the possibility of filtering sessions across themes, meeting days and room.

Given the specific thematic input by the community and in a bottom-up manner, the MAG has decided to focus the intersessional activities to 4 Best Practice Forums (BPFs) that will specifically map and analyse best practices within dedicated output documents. The BPFs are focused on: *Cybersecurity; Local Content; Gender and Access; and Big Data, Internet of Things and Artificial Intelligence*. These workstreams also allowed for the IGF process to connect to various important initiatives, such for example is the UN's Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (GGE) and Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG); or the Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace initiative.

In order to bring the 14th IGF process closer to global community, a specific communication and outreach strategy was developed that resulted in raising visibility of the IGF through major gatherings of stakeholders, such are number of national and regional IGF initiatives where the IGF Secretariat and/or the MAG Chair participate remotely and in in-person: (European IGF (EuroDIG), Russian IGF, Asia Pacific IGF, West African IGF, Latin American and Caribbean IGF, South Eastern European IGF (SEEDIG)). The IGF Secretariat and/or the MAG Chair also participated in person in some of the largest global event on the Internet and social development, such as the World Economic Forum, World Internet Conference, World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).

For the annual IGF meeting, it is planned to develop tangible outputs of all sessions in the form of 'IGF Messages' that will feed into the IGF 2019 Chair's Summary. The messages will be based on session reports from the session organizers received within a few hours of their session conclusion.

The IGF Host Country has oriented specific efforts toward engaging high level multistakeholder participation at the IGF, with a number of heads of Governments confirmed, in addition to heads of leading intergovernmental organisations, international organisations, civil society organisations, academic institutions and private sector companies. The meeting will be formally opened by the German Chancellor and Secretariat-General of the United Nations.

In addition, intensive outreach efforts were conducted toward parliaments around the world to increase the participation of legislators at the IGF 2019 annual meeting, with 30 parliamentarians receiving financial support.

All these specific efforts have resulted in the so far highest number of registered participants for the IGF annual meeting.

Cooperation with Other Internet Governance Related Entities

The 2019 IGF process focused on motivating stakeholders and IGF focused groups in providing input to the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation through active participation in Panel's open consultations. After the HLPDC Report was published in June 2019, a several-weeks long feedback consultation to the Report was launched by the IGF Secretariat. The feedback particularly aimed for inputs to the Report's proposal for advancing the IGF ('IGF Plus') and the 5th recommendation of the Report focused on global digital cooperation. These inputs will be the critical base for one of the main thematic sessions at the 14th annual IGF focused on digital cooperation and Internet governance that aims to advance a dialogue on international cooperation, identify good practices and propose modalities across sectors and disciplines to address current and future challenges in the digital age.

The IGF continued to actively participate in the European Commission's High-Level Group on Internet Governance (HLIG) and contributes to the work of the Commission on digital matters.

In addition, the IGF Secretariat and the MAG Chair contribute to the Internet for All Initiative of the World Economic Forum that focuses on creating a multistakeholder partnership to create millions of new Internet users.

Capacity Development

In order to fulfil its mandate and *contribute to capacity building for Internet governance in developing countries, drawing fully on local sources of knowledge and expertise[3]*, as well as in a response to the recommendations of the CSTD's Working Group on Improvements to the IGF *to support the participation of stakeholders from developing countries, in particular, the least developed countries (LDCs)[4],* and the UN Secretary-General's call for action expressed at the 13th IGF stressing that the Forum *must increase its efforts to draw upon the "weak and missing voices" into the IGFs work*[5], a capacity development plan was developed and implemented. Namely, with the support of the IGF's donors, the IGF Secretariat allocated 9 financial grants to the national and regional IGFs whose work scope directly impacts the multistakeholder communities of least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked

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[3] Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, para. 72
[4] Report of the Working Group on Improvements to the IGF, section IV.
https://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/a67d65_en.pdf
[5] UN Secretary-General address to the 13th IGF: https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-2018-address-to-the-internet-governance-forum-by-un-sg-ant%C3%B3nio-guterres

developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS). Namely, grants were allocated to the regional IGFs of Africa and Asia Pacific; as well as to the national IGF initiatives: Gambia IGF, Chad IGF, Haiti IGF, Nepal IGF, Zambia IGF, Malawi IGF and Burkina Faso IGF. The purpose of these grants was to support the implementation of the local IGF processes and particularly to support the inclusion of underrepresented stakeholders.

