

Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

Open Consultations and MAG Meeting

1-3 December 2014, Geneva, Switzerland

Synthesis Paper

Contributions Taking Stock of IGF 2014 and Looking Forward to IGF 2015

I. Introduction

1. This paper summarizes inputs received from the IGF community in response to an invitation from the IGF Secretariat for stakeholders to submit written contributions taking stock of the IGF 2014 meeting (ninth IGF) and looking forward to the IGF 2015 meeting (tenth IGF), including suggestions on the format, schedule and themes. In total, 18 contributions were received by the Secretariat and they can all be found in their entirety on the IGF website.¹ The paper also takes into account and summarizes responses received to the online survey made available to participants in the ninth IGF in order to evaluate the overall meeting.
2. This paper is intended to form an input for the first Open Consultations and Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) Meeting (1-3 December 2014, Geneva, Switzerland) in the preparatory process for IGF 2015, which is scheduled to take place in João Pessoa, Brazil, from 10 to 13 November 2015. The readers of this paper are also encouraged to read the transcripts of the Open Consultations and MAG Meeting, which will be posted for public view on the IGF website.

II. General Comments on the Ninth IGF Meeting

3. Many expressions of gratitude were given to the Government of Turkey for the successful hosting of the ninth IGF meeting, which took place from 2 to 5 September 2014 in Istanbul. Appreciation was extended by stakeholders to the team from the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA) of Turkey for their hard work, efficiency and hospitality. Many also thanked UNDESA and the IGF Secretariat for their operational support, as well as the interpreters and all those who assisted with remote participation, making the IGF an inclusive event. Appreciation was also extended to the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) for organizing the programme of the IGF and to all those who contributed financial support, directly and indirectly (e.g. through funding participants to come to the IGF).

¹ The synthesis paper is a summary of the various contributions received by the IGF Secretariat. Some specific suggestions are included verbatim. The synthesis also takes into account the responses of participants of the ninth IGF to the overall survey that was available to be filled out on the IGF website after the meeting. A complete list of the contributions can be found on the IGF website here:

<http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/documents/contributions/open-consultations/2014-december>

4. It was said that the IGF 2014 meeting came at an important time for Internet governance, both internationally and in Turkey, and demonstrated the progress made by the IGF towards becoming more outcome-oriented. It was also mentioned that “there is no other environment like the IGF that allows for fruitful Internet policy discussions without the burdens of negotiated outcomes and political grandstanding”.
5. It was noted in many contributions that the programme development for 2014 was undertaken in an efficient and effective manner, around issues relevant to participants from all stakeholder groups. This development occurred despite a severe constraint on time, with the IGF being held in early September, nearly two months earlier than its usual timing.
6. Many inputs underlined improvements made in the preparatory processes, such as seeking inputs from all stakeholders on suggested themes and sub-themes prior to the first Open Consultations; combining the Open Consultations with the MAG meeting; holding regular MAG virtual meetings and making the summaries of all meetings available online and engaging stakeholders in identifying policy questions to be addressed during IGF main/focus sessions.
7. It was said that a number of elements distinguished IGF Turkey from other IGFs. These included, but were not limited to: the launch of a new funding mechanism to support the IGF (the IGF Support Association); launch of an African Declaration on Internet Rights and Freedoms; the return of best practices in a new and policy-shaping format; and endorsement by participants in a round table of a message that was forwarded to the Human Rights Council Panel on Privacy in the Digital Age.
8. Stakeholders mentioned many other notable aspects of the IGF 2014 meeting, such as the discussions on ICANN accountability and the IANA stewardship transition, the reflections on NETmundial, increased awareness of human rights, including access, gender and women’s rights, and social media activity.
9. In terms of logistical and organizational aspects, stakeholders emphasized with appreciation that the host country website was informative and covered most of the required practical information; entry visa was in most cases easy to acquire, with straightforward processes; the venue was modern, spacious, well equipped, and had various room types. It was also said that the “Sched” online tool used for the IGF 2014 schedule was an improvement and was useful in organizing one’s personalized schedule. Participants noted that it provided an agile platform to easily plan participation, overview sessions, and better plan side meetings by knowing who is where.
10. On the other hand, there were some criticisms on aspects related to the 2014 meeting, which should be kept in mind in planning the 2015 meeting, as follows:
 - Some noted that while the meeting venue was very good in many ways, the multiple-level structure and the location of some of the rooms and other facilities made it less convenient for participants. Room naming and signage needed to be clearer.
 - WIFI access suffered some disruptions and was of inadequate capacity at times.
 - There were some visa issues which made it difficult for some to attend the IGF in Turkey.
 - Criteria for participation in the high level leaders meeting on ‘day 0’ were not clear for

some.

