



CONVENED BY THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL

10 – 13 November 2015, João Pessoa, Brazil

Whether participating on-site, through online participation channels or on social networks, thousands of delegates from all stakeholder groups (Government, Inter-governmental, Civil Society, Academia, Private Sector and Business Community, Technical Community, etc.) were able to participate in fruitful discussions on the opening day of the 10th Internet Governance Forum in Joao Pessoa, Brazil that focused on the role of Internet governance in promoting sustainable development.

Opening Ceremony

“The breadth and depth of the sustainable development agenda will require that we tap into the potential of the data revolution through the use of new and non-traditional sources of data,” stated the UN Assistant Secretary-General Lenni Montiel in a statement from United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon at the opening ceremony of the Forum. In a video address to delegates, Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff noted the IGF’s importance in continuing, “the trajectory of building a global Internet, enabling sustainable development and also inclusive development.”

A number of high-level officials from all stakeholder groups addressed the forum during the opening session and stressed the growth and maturation of the IGF since its first meeting in Athens in 2006, stressing that the IGF has helped to quickly disseminate the concepts and innovative ideas of the Internet to the developing world. Other speakers emphasized that through its multiple views, multistakeholder nature, and wide diversity and representativeness, the IGF provides the ideal space to develop a response to both the opportunities and challenges that the evolution of the Internet presents.

Other issues addressed by many speakers throughout the opening session included ideas about how Internet governance should evolve, addressing concerns related to the increased use of the Internet and the role the Internet can play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

WSIS+10 Consultations

Prior to the opening ceremony, an interactive plenary main session on the World Summit on Information Society +10 (WSIS) consultations gave participants the opportunity to express their views on the future of the Internet within the framework of the ten-year review of the WSIS. A report on this session is expected to be circulated to UN member states in New York and will feed into the final negotiation process taking place at the WSIS+10 High Level Meeting from 15 to 16 December.

Much progress has been made since the start of the WSIS in 2005 that committed to building “a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, where everyone can create, access,

utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life”

However, as co-facilitator of the upcoming WSIS+10 High-Level Meeting H.E. Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, indicated, today 80% of online content is available only in one language and 60% of the world lacks internet access. She added that only 37% of the world’s women have internet access.

“Just having access to ICTs and the Internet is no longer enough. The quality of access, relevance of content is also critical. Moreover, technologies and services must be affordable and information must be available in different languages,” Ms. Nusseibeh continued.

The ten-year review of the WSIS, therefore, will provide the opportunity to assess the outcomes of WSIS while reviewing progress made as well as the challenges ahead in the context of the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The new development agenda, agreed on by the 193 member states of the United Nations, highlights the crucial role of the internet in achieving sustainable development goals.