

LETTER FROM SÃO PAULO

September 18th and 19th, 2023

1st Lusophone Internet Governance Forum

We, the participants of the 1st Lusophone Internet Governance Forum, gathered both remotely and in person in São Paulo, Brazil, from September 18 to 19, 2023, representing Portuguese-speaking countries and communities, have engaged in dialogues and debates about the multiple interactions of the Portuguese language regarding the development, utilization, and governance of the Internet.

1. We acknowledge the linguistic and cultural diversity within our Portuguese-speaking countries and acknowledge the unity inherent in our Portuguese language, which manifests itself diversely and locally in our nations, on the different continents of the planet.
2. Consequently, we recognize that convening participants from diverse Portuguese-speaking countries to deliberate on global and local issues related to Internet use and governance in our shared language is also a recognition of the multilingualism, that must be incorporated and expanded on the Internet and within its governance and development organizations.
3. In this context, we reaffirm the declarations made during the ***World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)*** in Geneva on December 12, 2003: *“Cultural and linguistic diversity, while stimulating respect for cultural identity, traditions and religions, is essential to the development of an Information Society based on the dialogue among cultures and regional and international cooperation. It is an important factor for sustainable development.”*.
4. We reaffirm the commitment expressed in the ***Tunis Agenda*** of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), dated December 18, 2005: *“We commit to working earnestly towards multilingualization of the Internet, as part of a multilateral, transparent and democratic process, involving governments and all stakeholders, in their respective roles.”* (Chapter C – Internet Governance, Paragraph 53).
5. Furthermore, we are committed to the principles outlined the ***NETmundial Declaration***, in the 2014, *which states that “Internet governance must respect, protect and promote cultural and linguistic diversity in all its forms.”*.

6. As Portuguese-speaking countries, we not only endorse multilingualism but also underscore the pluricentric nature of the Portuguese language and its significance as a multicultural and multiethnic vehicle for fostering peace and facilitating dialogue across all continents, a multidimensional contribution that we offer to the world.
7. We also agree that collaborative debate on our experiences and initiatives in the field of Internet governance and utilization can inspire, enhance, and even support the requirements of local development in our Lusophone nations.
8. In pursuit of this objective, we pledge to engage in dialogue within our countries with all sectors interested in the debates on the uses and developments of the Internet and its governance: State actors and policymakers responsible for Internet-related matters, business and innovation sectors within the Internet, technical sectors that support and maintain the Internet in our locations, organizations dedicated to defending and expanding social rights, academic institutions and researchers spanning various fields of knowledge, especially linguists, as well as local content producers disseminating their work on and through the Internet, broadening our multiplicity.
9. We advocate and encourage our local Internet governance spaces, as well as our meetings and debate forums, to embrace a multistakeholder approach as the very nature of consensus-building processes and the guiding principles that uphold the requirements of plural democratic rules, by enabling the various sectors to accompany, voice their opinions, share particularities and build common understandings, preserving and stimulating the collective creation character of the Internet.
10. We also emphasize our commitment to ensuring that our local and collective Internet governance spaces promote and expand the inclusion of individuals from diverse backgrounds, including gender, race and color, ethnic, generational, social, cultural and linguistic diversity.
11. As a ***Sub-Regional Forum of the Global IGF***, taking into account and considering that Portuguese is an official language in countries across four continents and is the sixth most widely spoken language globally (L1), we affirm our support for advocating Portuguese to be recognized as an official working language at the United Nations, alongside with English, Spanish, French, Russian, Arabic and Mandarin.
12. We invite the ***CPLP – Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries*** and the ***IILP – International Institute of the Portuguese Language*** to join efforts to insert the Portuguese language into the digital and technological environment, especially at the present time, to support the formulation of strategic guidelines for the development of Artificial Intelligence and large language models (MLL) that meet the requirements of the Portuguese language.

13. While affirming our commitment in the continued organization of an annual meeting with the global Portuguese-speaking community, fostering open, democratic, pluralistic and collaborative dialogues, reflections and research on the development, use and governance of the Internet, we strongly advocate for a transparent, resilient and secure Internet, which promotes human rights, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of creative expression, which is always vigilant with privacy and the safeguarding of personal data, while promoting the inclusion of young individuals and women, the protection of children and adolescents' rights, social inclusion; and combating hate speech, racism and all forms of gender and LGBTQIA+ prejudice.
14. In closing, we congratulate the organizing team for the brilliant production of this 1st Lusophone Forum. We also invite them to also support the organization of the 2nd Forum in Cape Verde, proposing and creating a secretariat with multistakeholder representation, equitable collaboration with Lusophone countries to timely debate, submit programming for the next edition and propose guidelines to be approved for future annual editions of the Lusophone Internet Governance Forum.

São Paulo, September 18 and 19, 2023.