- One contribution noted that translation and transcribing was below average compared to the Bali IGF. More work needs to be done to ensure best quality transcribing and translating.
- There could be room for improving the reliability of remote participation.
- The opening and closing ceremonies were said to be too long and it was suggested by some to significantly decrease the number of speakers in these sessions.

III. Comments on Sessions, Participation and Overall Substance of the Ninth IGF

11. Some contributions mentioned that the topics of main/focus sessions were well chosen and reflected current high priority issues. Focusing on specific topics brought more value to the sessions and allowed in-depth exchange and understanding of the issues. Moderators of main/focus sessions were engaging and kept the rhythm interesting for the audience. This reflected on the level of attendance in these sessions. The setup and format of main/focus sessions enabled energetic and inclusive discussions. At the same time, it was also mentioned that three-hour slots allocated to some sessions seemed to be somewhat lengthy and sometimes discouraging. It was suggested that keeping sessions' durations below two hours may be desirable. Where a three-hour discussion is needed, a split into two consecutive panels, which are related but distinct, could better serve the purpose. Comments were also made with regard to the fact that some the main/focus sessions had too many panellists/speakers.
12. One input said that the U-table format for main/focus sessions, with moderators standing and moving between panellists and attendees, was a major improvement and more interactive vis-à-vis IGF 2013. It was said that the reconfiguration of the main room in a U-shape format with seating on three sides was very useful and promoted interactive discussions.
13. One comment on the 2014 preparatory process noted that progress was made in ensuring that workshop proposals were updated and completed in a timely way, and that the workshop selection process was improved, carried out, and prepared for vigorously. Many lauded the continued evolution of the agenda and the responsiveness to community input.
14. Some contributions commented that there were too many workshops held in parallel and that some workshops addressed similar topics. It was suggested that the best practice forums should have been held as stand-alone events to allow fuller participation. Others pointed out that main sessions and workshops need to be separated to avoid overlaps which make it difficult for many interested participants to join the sessions which are most important to them.
15. Many contributions noted their appreciation for the new format and substance of the Chair's Summary. It was also noted that the timely availability of sessions' transcripts and video recordings on the IGF website has magnified the meeting footprint and made it possible for more people to benefit from the knowledge and expertise shared in the sessions.
16. Many inputs stated that the development of the best practice documents within the framework of the five IGF 2014 Best Practice Forums represents a good step forward in terms of producing

more tangible outcomes. It was also said that the process of developing best practices could benefit from more outreach, in order to engage a more diversified experts' pool from the different regions and stakeholder groups. Giving more time to this process and early preparations moving forward will cater for better engagement.

