

# **ETNO Reflection Document on the draft programme outline and schedule of the 3<sup>rd</sup> IGF meeting, ahead of the 2<sup>nd</sup> open consultation (Geneva, 13 May 2008)**

## **Introduction**

ETNO, the European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association ([www.etno.be](http://www.etno.be)) and its 41 members from 34 countries have been working for many years on a range of policy issues associated with the information society, including Internet governance and the World Summit on Information Society process. Many ETNO member companies attended the Athens and the Rio IGF and participated in the preparatory open consultations.

This document describes how these telecommunications network operators view organizational and certain IGF content issues and it contains suggestions for improvements for the Forum's third meeting.

## **General Comments**

ETNO and its members are committed to the IGF process and are looking forward to the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the IGF. We are very pleased that a new date and place have been fixed. We are also pleased by the informative presentation of the Indian delegation regarding the facilities and arrangements.

ETNO welcomes the fact that the IGF Secretariat, in light of the discussions which took place during the February consultations in Geneva, presented the first draft programme and schedule prior to the 13 May 2007 consultations. However the first draft programme is focusing on structure and has limited information on content. ETNO would like to encourage the IGF Secretariat, the Multistakeholder Advisory Group, the host country India, and all the parties involved in the preparations of the Hyderabad meeting, to work towards finalizing all the details by September 2008.

## **Specific comments**

Based on the draft programme and schedule, ETNO wishes to present the following specific comments and suggestions:

### **Basic structure for the Hyderabad meeting**

ETNO supports in principle the new format of the Hyderabad meeting, in other words the need to move forward from the Athens and Rio meetings. We find it necessary to increase interest and participation, but also to keep the basic structure of main sessions and workshops. Of course, there is room for many improvements.

We understand that the 5 main themes of access, openness, security, diversity and critical Internet resources will be retained in the background, but not recycled with yet another general discussion. Instead, they must be focused and not necessarily in the format of one main session per theme, as we had suggested in our previous contribution in February. However it must be very clear to all, to which of the 5 themes the titles of the new “focused themes” refer to and / or if there are any new themes.

As regards the 10 changes to be introduced, ETNO supports all of them in principle. Still, we would like to clarify that when it comes to workshop reports, these must be short, based on a previously agreed template (who participated, what issues were discussed, what were the main points) and checked before being presented in order to make sure that they truly reflect the discussions. Also, due to the substance of the IGF, remote participation suits very well the Forum and should be facilitated. After all, keeping the diversity and assuring effective physical and remote participation of stakeholders remains a challenge to be met. When it comes to proceedings, no matter what their format, the principle of “no official outcomes” must be preserved.

### **Meeting types**

#### ➤ Main Sessions:

ETNO believes that the main sessions are the most important meetings of the IGF and special attention must be given to them in the schedule. We believe that every effort must be put to have fewer events parallel to the main sessions, but with better quality.

As we had stressed in our previous contribution, the number of panellists should be kept to a maximum of 4-5 people. However, panellists - besides their presentations - should limit their remarks so that there are more views presented from the floor. It is worth examining the idea that one of the panellists acts as a Key note speaker to stimulate discussion, rather than having the moderator trying to do that. In general the main sessions should be more interactive. Additionally, we believe that “best practices” or rather “lessons learnt” should be integrated into the main sessions.

Regarding the “Taking Stock” and “Emerging issues” sessions, these should have the format and structure of the Rio IGF.

#### ➤ Workshops:

ETNO is pleased that some of our earlier proposals have been incorporated into the draft programme. More particular, we have suggested that there is a core IGF programme, consisting of main sessions and selected workshops closely related to them, integrating best practices. This core programme can be organized or at least selected in the case of workshops by the IGF Secretariat in conjunction with the Multistakeholder Advisory Group. In our view, the main workshops should fuel the discussions in the main sessions.

We welcome the early call for workshops by the IGF Secretariat as a very positive action and we reiterate that the number of workshops should be reduced and similar workshops should merge.

➤ Reporting Back Sessions:

ETNO notices with concern, that these meetings are not included in the draft programme. Therefore, we would like to repeat our previous comment that these one hour sessions, are extremely useful because someone may hear - and in more than one language - a brief summary of what was discussed in the previous main sessions and in many of the other events held before. Therefore, we urge that there is at least one Reporting Back session per day.

As we have suggested in the past, the reporting back for the main sessions should be done by the IGF Secretariat as it can guarantee a well balanced overview of what was discussed. As for the reporting back of all the other meetings, we suggest that there is more structure, with a strict format to be followed by all. A maximum time should be given for presentations and there should be more chances for comments (but not on substance issues, because substance comments fit best in the main sessions).

