Looking forward to the third IGF meeting in Hyderabad
Statement from the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) on the IGF open consultations, Geneva 26 February 2008

We would like to congratulate the IGF and the host country, Brazil, for a very successful IGF in Rio. Looking forward to the IGF in Hyderabad, we want to suggest the following:

1. APC supports the proposal, made by many in Rio, of **regional and national IGFs** preceding the next global IGF. They can help define regional or national priorities and facilitate participation in the IGF process. They can be a powerful mechanism for learning, problem solving and collaborative action.

2. APC supports comments made previously regarding the **structure of the IGF**. We want to emphasise that:

   - recycling of the core themes in plenary sessions need to be revisited. There is no need to convene a plenary session on each of these themes. We should rather use plenary sessions to address crosscutting areas and emerging issues;
   - gender balance should be given greater attention in the composition of panels.

3. Regarding **content and themes** of the Hyderabad IGF:
   - We support the proposals for key themes made by the Swiss delegation, and by the civil society internet governance caucus.
   - We also support the proposal from the International Institute for Sustainable Development that sustainable **development be included as a key theme**. This theme cuts across most of the existing themes, and complements the proposed focus on a development agenda (which APC supports) in internet governance.
   - Sustainable development concerns are integral to many core IGF themes. For example, it relates to how we deal with the access theme. Policy makers as well as implementers are in the position to make choices about what technologies are used to expand infrastructure. These choices have long term implications for the environment, particularly on climate change. These choices also impact on the sustainability of the infrastructure itself, e.g., does it make sense to build internet backbone using technology that requires huge amounts of energy in parts of the world where electricity supplies are unstable, limited, and very expensive?
   - Sustainable development as it relates to the development and governance of the internet is a global issue, like climate change. It

belongs in the IGF. It is an area of common concern for developing and developed countries as it impacts on everyone, even if in different ways.

- We acknowledge the input of those speakers who feel that the issue is too broad, and outside of the mandate of the IGF. However, we are convinced that the IGF can find a way of including sustainable development in a focused manner that is consistent with the mandate of the IGF.

4. APC recommends that the IGF uses the format of the **Working Groups** to assist with ensuring that the primary IGF themes, cross cutting areas, and suggested topics for main sessions, are addressed as effectively as possible before, during and after a Forum; and in between Forums. This format can be used in various ways:

- In the case of one of the existing core themes or crosscuts, they can synthesise the outcomes of relevant workshops, best practice forums and plenary sessions and make suggestions to various stakeholders on how to move from dialogue to action. For example, in the case of the access theme, such a working group can build on the substantial consensus that was evident among different stakeholders in Rio, and propose ways in which the availability of affordable internet access to 'the next billion' can be accelerated. These recommendations need not be presented as formally agreed recommendations from the IGF, but as recommendations or suggestions for action from the individuals in the working group.

- In the case of new proposed topics for main events, e.g. the proposal from the Internet Governance Caucus for a plenary session on "strengthening the development agenda in internet governance" such a working group can assist the MAG and the secretariat with defining the issue and convening the plenary session. We note that the Swiss delegation has also proposed a working group to focus on this topic.

- We agree with Switzerland that crosscutting issues are not effectively addressed, and working groups could assist the MAG to rectify this.

These working groups should not replace dynamic coalitions, nor undermine the nature of the IGF as a space for informal and inclusive dialogue.

We particularly propose the formation of a **working group on Access** as outlined in our written paper on the topic.

Geneva
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