17. In regards to remote participation, many noted with appreciation that there were multiple ways to remotely participate through WebEx, Twitter, webcasts and YouTube. Remote participants could use the Sched tool and the IGF website to plan which workshops to attend. It was said that it was good to have a variety of ways to remotely participate, as people were able to follow the sessions from different devices and if there was a problem with one option, another could be used.
18. It was suggested that while the IGF remote participation page was useful, a more developed dynamic landing page for all aspects related to remote participation would be ideal. As a practical suggestion, it was mentioned that it would be useful to set WebEx links to open in a new tab, so the IGF website didn't disappear. It was noted also that while those attending the IGF in person are hosted, welcomed and facilitated, this does not really happen for remote participants. Remote participation is a way of increasing the accessibility of the IGF to those who are limited by funding, health or other commitments and how to welcome and include these people should be better considered and formally addressed, with additional funding, if necessary.
19. It was mentioned that remote participants (RPs) are not always aware of the possibilities for their interaction. As such, remote participation (RP) guidelines should be provided not only for moderators and panellists, but also for participants, to help them understand how they can best participate using different tools (webcast, Twitter, WebEx chat, WebEx video intervention, email intervention) and what RP etiquette should be followed for each type of session. It should be clear what kind of RP is available for each session (some sessions have remote participations facilities, while others, such as side-meetings, do not). On site panel organizers and panel moderators do not always know how to manage RP; guidelines should be provided for them, so they clearly understand their role in supporting RP.
20. It was recommended that remote moderators should be empowered to insist that RP interventions be considered. It was said that "Often remote moderators have a queue of RP interventions, but are not sufficiently recognized by the panel moderator, or are not firm enough in raising the need to attend remote interventions. This point should be addressed in the remote moderator guidelines and respected by panel moderators. The procedure for including RP interventions is not always clear. Panel moderators should be reminded in the guidelines to include instructions to invite both in situ and remote interventions when appropriate during the session. Another 'microphone' should be considered for RPs, if mics or intervention rotations are given to stakeholder/other groups. The possibility of audio and/or video interventions is not sufficiently promoted or understood. While some sessions may not be ready for many and especially unprepared audio or video RP interventions, this modality should be better informed in guidelines for RP and RPs, especially for remote hubs, and the newer virtual remote hubs. Panels/workshops/sessions do not realize that there are many RPs following the session, and that they should be acknowledged."

IV. Suggestions and Recommendations regarding the Preparatory Process and Inter-sessional Work towards the Tenth IGF

21. One contribution emphasized that the IGF is in a unique position to democratize participation in Internet governance, by acting as both a coordinating mechanism to connect stakeholders to external Internet governance processes, and also as a policy venue in its own right where emerging or orphan issues can be addressed and consensus-based solutions found and documented.
22. It was said by some that the work of the MAG could focus on the "way forward/ recommendations" sections of the 2014 Chair's Summary in a structured way, e.g. by creating different working groups for exploring in detail and implementing the suggested recommendations. The creation of ad hoc groups (not necessarily composed of MAG members only), that are tasked to develop a programme focused on specific areas that have been identified as requiring improvements (e.g. IGF outputs / liaising with national and regional IGFs, linkage to other Internet-governance related entities, etc.) should be considered.
23. Many suggested that the scheduling of the IGF process should cover the full year, through including timelines for working groups to develop concrete proposals to be taken further at the IGF. This would better sustain a work programme between meetings. A step towards this can be made by offering IGF participants, when registering for attending the meeting or for following it remotely, the opportunity to join an online collaborative platform for interacting with other participants throughout the year on issues of shared concern.
24. One contribution suggested that the IGF should encourage organizers of successful workshops to submit follow-up proposals for the following IGF. For example, workshops that have highlighted issues that are new and/or attract significant participation should be encouraged to submit an updated workshop proposal so that developments, new research and policy changes since the previous IGF can be reviewed and discussed at the following IGF. In recognition of a continuing need to improve the diversity of participants and perspectives represented on panels, workshop organizers should be encouraged to invite new speakers to appear on the subsequent panels.
25. It was said that more youth should be represented as speakers and organizers of sessions. In general, further consideration needs to be given to increasing youth engagement and participation throughout the preparatory process and during the annual meeting.
26. Many contributions supported the suggestion made in the IGF Chair's Summary that inter-sessional work is critical to continuing the discussion and debate on key issues. Inter-sessional work also allows interested parties to follow and engage in current and pressing issues as they evolve, providing a real opportunity to debate and shape the discussion. It was said that this would better ensure continuity between the annual IGFs and inter-sessional issues should also be discussed at national and regional IGFs.
27. It was said that further discussions should be held on whether and how the 12 dynamic coalitions that are currently active within the IGF should contribute to or support the IGF's inter-

sessional work. A comment was made with regard to the need for a more structured process to be developed for dynamic coalitions, even with respect to their engagement with the MAG/IGF. This would be helpful for a wider and more pluralistic engagement.

