



**IGF 2019 Second Open Consultations and Multistakeholder  
Advisory Group (MAG) Meeting  
9-11 April  
Room A - International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Geneva, Switzerland**

**Executive Summary: Announcements, Decisions Taken and Next Steps**

- *Discussions in the meeting considered both long-term questions on the IGF's future strategic direction and where improvements were most urgently needed, as well as shorter-term programmatic ones tied to the 2019 annual meeting. The questions of multi-year topics the IGF might take on and of strengthened communications and outputs figured prominently in the context of future work. Participants acknowledged that in an increasingly crowded digital policy ecosystem, the IGF should distinguish itself through curated topical focuses and more impactful and widely disseminated outputs.*
- *Related to the 2019 IGF, it was decided that MAG members would undertake more focused programme shaping around the three themes - (1) Data Governance (2) Digital Inclusion, and (3) Security, Safety, Stability and Resilience – by forming thematic evaluation groups to discuss proposed selected workshops under each theme. They would meet virtually before the Third face-to-face Open Consultations and MAG Meeting and during the MAG meeting itself, in breakout groups, if necessary.*
- *The German Government announced that Chancellor Angela Merkel would participate in the annual meeting's opening ceremony.*
- *UNDESA confirmed an early start to the 2020 MAG and MAG Chair renewal process, with a public launch of the process expected imminently.*
- *The Secretariat informed that funding applications were now being accepted from Global South participants to attend the annual meeting in Berlin.*
- *It was decided that the deadline for workshop and other session proposals would be extended from Friday 12 April to Sunday 14 April.*

**Overall Summary**

1. The Second Open Consultations and MAG Meeting of the 2019 IGF preparatory cycle took place from 9 to 11 April in Room A. The venue was kindly provided by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in Geneva, Switzerland. Online participation was made available for those who were unable to join in person. Ms. Lynn St. Amour moderated the meeting as the Chair of the MAG, together with Ms. Daniela Brönstrup of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy of Germany, as Host Country Co-Chair for 2019. Mr. Chengetai Masango represented the IGF Secretariat and Mr. Deniz Susar represented the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

2. The [agenda](#) for the three-day meeting focused on developing the 2019 IGF programme in line with strategic priorities, including but not limited to, the strengthening of outputs and intersessional activities, increasing stakeholder engagement, improving outreach, and a planning for a possible multi-year topical framework. The meeting's Open Consultations were exceptionally held on the second day in order to present the community with an overview of the strategic discussion by the MAG on Day 1 and seek their inputs. [Transcripts](#) from the proceedings can be accessed via the IGF website.

3. The meeting opened with remarks from Mr. Susar on behalf of Mr. Juwang Zhu, who has newly been re-appointed Director of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, UNDESA, the administrative home of the IGF. Mr. Susar commended the MAG on its selection of timely and interesting themes for the programme, and conveyed that on the UNDESA side, efforts were underway to both renew the MAG for the 2020 cycle and identify a 2020 IGF host country [the [call for nominations](#) for the MAG and MAG chair renewal was formally launched following the meeting, on 15 April]. An announcement regarding the 2020 host might be possible by the time of the Third Open Consultations and MAG Meeting in June.

4. Mr. Susar was followed by Ms. Brönstrup, who briefed the MAG on preparations for the 2019 annual meeting in Berlin. She informed that German Chancellor Angela Merkel, engaged in the IGF process early on, would be giving opening remarks at the meeting. It was hoped that the UN Secretary-General might also address the opening, as the German host country team continue to work on raising awareness of the IGF among the broader public and toward a highly visible annual meeting. Ms. Brönstrup shared Germany's plans for a high-level multistakeholder session on Day 0, invitations for which would go out soon from the Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, as well as for a session co-organized with Germany's Bundestag, featuring parliamentarians from around the world, including the Global South, and to take place on the last day of the IGF.

5. The Secretariat confirmed it had opened [applications for travel support](#) to the annual meeting for participants from the Global South, thanks to funding from the German Government. After sharing initial workshop, open forum and other IGF 2019 submission figures, and in response to a short discussion by the MAG, it announced it would [extend the deadline](#) for all proposals and session requests from 12 April, to Sunday 14 April, 23:59 UTC.

6. During the 'Strategic Discussion' portion of Day 1, MAG members considered possible working topics the IGF could commit to for several years, as part of a multi-year plan for the IGF. This followed on the work done by the MAG Working Group on a Multiyear Strategic Work Plan (WG-WMP), led by the MAG Chair. The Group closed at the end of 2018 and submitted for the MAG's consideration during the 2019 cycle a strategy paper, which includes a topical review. There was agreement on the need for such a plan, with the observation made that some intersessional activities, such as the Best Practice Forums (BPFs) on Cybersecurity and on Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data & Artificial Intelligence (AI), already project their work into future cycles and could act as a blueprint for the wider IGF. This upcoming IGF had also already identified three consolidated themes around which there is community and MAG support – [Security; Digital Inclusion; and Data Governance](#). As themes that closely mirror the three 'pillars' of the UN – Peace & Security; Human Rights; and Development – they could be one thematic basis for a multi-year plan. If specific 'focus themes' for the IGF were agreed on, they could be applied across the intersessional work and feed into the annual meeting for a synchronized approach.

