

GENEVA IGF – TAKING STOCK
JANUARY 21, 2018

Dear Anja

This message has come through from our APriIGF Secretariat and I am very grateful to be able to provide some thoughts.

First of all, many thanks for sorting my registration issues out for me before Geneva. Everyone was grateful for the extension of the registration date, after the reminder to register. The end of year was so hectic at the day job as well as my voluntary activities with ICANN and APriIGF that I lost track of time, but I was very grateful for your assistance, and to Marilyn for passing the message on as well.

The IGF is always an amazing experience and organising the logistics must be horrendous but the hard work is appreciated and the experience for us who have been a even just few times to a global IGF, is always one of great learning and networking.

We, the At-Large community of ICANN, took advantage of an opportunity to establish a booth for the first time. We were very grateful for our very central location which was absolutely ideal not only as a drop-in centre for our At-Large members to touch base with each other, it also gave us all a chance to chat with passers-by about our community and what we do in ICANN. We were able to take names of people from the global IGF community who wanted to know more about At-Large's role in the internet ecosystem and our own IG issues.

Being one of the booth organisers, this was a responsibility that took me away from some of the sessions I would have liked to attend. But one of the things that I noted was that there were several sessions that were on basically the same topic or similar, and I wondered if there might have been some opportunity for these to have been merged. Some sessions did not have many people gathered there, while others were full, so that I felt that in order to enable more topics that might have missed out this year, that perhaps some mergers could also have aided the issue of trying to fit too many sessions in during the day.

I know that it is on a miniscule scale in comparison, but we have found that when our regional IGF programming committee is trying to get as broad a range of topics in within a set number of sessions, that merging submissions on similar topics, has often led to some very interesting sessions by enabling a variety of perspectives on a particular topic to be presented and it also encourages more inclusive audience participation as well.

While from a regional IGF perspective, it would be very relevant and appropriate for regional participants to be able to share what is important for the region, I was considering the idea for the Global IGF of encouraging workshops and panel discussions where there was more specifically global representation so that particular issues could be presented from a more global perspective.

This is a model that we use in At-Large which is already divided into five regions (Asia Pacific, Africa, Europe, Latin America and North America), and on many At-Large panels and working groups we ensure that there is participation from the five regions to allow for all perspectives to be brought to the table. At the global IGF, it would be good to get a global picture of an issue, with glimpses of approaches from the different regions.

My 2c and thank you again for the invitation to attend another great IGF (and thanks too to ICANN for enabling me to attend from the South Pacific)

Regards
Maureen Hilyard
Cook Islands.