

Input from the Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM, Switzerland) to the stocktaking consultation conducted by the IGF Secretariat

OFCOM thanks for the opportunity of taking part in this stocktaking exercise and in view of past meetings, especially the 2017 IGF in Geneva, would like to share the following suggestions for the 2018 IGF.

- Continue raising the **political relevance and profile** of the IGF:
We consider that the IGF would benefit from maintaining a broad approach to “Internet Governance”, i.e. allowing and fostering discussions on issues that are of **interest for citizens and businesses** in their daily lives and that are thus relevant for **political debates**. This means that the focus should lie on issues related to the sometimes disruptive digital transformation of our societies and economies through the use and development of the internet - **in line with the broad approach on IG as established in the UN working definition of the Tunis Agenda**, instead of focusing too much on a narrow definition of “Internet governance” understood as being equivalent to critical internet resources.
- In this regard, it is important that the **sessions with highest visibility**, i.e. the host-country-led sessions and the main sessions, are **devoted to such broad topics of key political importance**. One possibility is to organize at least one high-level/main session each on broad current (1) political, (2) economic and (3) social key topics related to international digital governance.
- The **specific issues to populate the high-level/main sessions could be identified with the help of an open call for issues** (e.g. as in the Eurodig process), which should be triggered as early as possible (with topics being fine-tuned and session organizing teams being set up at the latest during the first quarter of each year). The **specific organizers of each main session could be recruited from the issue proposers**, with support from the MAG and the IGF-secretariat and the host country when appropriate. **An early definition of topics for such high visibility sessions is key** for allowing enough time for the proper organization and invitation of appropriate (high level) speakers.
- **Raising the level of political and business participation** in the IGF, especially from the global south, is desirable. This could be achieved, inter alia, through increasing the involvement of national diplomatic missions already present in Geneva, informing them and involving them as early as possible in the preparatory process.
- The **continued presence of the UNSG, if possible in person**, would be a valuable improvement, strengthening with his attendance the profile and visibility of the IGF and its outcomes. And as mentioned before also the re-appointment of a Special Advisor to the UNSG could help in raising the profile of the IGF.
- The **interactive format of the opening session** introduced in the 2017 IGF should be maintained and further improved.

- **Dynamic and interactive discussion formats** should further be promoted in all other sessions (main sessions and workshops), possibly with a more limited number of panelists – while respecting **regional, gender and stakeholder diversity** and seeking to include **young people**. The default duration of 3 hours for main sessions could be reconsidered and, possibly, reduced as a general approach – which may allow for a greater number of such sessions and more dynamic/focused discussions.
- More efforts by all stakeholder groups should be made in order to increase the outreach to **sectors undergoing deep processes of digitization**, which nonetheless are **not yet sufficiently present** in the IGF environment. We consider that, in particular, a higher presence of the **wider business community** would be welcome, and therefore, specific outreach actions to involve them in the preparatory work should be envisaged.
- Further work is needed for establishing clear **linkages to the Agenda 2030 / SDG process**, also using the Geneva international network in this field.
- Efforts to benefit from the **potential of Geneva as an international hub for global governance and dialogue** on a broad range of issues relevant to Internet Governance and digitization should be continued, in order to continue taking advantage of the large international community present in Geneva, including international organizations and international NGOs, scientific and academic networks, etc. involving them as much as possible in the preparatory work.
- The IGF should **build on the experience of the “Geneva Messages” introduced in the 2017 IGF** and continue **improving the tangibility and usability of “outcomes”** of the meeting. These “messages” should be put to effective use by all participants (e.g. by feeding them into any other relevant fora and processes), be included in all reporting activities performed by the MAG and the IGF-Secretariat, and be revisited in forthcoming IGF and NRI meetings.
- The **information sources** at the disposal of the participants during the IGF (such as instant “session reporting”, “daily reports”, etc.) should be further developed and improved, e.g. by strengthening and entering into partnerships with, inter alia, GIP, GIPO, IG Schools, etc.

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