7. In related discussions on the future work of the IGF, it was said that the findings from the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation (HLPDC) should be noted, as they may have recommendations that impact the IGF or that the IGF could decide to take forward. It was remarked that future work should also consider the three fundamental suggestions made by the Secretary-General himself at the 2018 IGF, in the context of long-term improvements, namely for a more multidisciplinary approach to the IGF's discussions; the development of a shared language or references around Internet governance; and the inclusion of weak or missing voices in the Internet governance debate.

8. MAG members also discussed at length the issue of IGF outputs. There is a common belief that the IGF community, the Secretariat/UN and MAG through their

respective stakeholders – should do more to increase the utility of its outputs. There was a view among some MAG members that there is, in fact, a wealth of outputs produced by the IGF, but that they are not sufficiently disseminated or read. There was also a view among some MAG members that the outputs could be more accessible and useful. In connection with this, it was shared that a communications plan developed by the IGF Secretariat-UNDESA would have the IGF 2018 annual meeting outputs, the [Chair's Summary and key 'IGF Messages'](#), disseminated to UN permanent missions, UN agencies, other intergovernmental organizations and bodies such as the European Commission, as a starting point for better promotion of IGF outputs. It was remarked that the way information is presented on the IGF website is suboptimal for finding outputs, but it was understood that this is not a technical issue but rather a question of marketing, outreach, strategic communications and website restructuring for different audiences e.g. annual meeting participants, all stakeholder groups, etc.

9. Concrete suggestions for improving outputs and related processes included a careful review or re-structuring in 2019 of the reporting process for sessions at the IGF, with guidance on reporting given to session organizers well ahead of the meeting. Individual session reports are particularly important, as they feed into the cross-cutting, thematic 'IGF Messages' drafted by the Secretariat. Larger questions were raised about what is meant by the IGF needing to do more on outputs – are the outputs insufficiently concrete, or insufficiently specific? Aside from accessibility on the website, what qualities are they lacking that do not make them as useful as they could be? It was mentioned that outputs from the UN Global Compact, as one example, could be used as a model.

10. It was agreed that the outputs and reporting question was linked to how the meeting programme was structured. There was also discussion on how much the sessions in a thematic stream should be interlinked, building on and advancing key topics in each stream. This was to be discussed further once the MAG member evaluations were complete and as part of the final programme setting process. There was support for 'topping and tailing' the three thematic streams through main sessions, and this will be pursued in the next round of programme discussions.

11. Issues of outputs, communications and programme structure were further examined on Day 2 of the meeting, during open consultations with the community. Comments were made that, despite chronic under-funding and under-resourcing, key conclusions from the IGF should be able to be captured. Creative use of social media and other tools, as well as ensuring that outputs resonate better in Internet search results, was strongly encouraged. Outputs should be more clearly useful, so as to create a reason for sharing them. The IGF, it was said, needed to do a better job telling its story and communicating its unique set of values and outputs. It could also improve on highlighting its own value within the UN system by demonstrating how the multistakeholder model works, as the organization looks to increase engagement with digital actors through the HLPDC and other efforts.

12. In terms of programme structure, the community expressed much support for the 'top and tail' approach mentioned a day earlier. It was also expressed that the MAG should seek not only to reduce duplicative and repetitive sessions in the programme, but reduce the number of sessions overall. A suggestion was also made to specifically include sessions that support accelerated action or partnerships, as part of an enhanced, results-based orientation for the IGF.

13. Day 2 also featured short briefings from the IGF's 2019 BPFs on Cybersecurity; Gender & Access; IoT, Big Data & AI; and Local Content; as well as from the Dynamic Coalitions (DCs) and National, Regional & Youth Initiatives (NRIs) communities. Among the NRIs to address the MAG, focusing specifically on their recent or upcoming annual meetings, were the Russian IGF, the European Dialogue on Internet Governance

(EuroDIG), the West African IGF, the Latin American and Caribbean IGF (LAC IGF), French IGF and South Eastern European Dialogue on Internet Governance (SEEDIG). Reflecting on the need to have DCs and NRIs, in particular, integrated into the annual meeting programme, it was said that these respective communities' requests for individual and main sessions should be carefully considered in terms of placement in the programme. Specific ideas were put forward to have DCs and NRIs, with their valuable expertise, brought into the organization and substance of main sessions, as well as to have physical spaces in the venue for DC and NRI awareness-raising.