28. It was noted that the revived Best Practices Forums (BPFs) were one of the key additions to the IGF 2014 programme. They were said to respond to the need to connect policy issues to tangible solutions that can be shared across regions and actors of the Internet ecosystem. The 2014 BPFs produced concrete draft documents without having to negotiate texts, in the spirit of the IGF.
29. One contribution suggested specifically that a small leadership group composed of volunteer MAG members to steer the BPF tracks could be formed starting in December 2014. Additional expert consultants could be used to strengthen the IGF Secretariat, on an ongoing basis, and lead the inter-sessional work needed for high-quality outcomes (the 2014 BPF were put together in only seven weeks, which is an extremely short period of time for a new track). An assessment could be taken on the status of the interim 2014 findings and agreement could be found on a methodology for finalizing and developing them further; and the community might want to consider identifying new topics for 2015 Best Practice Forums.
30. It was emphasized that the IGF should establish better coordination across other Internet governance platforms and initiatives. It was said that, given the proliferation of Internet governance meetings, coordination is essential. The IGF should ensure that there are regular exchanges with the various Internet governance forums, meetings and initiatives throughout the year.
31. The need to strengthen ties between the global IGF and regional and national IGF initiatives was also underlined. It was mentioned that, through focusing the dialogue among local actors on relevant local governance issues, regional and national IGFs offer one of the greatest values of the decentralized IGF model. At the same time, this distributed approach should not prevent the IGF community from building flexible connections between the different IGF tracks. Therefore it was recommended in one submission that the MAG and the IGF Secretariat could explore ways to install fluid channels of communications between the global, regional and local IGF initiatives. In addition, themes discussed within the IGF main sessions could systematically integrate some of the outcomes of discussions that took place locally, whenever the themes coincide.
32. Increasing remote participation and genuine e-participation at the annual IGF and during inter-sessional work were stressed by many stakeholders. Dedicated working groups and additional funding should be sourced to address this important issue. Many said that the Capacity Building track that has been built into the past two meetings should continue and grow in 2015. Some contributions suggested that the Orientation Session should continue and expand moving forward, for example through including a section for newcomers to ask questions and gain a deeper understanding of Internet governance issues.
33. One input noted that, in order to strengthen IGF processes, all workshops, main sessions and dynamic coalition discussions should be accurately documented. Both converging and diverging opinions must be included in the Chair's Summary. Session reports should be issued in a timely

fashion and be used as benchmarks for future sessions to measure progress.

34. It was suggested that, while still maintaining the key characteristic of being an open platform for discussion, the IGF should continue to develop more tangible outcomes, as recommended by the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) Working Group on Improvements to the IGF. Some contributions emphasized that the tenth IGF could take a step forward in this direction if it were to practically use designated main sessions, workshops, other sessions or working groups to develop non-binding opinions, recommendations and/or policy principles that stakeholders could use to address currently pressing Internet-related issues. One input suggested that a separate “Multistakeholder Internet Policy Council” could be formed to assess whether a text proposal/policy recommendation(s) discussed within the framework of IGF preparatory work or in the annual meeting itself had reached consensus.
35. Taking into account that the tenth IGF will be held about one month before the WSIS+10 high level meeting of December 2015, it was suggested that one practical deliverable of IGF 2015 could be an outcome document addressed to the United Nations General Assembly. This could provide an excellent opportunity to express the views of the multistakeholder community on this important process. Further, as the next IGF is planned to take place in November 2015 and clear progress can be expected by then on the ongoing IANA stewardship transition, the IGF 2015 would therefore provide an opportunity to review and take stock of this process.
36. Many inputs stated that, in order to push forward inter-sessional work and to ensure predictability and continuity, a more stable funding mechanism is critical to ensure full support to the IGF Secretariat throughout 2015 and beyond. A number of inputs also called for the immediate extension of the IGF mandate, ideally for 10 or more years or a permanent term.