Furthermore, the IGF also focused on strengthening the stakeholder engagement into the IGF 2019 annual meeting. It carried our careful analysis of the past IGF participation at its annual meetings and mapped the unrepresented nationalities, stakeholder groups and specific expertise. With the generous support of the IGF 2019 Host Country, Government of Germany, seventy-six (76) stakeholders from developing countries, historically unrepresented at the IGF, received financial support to participate at the 14th annual IGF meeting, following the open call for travel support.

Trends and Experiences on Main Theme(s) of WSIS Outcomes

IGF 2019 preparatory process and the agenda developed in a bottom-up manner, undoubtedly pointed at the global thematic priorities on Internet governance. Of people's interest is the huge potential of new technologies in bringing progress and development to everyone, along with concerns related to still present digital divide and cyber-attacks that might limit or jeopardize the positive effects of digital technologies. Further, the community clearly centralized the matters of cybersecurity and trust to online platforms and services, data protection and digital inclusion as highest priorities.

Through session proposals, the community will address some of the most pertinent matters to the current digital issues, related to trust and online safety and security; human rights online; models for digital inclusion, especially women and girls, youth and people with disabilities.

The BPFs have also followed the thematic priorities of the community and orient their work toward specific aspects under the broad themes they cover.

The BPF on Gender and Access centralised the analyses of gender balance on a local level and barriers to having women and girls achieving economic development through utilization of ICTs. It advocates that digital gender inclusion is much more than a computer device connected to a network and it requires communities to provide knowledge and skills and equally integrate these unrepresented groups into cultural, societal and economic aspects of lives.

The BPF on Local Content emphasized the importance of online content accessibility in a language people can understand for preserving local cultural heritage.

The multistakeholder community of the BPF on Cybersecurity works tirelessly on identifying common norms and shared values in cybersecurity. It looks at norms, values, policies and approaches captured in international cybersecurity agreements and looked at how words are translated into actions.

The community of the BPF on IoT, Big Data and AI works on formulating clear but pertinent policy questions around the application of the technologies. Understanding the different layers and perspectives on trust in IoT, Big Data and AI, is seen as important.

In addition, 18 Dynamic Coalitions (DCs) worked throughout the year on their specific topics[6] and have oriented joint efforts toward addressing the importance of digital technologies for the SDGs at a dedicated

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[6] Overview of the DCs thematic focus: https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/dynamic-coalitions

session at the IGF 2019. At the same time, more than a hundred and twenty (120) national, regional and youth IGF initiatives (NRIs) identified through a bottom-up process their collective thematic focus on emerging technologies and are preparing a dedicated session for the 14th IGF.

III. Brief Description of Innovative Policies, Programmes and Projects, plus Future Actions with regard to Issues Raised in Part II.

One tangible way for the IGF to enhance and increase the participation of developing countries is through the National, Regional and Youth IGFs (NRIs) which have been emerging spontaneously ever since the IGF was convened in 2006. They are independent in their work and organized in accordance with the core IGF principles of being multistakeholder, bottom-up, inclusive, open, transparent and non-commercial. Since the 10th IGF, the number of NRIs has grown tremendously and the total number of officially recognized initiatives has almost tripled from 43 NRIs at the end of 2015 to a current record of more than 120 recognized NRIs. The NRIs are active and immensely useful contributors to the IGF community's intersessional activities. The linkages between the NRIs and the IGF have increased significantly, due to many joint work activities such as the organization of sessions for the annual IGF meeting; developing publications on the NRI nature and thematic priorities. Records from the NRIs regular fortnightly meetings also serve as valuable and tangible inputs to the global IGF; providing more local and issue - perspectives to policy challenges. In addition, through the NRIs local communities can be reached, local processes strengthened and global IGF enriched with direct perspectives from these countries and regions.

