

Dynamic Coalition for a Global Localization Platform: Localization4all

Report on Inaugural Meeting

Prepared by: Reinhard Schäler

The first meeting of the *Dynamic Coalition for a Global Localization Platform: Localization4all* took place at the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Internet Governance Forum held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, on 17 November 2009.

Eight stakeholders working in the area of multilingualism and the internet came together to set up a new *Dynamic Coalition for a Global Localisation Platform*.

They were:

- The Rosetta Foundation (Reinhard Schäler)
- ICANN (Kieran McCarthy)
- Welocalize (Smith Yewell)*
- DotSUB (Michael Smolens)*
- Translate.org.za (Dwayne Bailey)
- Arabize (Manal Amin)
- National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences Pakistan (Sarmad Hussain)
- Translators without Borders (Lori Thicke)*

* These founding members were not physically present at the meeting.

They were joined by:

- Adobe (Francis Tsang)
- AOL (Stephen Roantree)

The Founding Members came together in this Coalition in order to make a major, very direct and practical impact on making multilingual content available on the internet. They noted that the establishment of the Coalition was only possible through the facilitation of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF). They expressed their gratitude to the organizers and supporters of the IGF for their hard work that made the gathering such a successful event.

The Founding Members agreed the following charter.

Charter

The Coalition, organized as a working group, will coordinate the development of communities and the deployment of technologies that will enable **localization for all**. Localization, the linguistic and cultural adaptation of digital content, is a prerequisite to make the multilingual and multicultural knowledge society a reality and to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals. Participation in the knowledge society and “access to information in your language” is not a “nice-to-have”, it is a fundamental human right. In many cases, access (or the lack of it) can be a matter of life or death, as in the case of information on HIV/Aids prevention or in cases of justice and legal rights. The Coalition’s aim is to add a social, cultural, political and developmental dimension to mainstream commercial localization efforts, to move localization from a mono-dimensional to a multi-

dimensional activity, encouraging and supporting localization activities whose rationale is not short-term profit, but long term societal impact.

The Founding Members agreed to invite all those interested in supporting the work of the Coalition to join them in their efforts to create an Internet that speaks *your* language a reality.

The Founding Members agreed to set up:

- A mailing list
- An online facility to join the Coalition
- A web site

The Founding Members agreed to appoint Reinhard Schäler as the Coalition's Coordinator.

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