

The IRPC Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet: Six Years On

This meeting marks six years since the IRPC Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet began as a collaborative, cross-sector project to develop a coherent and legally viable human rights framework that could be applied to Internet governance policy-making and processes. In that time it has moved from rough draft form to an authoritative working document that has framed and guided thinking across a number of sectors. In the last few years it has been implemented on the ground. For instance, it has informed intergovernmental analyses of existing human rights for the online environment (e.g. the Council of Europe Guide on Human Rights for Internet Users) and legal analyses (e.g. the Chilean Institute of Human Rights). The Charter and its “Ten Punchy Principles” have proven their relevance as working models for grassroots awareness-raising campaigns (e.g. the Hivos IG-MENA Click Rights campaign), and innovative legislative initiatives (e.g. the NZ Greens’ Internet Rights and Freedoms Bill). The Charter work has also benefitted and learnt from precursor and parallel initiatives through the contributions of individuals and organizations in the IRPC such as the APC Bill of Internet Rights and the Brazilian Marco Civil da Internet. The IRPC Charter, as a whole and the 10 IRP Principles in particular, are also part of university curricula around the world, from Latin America to the Philippines, to the UK and the USA.

The current version of the Charter has therefore achieved its goals and had a clear impact in human rights advocacy for the Internet. In addition it has been published in booklet form in several languages and so become accessible to new audiences online and in print form. Because it has been developed as a comprehensive framework anchored in international human rights law and norms, the Charter has also been a formative contributor to increasing official recognition that online rights and fundamental freedoms matter too, e.g. the UNHRC 2012 Resolution and the NETmundial Outcome Document last year. But these six years have also been marked by major technological developments, and revelations that have implications for how human rights can be protected and enjoyed online, and future roles and responsibilities for the Internet’s governance. Along with celebrating these achievements comes the opportunity to solicit suggestions from the broader IG community from all stakeholders, as part of the IGF’s Dynamic Coalition consultation. This meeting will provide an opportunity to review and summarize this feedback.

Roundtable: The first half of the meeting is in two parts: A). a roundtable discussion that assembles members of the IRPC and invited Human Rights experts attending IGF João Pessoa to first discuss recent implementations and adaptations of the IRPC Charter that have applied human rights frameworks in the technical sector (i.e. at the ICANN and IETF); recent consultations of the IRPC Charter; and recent developments in translation of the IRPC Charter (Launch of the Portuguese translation). B) Next, members of the IRPC coalition will discuss the results of the online consultation of the IRPC Charter requesting feedback from the audience on specific consultation points. At the end of this half of the session, inputs will be collected to provide support and content for a new summary statement that will be drafted and presented to the Main Session on Dynamic Coalitions Day 4: 13th Nov. 9-10:30 (Main Meeting Hall).

Annual General Meeting: The second half of the session will be the coalition’s Annual General Meeting. The IRPC Charter is available online in Portuguese, Spanish, English, and several other languages at <http://Internetrightsandprinciples.org/site/>.