

Comments posted in the IGF website by Juan Alfonso Fernández González about the IGF Plus proposed in the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation

### **The Advisory Group ---> WHAT**

Its task is to identify WHAT policy issues should be discussed.

### **The Cooperation Accelerator ---> WHO**

Its task is to identify WHO should sit at the table to discuss a particular policy issue identified by the Advisory Group, and to coordinate such discussion. It is paramount the participation of the relevant UN agencies (ITU, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNDP, regional economic commissions, etc.)

### **The Policy Incubator ---> HOW**

Its task is to identify HOW a particular policy issue should be "solved". The policy incubation should be done in coordination with the Cooperation Accelerator to create synergies and avoid duplications. Additionally, the identified gaps in the existing norms and regulations, should be submitted to the Advisory Group so the corresponding policy issue is considered for discussion.

### **The Observatory and Help Desk ---> 2 main functions:**

**The Observatory function:** Continuously evaluate the whole IGF Plus process and emit timely reports. Also to do prospective studies in collaboration with the UN Tech Envoy.

**The Help Desk function:** To function as an efficient "clearing house" collecting needs from the different stakeholder groups and dispatching them to the appropriate IGF Plus body. (See point 12 in: <https://www.intgovforum.org/cms/documents/igf-meeting/igf-2016/takingstock/762--1/file>)

### **The IGF Trust Fund ---> Taxes**

Who "owns" the common words (not names or brands) in the different languages that are used as domain names in the Internet?

Who "owns" the personal data of Internet users?

Who "owns" the content (text, audio/music, video) that individuals share in the Internet?

While there is a debate around these questions, a handful of companies are "monetizing" these words, data and content.

So a tax could be imposed to these companies.

The collected taxes should be more than enough to finance the IGF Plus.

Additionally, the surplus monies accrued could go to a Universal Internet Fund that can be used to finance developmental projects to achieve meaningful Internet use in undeserved communities.

### **The IGF Trust Fund ---> A clarification**

I have received some questions about whether my previous comment on the IGF Trust Fund reflects any animosity against the Internet companies mentioned.

I want to clarify that this is not the case!

On the contrary: I am an admirer of these companies that in a creative way have managed to extract value from ICTs, for their own gain, but also creating 'spills' that benefit others in the global economy.

As a former computer programmer in the 80s, I can fully assess the merit of the founders of these companies, who with their intelligence and effort, and that of their collaborators, managed to solve definitively the "*Solow Paradox*", and turn the ICTs into an engine for economic, social and cultural development in many parts of the world.

These companies and their business models grew in an environment dominated by a corporate culture that gives priority to the profit of its shareholders over other considerations.

But I am pleased to know that very recently a major US business organization released a new Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation.

(see: <https://www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-redefines-the-pur...>)

The Statement says at the end: "*Each of our stakeholders is essential. We commit to deliver value to all of them, for the future success of our companies, our communities and our country.*"

I hope that for transnational corporations, as in the case of Internet companies, this refers to all countries and communities of the world.

Therefore, to be consistent with this new commitment that these companies have adopted, their participation in the global mechanisms for digital collaboration is essential.

It is in this sense that I consider appropriate to suggest that these companies dedicate a small part of their income to this purpose, which includes, among other actions, the financing of the IGF.



**Juan Alfonso Fernández González** is an Advisor in the Ministry of Communications and Assistant Professor in the University of Informatics Sciences of Cuba.

Previously he was Coordinator of the Cuban Commission for Electronic Commerce, Director of Information Technology of Cuba's Ministry of the Steel, Mechanic and Electronic Industry, Technical Director and Project Manager in the Robotic and Software Center, and a Senior Researcher in the Microelectronics Research Center of the Technological University of Havana.

He was a member of the United Nation's Secretary General Multistakeholder Advisory Group for the Internet Governance Forum, of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation on Public Policy Issues Pertaining to the Internet of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, and an Advisor for the Cuban expert of the United Nation's 5<sup>th</sup> Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security.

Before, he was a member of the United Nations' Global Alliance for ICT and Development, ICT Task Force and Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG).

He participated actively in the negotiating process for the outcome documents of both phases of the World Summit on the Information Society.

He has given lectures and published articles about microelectronics, computer programming, robotics, local microcomputer networks, the management of big software projects, Internet applications, electronic commerce, the economic sustainability of international telecommunication networks, ICT for development, Internet governance and cybersecurity.

He has a Physics Degree from Havana University and the degree of Senior Researcher of the National Academy of Sciences of Cuba.

He has received various technical or scientific awards, and has a Patent in Image Processing. He is also a FIDE International Chess Master.

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