UNITED NATIONS
COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

Fifth Meeting of the Working Group on improvements to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)
Geneva, Switzerland

20-22 February 2012

Chairman's summary of the meeting
(draft)

1. The fifth and final meeting of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) Working Group (WG) on improvements to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) was held in the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland on 20-22 February 2012. It was chaired by Mr. Peter Major (Hungary).

2. In his opening statement[1], the Chair stressed the important and positive results of the fourth meeting of the Working Group (Geneva, 11-13 January 2012)[2] during which points of broad agreements were established and included in the rolling document[3], regarding each areas related to the IGF which were identified as requiring possible improvements, namely A. Shaping the outcomes of IGF meetings; B. Working modalities including open consultations, MAG and Secretariat C. Funding of the IGF, D. Broadening participation and E. Linking the IGF to other related process/mechanism/bodies. On this basis, the Chair outlined the expected goals of the fifth meeting, which was to focus on the drafting of recommendations on improvements to the IGF. In this regard, the Chair invited participants to aim at the establishment of clear recommendations with no ambiguity to ensure their effective and prompt implementation, possibly even at the next IGF.[4] The Chair also recalled that in its previous meetings the Working Group had agreed that micro-managing the IGF in view of its improvement should be avoided.

3. The Chair of the Working Group presented the consolidated version of the rolling document which was developed following his suggestion made at the fourth meeting concerning the format and structure of draft recommendations on improvements to the IGF.[5] To facilitate the finalisation of the expected draft recommendations, this document was established in an attempt to structure the work of the Group, taking full account of existing broad agreements, proposals where consensus could not be reached and which were therefore left in brackets for the sake of transparency, as well

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[1] The "preliminary remarks" made by the Chairman of the Working Group at its Fifth Meeting is available at: http://www.unctad.org/sections/un_cstd/docs/UN_WGIGF2012d8_preliminary_remarks_en.pdf
[2] For more information, the "Chairman's summary" of the Fourth Meeting of the Working Group on Improvements to the IGF is available at: http://www.unctad.org/sections/un_cstd/docs/UN_WGIGF2012d5_summary_en.pdf
[3] The rolling document was established initially at the Third Meeting of the Working Group (Geneva, 31 October – 02 November) to capture points of discussion, including broad agreements concerning items A, B, C, D and E as well as proposals which could not find consensus and were therefore put in square brackets.
[4] The Seventh Annual IGF Meeting will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 6-9 November 2012. More information is available at: http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/
[5] For more information, see item 8 of the above-mentioned "Chairman's summary" of the Fourth Meeting of the Working Group

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as additional points of discussion.[6] It is also important to note that for each item, general introductory "chapeaux" were proposed by the Chair on the basis of broadly agreed principles during the third and fourth meetings of the Group.

4. Following the adoption of the agenda, the Chair presented his preliminary draft recommendations on improvements to the IGF which were prepared on the basis of broad agreements contained in the consolidated version of the rolling document as well as the proposal made by one participant of the Group[7]. The Chairman's draft recommendations were sent by email to participants of the Working Group prior to the fifth meeting to serve as the main working document to facilitate the drafting exercise. Participants welcomed the solid and important work of the Chair and agreed with his suggestion to use his draft recommendations as a starting point in the drafting exercise which, as it was agreed, was to be carried out mainly in plenary with the possibility of working in small groups to address and solve complex drafting issues. In this regard, the Chair recalled the non-legally binding nature of the IGF. The expected draft recommendations on improvements to the IGF were to ensure that, as far as possible, flexibility and openness were maintained also during the drafting exercise.

5. Concerning the format of the draft recommendations, the Chair stressed the need to reduce their important number as they sometimes overlapped. Participants agreed that, as a whole, the final draft text should seek to be straightforward. In addition, the Chair invited participants to decide whether the established draft recommendations should reflect consensus strictly or if in case of dissent, other alternate recommendations should be included as footnotes. Participants were divided on this issue, however, for the sake of clarity leading to the practical and effective implementation of the proposed recommendations, the Chair decided that the included text would be strictly based on consensus.

6. Although participants did not have sufficient time to address every proposal made, including the so-called "chapeaux", draft recommendations on improvements to the IGF concerning the five areas mentioned above were, however, successfully established. To improve relevance and clarity of the tackled areas of improvements wording of items D and E were amended to D. Broadening participation and capacity-building and E. Linking the IGF to other Internet governance-related entities.

7. The Chair of the Working Group decided to send his expected draft Report prepared on behalf of the CSTD Working Group after the meeting with the clean version of the draft recommendations on improvements to the IGF to participants of Group by email for their comments and approval. Given the information provided by the CSTD Secretariat concerning the extremely limited time to finalize the draft report and recommendations which needed to be transmitted to the relevant UN services 14 weeks before the CSTD 15th session itself (21-25 May 2012) which also meant that an extension was to be sought as the deadline had already passed, the Chair decided to include only discussed and agreed proposals regarding which only editorial comments would be acceptable.

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[6] For more information, the Chairman's consolidated version of the rolling document is available at: http://www.unctad.org/sections/un_cstd/docs/UN_WGIGF2012d7_rolling_en.doc
[7] Prior to the fourth meeting of the Working Group (11-13 January 2012), Marilia Maciel, Civil Society, transmitted by email a suggestion to categorize proposals made during the Third meeting of the Working Group and contained in its rolling document.

8. Concerning the follow-up to be given to the Report of the CSTD Working Group on Improvements to the IGF, various participants expressed their concern in relation to the ambiguity of the mandate of the Working Group in relation to its submission to the CSTD, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the UN General Assembly (GA).[8] Following the confirmation of the relevant UN services, the CSTD Secretariat confirmed that as last year, the way to proceed would be to submit the Report to the CSTD, ECOSOC and to the GA at the same time. In addition, the CSTD Secretariat informed participants that the Report will be examined at the 2012 substantive session of ECOSOC (New York, 25 June-20 July 2012) and at the 67th session of the GA (New York, 18 September-31 December 2012).

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[8] GA Resolutions 2010/2 and 2011/16 on the "Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society" read "submission of its recommendations to the Commission at its fifteenth session, which shall constitute an input from the Commission to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council".

MEMBER STATES

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Technical and Academic Community

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Intergovernmental Organisations

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OTHER

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