V. Suggestions Regarding Main Themes/Sub-Themes/Issues for the Tenth IGF

37. Some contributions noted that, in general, the IGF should address policy questions that are controversial and/or time-critical and that are currently lacking any other multistakeholder mechanism for global coordination. One suggestion noted that the IGF should avoid themes that are too broadly framed, like “openness” and “security”. The same submission said that the national IGFs should feed issues into the regional IGFs which should in turn feed issues into the global IGF, so that the issues discussed at the global level in part reflect the concerns and challenges raised by the national and regional IGFs; a “reporting in” session for national and regional IGFs (as is currently the case) was said to be insufficient.
38. Some inputs encouraged the IGF to further focus on pressing and challenging issues, noting that there should be flexibility and willingness to include sessions that address challenging topics on the formal IGF agenda. One input noted that, to a certain extent, the emphasis on participatory sessions that include interventions from the audience helps to ensure this happens, but a more overt focus on a particularly pressing issue would guide session organizers to consider how their topic is related to the over-arching theme. That same mentioned that the IGF must continue to embrace and encourage open and frank discussions on the real challenges facing Internet-related policy, development and governance and that the IGF community should consider whether a day

dedicated to such an issue would be a useful evolution of the traditional agenda.

39. It was said by some that the IGF should, whether in its overarching theme or its workshops, highlight thorny issues and challenge participants to explore solutions and ways forward. It was suggested that the IGF Secretariat and the MAG agree on a set of sub-themes that will carry from one IGF to another, and it was noted that this could be better for the global community, as they would know what the sub-themes are and they could be solicited for their view on key questions and substantive issues that the following IGF should be addressing within those themes.
40. One input recommended that the IGF community should agree on two or three high-level themes and should try to work throughout the year towards the production of common best practices or policy messages. The input suggested that priorities identified within the NETmundial Declaration could be used as a source of inspiration (e.g. evolution of the Internet governance ecosystem, human rights, spam). An input noted also that in the context of the emergence of new UN Sustainable Development Goals, it would be timely and relevant to explore themes at the intersection of ICT and development, with an Internet governance focus. One input suggested two inter-sessional themes for the 2015 IGF process: “Policy Menus for Connecting the Next Billion” and “Impact of Internet on jobs and skills”.
41. One proposal for the overall theme of the 2015 IGF meeting was “Internet governance for sustainable development and promotion of human rights”. Other inputs suggested that surveillance, cyber-security and online privacy should be primary themes for the 2015 meeting.

VI. Comments, Suggestions and Recommendations for Logistical Improvements for the Tenth IGF

42. It was suggested by some that, from a logistical and organisational point of view, the IGF could benefit from a more structured agenda with eventually fewer workshops. An opposing view was also expressed, noting that the number of workshops should not be reduced, as the dynamism of the IGF comes from workshops. One commented noted that an alternative to the usual IGF schedule would be to have each day at the IGF focusing on a specific issue, within sessions of various formats.
43. A more regular update of the information posted on the IGF website was also underlined as a need, in order to promote the IGF website as the legitimate source of information regarding the IGF programme and to avoid misunderstandings and confusion in the wider community. It was said that this would make it easier and clearer for participants and could in the meantime enhance participation to and interaction during individual workshop, including remote participation. One contribution also suggested that the IGF main outcome documents should be translated into all UN official languages, to ensure a broader outreach.
44. One input noted that increased efforts should be made in improving facilitation of remote participation in the interest of wider inclusion. A “newcomer's lounge” or “IGF booth” in the IGF Village would be beneficial, as it would help answer any queries participants might have related to IGF or Internet governance.

45. Many contributions encouraged improvements in the following areas: media operations, badging, beverages and food breaks, broadband and wifi connection, delegate bags, host country website, printing etc. The MAG and Secretariat should continue to monitor logistical matters in a serious manner to maintain the IGF's standing as an accessible global forum. One contribution suggested that the IGF Secretariat and the MAG engage professional facilitators with expertise in planning large participatory events.

VII. Suggestions and Recommendations regarding the MAG, the IGF Secretariat and the General Improvement of the IGF Processes

46. It was suggested that the MAG could establish a series of working groups dedicated to critical issues such as communications, outreach, inter-sessional work, best practice forums etc. One contribution noted that some of the biggest perceived failings of the IGF have little to do with the substantive issue-based discussions that occur at the annual meetings, but are rather related to the supporting work such as communicating both prior to and post the annual meeting, reaching out to and engaging with stakeholders (and particularly developing country representatives), encouraging stakeholder involvement in IGF sessions such as the Best Practice Forums, workshop submission mentoring and coordinating with and leveraging the learnings from the national and regional IGFs.