In the resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 7 August 2018 [on the recommendation of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (E/20168/31)]⁷, member states welcomed the continuous progress made with regard to the intersessional work of the Internet Governance Forum in the different modalities of connecting and enabling the next billion online, dynamic coalitions and best practice forums, as well as the contributions being made by both national and regional Internet governance forums.

The mentioned IGF's Best Practice Forums (BPFs)⁸ continue to offer unique platforms to investigate topical Internet policy challenges by collecting community input and experiences in a flexible and bottom-up manner. This year specifically, it was decided that all BPFs will be pragmatically oriented toward mapping good practices among different groups, organizations, experts and individuals, and present an analytical overview of these in the form of tangible output documents. The BPF processes create platforms for people to discuss, interact and collaborate on specific Internet governance issues. They foster interaction between existing stakeholders and stakeholder groups and community members from all geographic regions.

Extending and developing on a process which began in 2015 with their first-ever main session at the IGF, IGF Dynamic Coalitions (DCs) coordinated their efforts throughout 2019 leading up to the annual meeting. Through their regular monthly virtual meetings and adoption of common work standards, their activities have become more synchronized, all while coalitions continue to work independently as multistakeholder expert discussion groups on a variety of topics. A majority of DCs produced papers on

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⁷ http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/RES/2018/28
⁸ IGF 2019 BPFs are focused on: Big Data, Internet of Things and Artificial Intelligence; Cybersecurity; Gender and Access; and Local Content

the SDGs for IGF Community review before and during the 14th IGF. This substantive work also culminated in a multi-themed and engaging main session, following up coalitions' joint main sessions held since 2015. As with other parts of the IGF Community, DCs are growing steadily, with for now eighteen (18) being recognized and active in their thematic work.

Some specific efforts were undertaken to improve working modalities included:

In order to understand better the thematic Internet governance priorities of the global community, the MAG launched a public Call for Issues collecting community inputs to serve as a basis for the annual programme. More than 300 inputs received, followed by extensive discussions on a strategic, thematic direction for IGF activities in 2019, helped the MAG to identify three priority themes on which to build a focused and cohesive programme this year: *(1) Data Governance; (2) Digital Inclusion; and (3) Security, Safety, Stability & Resilience*. As mentioned, the submission process of session proposals was better streamlined as a result of the advice of MAG Working Group on Workshop Process (WG-WSP). These efforts were complemented by the work of the Ad-host Working Group on Reporting that has advanced the pre-session and post-session reporting within an automated online system, supported by written step-by-step written guidance and webinars for session organizers. This reformed system of gathering direct feedback from the session organizer will help to build the 'IGF Messages' during the annual IGF meeting as an integrated section of the Chair's Summary, all to provide succinct and readable takeaways on the IGF's major themes.

Providing even further opportunity to participate and enhance institutional memory of the dialogue that will place at the 14th IGF in Berlin, all sessions will be live-streamed and webcasted, with transcripts and videos instant upload for online viewing. Both the IGF's and wider UN Secretariat's social media channels, such as Twitter #IGF2019 and Facebook, are particularly active during the preparatory process and expected to be during the annual meetings itself, given the systematic posting of IGF 2019-related materials. The MAG Working Group on Working Group on Outreach and Engagement (WG-OE) also takes specific efforts to promote the IGF 2019 process and annual meeting broadly. In cooperation with the UN Department of Global Communications, several official UN press releases will be produced closer to the meeting and during the meeting itself for broad dissemination. These efforts help the IGF to impact beyond the annual meeting to those hoping to learn more about digital policy issues, particularly in developing countries.

In addition to the working modalities of the annual IGF programme, the long-term improvements of the IGF process were addressed by a dedicated MAG Working Group on the IGF improvements (WG-IMP) and its financial sustainability by the MAG Working Group on Fundraising (WG-FUN). These groups recommended specific actions to be implemented during the annual IGF meeting through active outreach toward present stakeholders with dedicated written materials and several bilateral and bigger public meetings on the importance of supporting the IGF.

In addition to a rapidly growing number of confirmed participants for the IGF 2019 annual meeting, especially in regard to high-level representation and participation from developing countries, the IGF has receive several expressions of interest for hosting of 2020 - 2025 meetings which shows its long-term relevance to people.