

High level thematic session 'Shaping our future digital global governance'

Messages

- There was broad support for the notion that as the Internet and digital technologies continue to evolve, better coordinated digital governance systems are needed to maximise the opportunities offered by these technologies, and address the challenges they bring. How such systems could or should look like, and what they should focus on, remains however an issue to be further discussed.
- That effective digital governance adapts and responds to the needs of the global citizens, was shared by all participants. But what are those needs? Some highlighted as priority areas bridging the digital divide (in its multiple dimensions), fostering digital literacy, and supporting the development of the digital economy. Others stressed that governance structures need to focus on enhancing confidence and trust in digital technologies, ensuring security, and creating stability and predictability in cyberspace.
- The notion that the ideal future digital global governance should be value-based, inclusive, open, and transparent gained traction along the debate. While it is challenging to determine values that can be shared by all stakeholder groups, and at a global level, there was common ground in the thought that core Internet values are and need to stay human-centred.
- When it comes to the governance model, there was broad support for the multistakeholder approach, and a more active involvement of all stakeholders in identifying and implementing consensus-based solutions for digital policy issues. It was underlined that the challenges of the digital world also need to be addressed by governments and intergovernmental organisations, through laws and regulation.
- On the suitability of an international treaty or convention to address challenges such as cybercrime and cybersecurity, some expressed the view that it might be too early to consider such an option – without excluding it as an option for the future - , while others considered that an intergovernmental treaty is not an adequate solution to tackle challenges that affect all stakeholders, and for which all stakeholders should have roles and responsibilities.
- The IGF, as a multistakeholder and inclusive process, was broadly supported as an important platform that allows stakeholders to reflect critically on existing digital governance processes, and contribute to the shaping of future processes.