14. The afternoon of Day 2 featured traditional updates from a number of Internet-governance related entities on their work and relevance to the IGF. Statements were made by the EU Commission, the Geneva Internet Platform (GIP), the Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD) [delivered exceptionally on Day 3], the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the International Chamber of Commerce - Business Action to Support the Information Society (ICC-BASIS), the Internet Society (ISOC), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

15. The open consultations concluded with a longer briefing from Mr. Jovan Kurbalija, Executive Director of the HLPDC Secretariat. Previewing the possible recommendations of the HLPDC's report to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurbalija outlined three models for addressing gaps in digital cooperation that were under consideration by the group. Namely, these were: 1. A new public/private digital cooperation initiative that takes a 'network of networks' approach, and which could propose policy norms and have support and capacity building functions; 2. The use or strengthening of the IGF, that would act as a close interface between the multistakeholder and multilateral communities as well as provide a 'helpdesk' for developing countries; 3. A digital commons platform more closely linked to the UN. The MAG Chair commented that the Secretary-General's Office had proposed having discussions on the HLPDC report at the IGF in Berlin, and requested that the MAG consider this. The Chair also noted that engaging those involved in Internet Governance but not necessarily present at the IGF was another important consideration for the MAG given the global community. In addition, the Chair asked the HLPDC, if in their report they had assessed reasons as to why the IGF, as a forum for the advancement of Internet Governance matters, conceived within the UN system and convened by the UN Secretary-General, has systematically lacked in participation and resources from within and external to the UN (noting that there had been good support from DESA and specifically from the IGF Secretariat). It was also noted that the HLPDC report is expected to be sent to the Secretary General in the second quarter of 2019.

16. The last day of the meeting was dedicated to broader programme shaping discussions, including themes, upcoming workshop evaluations, main sessions and meeting titles. There was agreement among the MAG, in light of higher expectations of the IGF, to intensify efforts at producing a more focused programme. This would entail looking closely at the policy questions tied to each of the three major programme themes as they emerge from the workshop proposal process, and potentially narrowing them down to those the community feels are most relevant. The workshop evaluation process itself, so as to both ensure the quality of selected proposals and coherence within the themes, it was decided, would be managed by three discrete thematic evaluating groups. The groups would meet virtually following individual grading, as well as in breakout groups during the face-to-face meeting in Berlin. MAG member assignment to the groups would be random, although members would have the opportunity to contribute to the theme of their choice during the development of main sessions.

17. It was widely felt that a focused programme should 'thread' the narrative themes across the sessions, something that would be supported by a 'topping and tailing' approach, with main sessions bookending the programme week. The main sessions at

the top of the week could provide introductions to the themes, and conclusions based on the sessions held at the tail-end. Suggestions were made to shorten the main sessions this year, to either 2 or 1.5 hours each, as well as to strive for sessions that are dynamic and highly participatory (along the lines of a 'town hall' format), and to include where possible, high-level personalities. Caution was expressed as to the tail-end sessions, with the need to ensure that they are not exclusively for 'reporting out'. The issue of concurrent sessions was also raised. Following on feedback stretching back several years, the MAG could consider reducing the number of 'parallel rooms' in the schedule, as part of the drive toward a focused programme.

18. To support this work, the Secretariat agreed it would share immediately after the workshop proposal deadline the proportion of submissions under each theme, as well as the policy questions from the submissions by theme. It would also consider the question of concurrent sessions and how this can be best managed in the context of the venue space offered. The Working Group on Workshops Process (WG-WSP) would also meet to review and finalize process changes from the previous year.

19. Lastly, MAG members exchanged ideas on the 2019 meeting title, using as a basis the German host's suggested iteration, *One world, one web, one vision: shaping tomorrow's society*. Without one title having been conclusively agreed on, some proposals from the MAG included: *One internet, a common vision for shaping the digital society*; *One world, one internet, one vision: influencing tomorrow's society*; *One world, one web, one vision: IGF 2019*; and *One world, one web, one future: IGF 2019*. There was some concern expressed over the conflation of the term 'web' with the term 'Internet' as the web is an application on the Internet.

20. The meeting closed with the understanding that further discussions on these items would advance through upcoming virtual meetings. The MAG will continue to hold virtual meetings on a regular basis, approximately every two weeks. The Third face-to-face Open Consultations and MAG Meeting is scheduled to take place on 5-7 June in Berlin, Germany.

**List of Participants**

<b>MAG Chair</b>			
Ms.	St. Amour	Lynn	Internet Matters
<b>Host Country Co-Chair</b>			
Ms.	Brönstrup	Daniela	Deputy Director General, Regulatory Framework for Digital Policy, Postal Policy, International Affairs and Media, Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy of Germany
<b>MAG Members</b>			
Ms.	Abdalla Mahamoud Ali	Alaa	Telecommunication and Post Regulatory Authority of Sudan
Ms.	Alhashimi	Hana	United Arab Emirates Permanent Mission to the United Nations
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Mr.	Candia Ibarra	Miguel	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay
Ms.	Cassa	Concettina	Agency for Digital Italy
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Ms.	Chair	Chenai	Research ICT Africa
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-	Echeberría	Raúl	Independent
-	ELERYAN	ELSAYED	International Federation of Websites
-	Erramuspe	María Alejandra	Uruguay

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-	KONAN	Montresor	Youth For Internet
-	Kwok	WaiMin	UN DESA
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-	Li	Meng	CST
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-	SIRRI CAROLINE	NFORNAH	Cameroon
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