

Dear Secretariat,

I am pleased to be able to forward the text below as an input to your synthesis paper on the review of IGF. This is the second of two statements adopted by the Internet Governance Caucus as an inputs to the synthesis paper.

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## Review of IGF

The Tunis Agenda (TA) calls for examining "the desirability of the continuation of the Forum in formal consultation with Forum participants, within five years of its creation, and to make recommendations to the UN Membership..". In this regard, we have two sets of comments. One set is regarding the process of the 'examining' or review of the IGF, and another consists of our substantive comments on the role, mandate and structure of the IGF.

### Process of review

As mentioned in the Tunis Agenda, the process of review should be centered on consultations with Forum (IGF) participants. These consultations should be both formal and informal. It is important to lay out clear formal processes, apart from informal ones. It will also be necessary to go beyond IGF participants to reach out to other interested stakeholders, who for different reasons may not attend the IGF meetings.

In reaching out, the process of consultations should especially keep in mind constituencies that have lesser participation in IG issues at present, including constituencies in developing countries including those of civil society. Other groups with lower participation in IG issues like women, ethnic minorities and disability groups should also be especially reached out to.

If it is found necessary to do a expert evaluation to help the process of review, the process should be open and transparent. It is not advisable to rely solely on a pro bono evaluation, by any agency that offers it, for such a politically sensitive and important assessment.

The selected experts should have adequate expertise in matter of global public policy and policy institutions. In view of the geo-political significance of IG, it may be useful to have a reputed public policy institution in the global South do the evaluation in partnership with one such institution from the North. Even if reliance on existing global institutions is sought, there should be adequate balancing of perspectives, and partnerships are a good way to ensure it.

It is important that the process of review starts at the earliest, preferably with the forthcoming IGF meeting in Hyderabad. IGC held a workshop on 'role and mandate of the IGF' at Rio (see [http://intgovforum.org/Rio\\_event\\_report.php?mem=30](http://intgovforum.org/Rio_event_report.php?mem=30) ), and plans another one with the same title in Hyderabad. The outcomes from this workshop should feed into the main workshop on 'Taking stock and going forward'.

### Substantive comments on the IGF mandate, role and structure

On the basic question of the review about desirability of continuation of the IGF, the Caucus is of the firm view that the IGF should continue beyond its first mandated period of five years.

It is important that IGF remains open to addressing all issues that are in the IG space, no matter how controversial. Very likely, the more controversial an issue, the more appropriate it may be to bring it to the IGF where inputs from a diverse range of stakeholders can be sought.

Deliberations at the IGF can be used as inputs for global Internet policy making, which will help make policy-making processes more participative and democratic.

The Tunis agenda calls for "development of multi-stakeholder processes at the national, regional.. level" similar to the IGF. It is heartening to note that some such national and regional processes are already taking shape. IGF should further encourage such processes and seek to establish formal relationships with these initiatives. Since the fear of governmental domination is considerably higher at national levels, IGF should use global civil society groups and processes to guide appropriate multistakeholderisation of emerging national IGF spaces. IGC offers its assistance to the IGF in this regard.

A greater need for the IGF to get deeper in substantive issues is evident to some. It is desirable in this regard for the IGF to have an inter-sessional work program in addition planning for the annual IGF event. It will be useful for this purpose for the MAG to operate in Working Groups, and also incorporating outside expertise in these WGs as required. Some start in this direction is expected to be made in the run-up to IGF, Hyderabad, whereby WGs of MAG members plus some outsiders are expected to prepare for main sessions.

As a global policy related institution it is important for the IGF to have stable public funding, and to insulate itself against any possibility of special interests influencing its working through control over funding. Such funding should not only enable appropriate and streamlined functioning of the IGF secretariat, the annual event and other proposed and inter-sessional activities, it should also be used to ensure equity in participation in the IGF across geographies and social groups.

We congratulate the IGF secretariat on doing exemplary work in the last few years, on a very thin resource base, and in difficult conditions where different stakeholder groups involved in the IGF have very different orientations and expectations of the secretariat. A lot of the IGF secretariat's work is indeed path-breaking in the UN system. However, it is very evident that the secretariat needs much better resource support that they have at present, if we are to fulfill all our expectations from this unique global institution.