

## **Justice Adel Maged**

I submit this input in my personal capacity.

### **Submission to the IGF Secretariat**

Taking Stock of IGF 2025 and Suggestions for IGF 2026  
(With a focus on the Global South and Developing Countries)

#### **1. What Worked Well**

1.1 New Tracks: The creation of new tracks—such as the Judiciary Track—expanded inclusivity by bringing new communities into the dialogue. This innovation can enrich the programme and strengthen IGF’s legitimacy.

1.2 High-Level Participation: IGF 2025 attracted ministers, parliamentarians, judges, regulators, civil society, and private sector leaders, reinforcing the IGF’s policy relevance.

1.3 Rapid Organization: Despite a compressed timeline, the Norwegian host ensured a well-executed event, demonstrating IGF’s adaptability.

1.4 Thematic Breadth: The programme addressed critical issues—artificial intelligence, cybercrime, digital inclusion, and human rights—responding to both developed and developing nations’ priorities. Given AI’s dual potential to drive human development and pose risks, IGF 2026 should deepen its focus on artificial intelligence.

1.5 Hybrid Engagement: The hybrid format enabled broader participation, giving access to many delegates from the Global South who could not travel.

#### **2. What Did Not Work So Well**

2.1 Limited Global South Representation: Delegates from Africa, the Arab States, and parts of Asia-Pacific were underrepresented, particularly in agenda-setting roles.

2.2 Youth and Disability Inclusion: Participation of youth and persons with disabilities was largely symbolic; their structural integration into decision-making (e.g., MAG membership) remains essential.

2.3 Programme Overcrowding: Excessive parallel sessions diluted audiences and forced difficult choices. Short time slots also constrained speakers and limited audience interaction.

2.4 Hybrid Participation Gaps: Bandwidth limitations hindered full online engagement, particularly in developing regions.

### **3. Suggestions for IGF 2026**

#### **A. Preparatory Process**

- Conduct targeted outreach to Global South institutions (universities, courts, bar associations, NGOs).
- Provide capacity-building orientation for Global South newcomers, with a focus on AI as a tool for development when responsibly governed.

#### **B. Programme & Structure**

- Consolidate themes into fewer clusters (e.g., AI & Justice, Cybersecurity, Human Rights & Digital Freedoms, Digital Inclusion).
- Ensure 25–30% of sessions are led by Global South stakeholders.
- Diversify formats: roundtables, debates, case studies—with sufficient time for dialogue.
- Shift from quantity to quality: reduce parallel sessions, extend time slots, and allow deeper exchanges.
- Strengthen focus on human rights and legal frameworks to regulate emerging technologies and combat cybercrime.
- Highlight best practices in AI deployment, showcasing responsible models that balance innovation with accountability, rights protection, and social impact.

#### **C. Hybrid Format**

- Develop regional hubs in Africa, the Arab States, and Asia to support collective participation where travel is not feasible.

#### **D. Logistics**

- Simplify visa processes and expand financial assistance for Global South delegates.

#### **E. Participants**

- Systematically involve judiciaries and bar associations, building on the Judiciary Track.
- Promote South–South dialogues linking Africa, the Arab States, and Latin America.
- Establish mentorship systems pairing Global South youth with senior experts.
- Create tailored programme streams to strengthen Global South capacities in digital governance.

#### **F. Intersessional Activities**

- Ensure BPFs and PNs deliver policy briefs in advance and co-leadership by Global South experts.

- Feed NRI findings directly into main sessions, not just side events.

### **G. Specific Tracks**

- High-Level Leaders Track: Guarantee Global South participation among ministers, judges, and regulators.
- Parliamentary Track: Enhance Global South parliamentary engagement.
- Judiciary Track: Institutionalize it as a permanent component of the IGF. Recognise it as a pillar of rights-based Internet governance, with judges safeguarding rule of law and accountability. Prioritise strengthening judicial capacity in the responsible use of AI in courts.

### **H. Gender Perspective**

- Ensure gender balance in panels and leadership, with deliberate inclusion of women leaders from the Global South.

### **I. IGF Village**

- Reduce booth costs and provide shared spaces for Global South NGOs, including support for entrepreneurs, to ensure fair representation.

### **J. Communications & Outputs**

- Publish plain-language outcome briefs tailored to policymakers in developing regions.
- Translate the Lillestrøm Messages into all UN languages.
- Disseminate outcomes through NRIs, universities, and judicial bodies in the Global South.

## **4. Conclusion**

To build on IGF 2025, IGF 2026 must move from symbolic to structural inclusivity by:

- Deepening engagement of the Global South.
- Strengthening human rights and legal perspectives.
- Investing in capacity-building and South–South cooperation.
- Consolidating the Judiciary Track as a pillar of rights-based and accountable digital governance.

Only by embedding these priorities can the IGF ensure a digital future that is inclusive, just, and globally representative.