47. Some contributions emphasized that for future IGFs, MAG members will need to increase their engagement and be firmly committed to the preparation of main/focus sessions and the workshop selection process. It was suggested that a document is developed to outline the responsibilities and commitments of all MAG members, to ensure active engagement across stakeholder groups. It was also noted that lead facilitators of main/focus sessions should be required to have preparatory calls with panellists prior to the IGF. Workshop organizers should be strongly encouraged to likewise hold preparatory calls with relevant materials for panellists prior to the IGF.

48. Some inputs recommended that specific principles for participation of MAG members as speakers and moderators in main sessions and workshops should be discussed and adopted through consensus by the MAG for 2015 and beyond. It would also be helpful if organizers of main sessions can hold discussions amongst themselves to ensure that a few select speakers, who could be relevant for more than one session, are approached in a structured manner, to avoid duplication. Equally, the role of moderators and substantive rapporteurs should be clearly identified and linked to the specific skill of carrying through the work of managing sessions and workshops in the most effective manner possible. In particular, the substantive rapporteurs play a critical role in capturing workshop and plenary session recommendations, which enable the IGF to serve as a unique laboratory for the exchange of best practices and capacity building expertise. They should be acknowledged in workshop descriptions and their selection should reflect an effort by workshop organizers to diversify based on region, gender and stakeholder group.

49. One input suggested that the IGF would benefit from the appointment of a "new, charismatic and visionary Executive Coordinator, with multi-stakeholder support, to personally evangelize

for and drive changes requested by the community”. The same submission also noted that “in the interim, it would also be possible for the periodic open consultation meetings to be facilitated, perhaps by an independent professional, in a way that is more open to blue-sky thinking, rather than being limited to a narrow analysis of the annual meeting themes and the like”. The reappointment of a Special Advisor was also suggested by some as an urgent and important issue.

50. It was underlined that a continuation of the implementation of the recommendations of the CSTD Working Group on Improvements to the IGF requires resources. Therefore, work must be done to secure a financial footing for the IGF through contributions to the IGF Trust Fund, primarily, but also through in-kind contributions and support for additional participants to the IGF, particularly from developing countries. Many inputs also noted that, as the IGF continues to develop more tangible outcomes, this implies that the IGF Secretariat needs to grow and to ensure the support of additional expert resources.
51. Some contributions suggested some reforms in the functions and roles of the MAG and the IGF Secretariat. It was said that in order to realize improvement and progression in the IGF, the community must rely heavily on the work of the MAG in its planning and preparation process. MAG’s role was seen as being vitally important to the multistakeholder, globally diverse and bottom-up nature of the IGF, that reflects the Internet itself. Some said that the MAG should continue to organize working groups in specific areas, provide organizational leadership for them and open them to those willing to participate and contribute to the process. It was also suggested that the MAG should produce annual reports.
52. Suggestions were made for the MAG and the community to work together to foster the outputs of the IGF, not only in the form of the IGF 2014 Best Practice Forums documents, but in other tangible ways as well. One recommendation was made to develop innovative ways to capture the conversations that occur at the IGF and share them globally wherever possible. It was suggested that this includes building on and evolving the workshop themes from one year to the next to reflect emerging issues. It was mentioned that to some extent that has occurred at the IGF with sessions on “emerging issues”, but that evolution should be reflected in the workshops as well. As the MAG refines the workshop proposal criteria and process for IGF 2015, this progression, specific sub-themes, and other concrete elements could be incorporated to elicit even more thoughtful proposals and dynamic workshops.
53. One contribution emphasized that individual communities, nations and regions should continue to advance multistakeholder Internet governance and policymaking by establishing (or continuing) their own IGFs.

54. Contributions were received from the following individuals and organizations:
- Association for Progressive Communications (APC)
 - Baudouin Schombe

- Bestbits
- Center for Democracy and Technology
- Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD)
- Desiree Zachariah
- Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology, European Commission
- Ginger (Virginia) Paque
- International Chamber of Commerce Business Action to Support the Information Society (ICC BASIS)
- Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)
- Internet Society (ISOC)
- Motion Pictures Association (MPA)
- NetMission Asia
- National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA) Egypt
- Ruth Hennel
- United States Government
- Virat Bhatia
- Walid Al Saqaf