

## **IGF 2015 ISOC Open Forum Report**

**Day 2, Wednesday, 11th November, 11:00-12:00, Room 3**

### **Title:**

Internet Society: connecting people together around the world

### **Report:**

The Internet Society has held Open Forums at IGFs in order to connect with IGF participants that shares the common goal of promoting an open, resilient, trusted internet, and engaging with our own ISOC community comprised of chapters, organizational and individual members. This year's focus has been on sharing successful experiences about community building and empowering people under the vision of "The Internet is for Everyone", with an overview of ISOC's activities around the globe to understand how our organization concretely strives to achieve this vision to bring the Internet of opportunities to all.

The agenda has been structured into three parts: (i) an introduction to Internet Society; (ii) the Internet Society activities around the world, its challenges on the ground for community building and empowering people; and (iii) global Internet policy challenges.

The Board of Trustees Chair, Mr Bob Hinden and the CEO, Mrs. Kathy Brown have provided an introduction to Internet Society history and priorities. ISOC has almost 80,000 individual members, 146 organizational members and 112 chapters around the world. The recent approved 2016 Action Plan has pointed on two clear priorities, connect the unconnected and restore the trust on the Internet. It was also highlighted the importance of the youth engagement on the discussions to shape the future of the Internet.

Mr Raul Echeberria, Vice-President of Global Engagement has noted the evolution of Internet Society into a distributed organization: internally with staff from 30 different countries, and in the community by organizing a distributed event (Intercommunity 2015) with 63 different locations connecting. He has also highlighted the work on IXPs and interconnection, especially in Africa and Latin America, and the support in providing grants to local community projects through ISOC's Beyond the Net program and by recently joining the Seed Alliance program. and

Mrs Ayesha Hassan, Senior Director for Stakeholder Engagement has reminded that ISOC network is comprised of civil society, technical community and business representatives, as well as our relationships with policymakers and many other organizations. The focus now is to keep building an effective and vibrant network, which includes reaching out the new stakeholders that are affected by the Internet issues.

Mr Frederick Donck European Regional Bureau has mentioned the expansion of the community building activities towards a broader geographical scope to include Central and Eastern European (CES) countries. He has also highlighted that the community plays an important role in helping to react fairly rapidly in cases we need

to position beyond policymakers and government representatives, such as the UK and France.

Mr Sebastian Bellagamba has shared the activities in LAC and Africa. Both are working in the intersection between technology, policy and development, focusing on: strengthening security and stability of the Internet, improving and enhancing the capabilities of the Internet itself, engaging with intergovernmental bodies and regulators, promoting national dialogues on Internet Governance and providing technical capacity building. He has also highlighted that the upcoming IETF meeting on April 2016 will be in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and it is the first time an IETF meeting is held in Latin America.

Mr Niel Harper, Senior Manager for Next Generation Leaders programmes has indicated that more than 3,000 people have been trained in the online course for Internet Governance. There are also other online trainings being delivered for network operations and wireless networks, in partnership with organizations such as IEEE. This year ISOC brought 21 ambassadors representing 14 countries.

Mr Nicolas Seidler has explained that based on the recent membership survey that indicated a need for more resources on Internet Governance, ISOC has develop a number of activities in this direction, such as: (i) the launch of Digital Watch, in partnership with Geneva Internet platform to provide reliable content on Internet issues and use the community expertise to bring local examples; (ii) the release of 10 policy briefs which are 2-3 pages with background on core issues: spam, local content, IXPs etc; and (iii) the partnership with Freedom House to provide data on online freedoms. Mrs Sanja Kelly, Project Director for Freedom on the Net report has presented some of their key findings: a large range of topics are being censored in many countries, from criticism of authorities to satire, blasphemy, social commentaries etc; surveillance is growing exponentially; and an increase in government targeting encryption and anonymity.

An interactive session with the audience has been opened.

Mr Vint Cerf has reminded that Internet Society received its name because they believe that a society would emerge out of the Internet. Moreover he stressed the need to make a distinction between the potential for everything to connect from the ability to decide when you don't want or to decide which things you want to be connected to or to interact with you.

Mrs Narelle Clark has added that we are part of creating the new norms that our society is building using the Internet.

Mrs Gunella Astbrink has mentioned the need to include people with disabilities issues while looking for connect the unconnected.

## **Agenda**

**Moderator: Sebastian Bellagamba, Regional Bureau Director, Latin America and Caribbean**

11:00-11:10 Introduction to the Internet Society **(10 min)**

- Kathy Brown, CEO and Bob Hinden, BoT Chair

11:10-11:30 Internet Society around the world: challenges on the ground for community building and empowering people **(20 min)**

- Raul Echeberria, Ayesha Hassan, Frederik Donck, Sebastian Bellagamba and Niel Harper

11:30-11:45 ISOC's approach to global Internet policy challenges: focus on Internet & Human Rights **(15 min)**

- Nicolas Seidler, with special guest Sanja Kelly, Project Director Freedom on the Net report.

11:45-12:00 Q&A with the audience **(15 min)**

Reported by Raquel Gatto, Internet Society