➤ Best Practice Forums and Open Forums

ETNO strongly believes that discussion about “best practices”, or rather “lessons learnt” fits better within main sessions or workshops. We underline that if “Best Practice Forums” remain in the programme, they must be very limited, specific, well justified, and accepted after a wide agreement. Additionally, a limited number of Open Forums, on the understanding that these are meetings organized by major organizations dealing with Internet governance, aiming at presenting and discussing their activities, could take place.

➤ Dynamic Coalition Meetings

ETNO views Dynamic Coalitions as a means to stimulate the debate within IGF meetings, by facilitating open discussion on emerging topics. We regard the Dynamic Coalition meetings as an opportunity for the various Dynamic Coalitions to report about their work in the previous year and to focus or identify issues for the next year. Therefore, we continue to believe that Dynamic Coalitions must be given space in the IGF to evolve. In order to ensure their dynamic nature, it is of the interest of all parties not to see their role institutionalized, that certain criteria are met (i.e. that their work is directly related to the IGF, that their constitution is known, that they are indeed a Coalition and not one organization advocating specific views, that the meetings

do not turn into workshops, and that they provide open access to information and documents as some already do).

Based on the draft programme and draft schedules attached to the Summary report of the MAG meeting (27-28 February 2008), ETNO would like to make the following specific comments and suggestions:

### **On titles and description of topics (Content issues)**

The term “Universalization of the Internet” is unknown to many and it is not clear what it implies. ETNO proposes that the new “focused theme” is called “Expanding the Internet - how to reach the next billion.” We see that under this title the Athens and Rio themes of access and diversity fit perfectly. Also, we strongly believe that the theme of Critical Internet Resources is more suitable for discussion under this “focused theme,” as it is almost impossible to discuss about the expansion of the Internet without referring to CIR.

As for “Managing the Internet,” the title is misleading and therefore must be changed. We strongly recommend the alternative title “Using the Internet”, in order to avoid building false expectations that this session will question the validity of the existing management functions. We also note that with this proposed change the Athens and Rio themes of security and openness fit perfectly.

Regarding the titles of the topics under each new “focused theme,” some of them are very vague and very general. In fact it is not clear at all what “Implications for development policy” and “Arrangements for Internet Governance” are about, why they fit under the respective “focused theme” and what will be discussed about. We urge for more specific topics and more appropriate titles that are understood by all.

ETNO finds the topic “Low cost sustainable access” as most appropriate under “Expanding the Internet” and we support discussion on this issue. Particularly, this session could be a great opportunity to acknowledge some of the successes in this field, such as in India, and to highlight ways and solutions thereto. ETNO also supports a discussion on “Innovation” under “Expanding the Internet.”

Regarding “Critical Internet Resources”, ETNO would like to comment that the proposed topics for CIR seem to be very focused on IP addressing issues. ETNO believes that the issue of transition from IPv4 to IPv6 is becoming extremely important and awareness needs to be raised. As regards the adoption of IPv6, any move in that direction has to be industry led and it can only occur when the industry determines that the required drivers are in place. Governance issues related to IP management should build upon the current practice and the bottom-up approach. Consequently, the focus under this topic should be expanded to give a broader perspective to some of the other important topics that need to be addressed, building on current best practice.

### **On schedule**

ETNO prefers the alternate proposed schedule and considers it a good starting point. We believe that there must be a balance between main sessions, main

workshops and all other events. The main workshops should take place before the main sessions in order to stimulate discussion and every effort should be put that they are not held in parallel to the main sessions. Also, in our view the Reporting Back session must be re-introduced in the schedule. Additionally, and there was general agreement that no official meetings will take place during lunch, or start after 18.00. Bearing in mind the above, having 3 main sessions lasting 2 hours per day, an equivalent number of main workshops also lasting 2 hours and the rest of the above conditions respected, makes it impossible to fit everything under the main programme. We therefore strongly plead for reducing the number of main sessions (thus main workshops as well) to two per day.

As for the slot "Debate," we don't understand what it is about and why there is a need for such a meeting when there are the main session meetings, as well as taking stock and emerging issues sessions. The topics listed under "Debate" should be discussed under any of the previous sessions. Therefore, we propose the deletion of the session "Debate."

Finally, it will be impossible to support dedicating a specific time plan for networking, having in mind that besides main sessions and workshops there will be many other events.