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Berlin IGF Report - Inputs for Stock Taking IGF 2020

Let me thank you once again for giving me the opportunity to make a contribution to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) 2019 which occurred from 25 -29 November, 2019 in Berlin, Germany. The overarching theme for Berlin IGF was “One world , One net , One vision” . IGF 2019 was also organized well and will also be remembered for having both the German Chancellor Angela Merkel and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to open the forum. During the opening session, the German Chancellor and the Secretary General Guterres likened the resulting benefits to Germans after the breakdown of the Berlin wall about 30 yrs to the corresponding benefits enjoyed by the Internet through the impact of the IGFs. The success of IGF 2019 could not have been achieved without the critical role played by IGF Secretariat, the Multi-stakeholder Group (MAG), the Government of Germany (the host country) , and other host organizations. This submission is being put together by Timothy Kwadwo Asiedu the Founder and Managing Director / CEO of TIM Technology Services Ltd., Accra, Ghana.

Regarding the stakeholder group, the author belonged to the Technical group and his region is Africa.

1.0 :Please find below the responses to various questions:

- 1.1 Taking stock of 2019 programming, output, preparatory process, community intersectional activities and the event itself: What worked well? What worked not so well?

In taking stock for IGF 2019, programming, output involving participants in the UN IGF’s Best Practice Forum and Others, preparatory process, community intersectional activities consisting also the various BPFs and others all worked well. IGF 2019 had an engaging discussion and a remarkable hospitality exhibited by the Germans.

Logistics: On the issue of Logistics, the host country, Germany and other surrounding communities did remarkable well towards the preparation for the 2019 Berlin IGF. The Berlin IGF recorded a smooth organization. In view the German government encouragement for a “paperless” environment, a lot of digital applications were used. Also re-usable water bottles and water filling station were used during the Forum. Also the German Government also provided fully accessible meeting rooms and facilities, including Child Care services.

- 1.2 What suggestions for improvements could be made for 2019? (Please focus on programming, the outputs preparatory process, community intersectional activities and improvements for the 14th annual meeting and beyond).

Considering any logistic challenges like Internet access for some participants and Internet connections for remote participation not working properly, which may have occurred during the first day of the Berlin IGF, organizers of 2019 IGF will have to look at them and ensure that it does not re-occur, through adopting continuous improvement strategy.

1.3 IGF 2019 overall programme structure and flow (in particular the three thematic tracks: digital inclusion; data governance; and security, safety, stability and resilience) *

The IGF 2019 overall programme structure and flow, especially the three thematic tracks are as follows:

Digital Inclusion:

Discussion on Digital Inclusion extends further than Access to Networks. At IGF 2019, the debate on the topic focused on issues like AI and its tools. Not only that but some of the session's discussion included online use of Local Language, education, financial inclusion, gender equality and others.

Data resource has also become a critical commodity and its advanced usage has created some level of inequality in the system. In fact technical innovation has come to serve the people but not the other way round.

Because Digital Inclusion is an important topic to society, its discussion will continue at 2020 IGF and other IGFs yet to be organized.

Data Governance:

In the governance of data, data becomes useful when it is shared. This Berlin IGF discussions also focused on data as an amplifier of inequalities in modern society. During this year's IGF on data governance, further effective discussion on Artificial Intelligence (AI) continued.

Cybersecurity: Centrality of cyber norms:

This year's IGF discussion on Cybersecurity was hinged on Security, Safety, Stability and resilience. This year's discussion on Cybersecurity at IGF focused on Cyber norm too.

- 1.4 IGF 2019 programme content: please comment on the content of workshops, main sessions, high level sessions, open forums, BPF, DC and NRIs sessions, as well as on the speakers and quality of discussions:

During the Berlin IGF, the MAG did a lot hard work to provide a good content for the workshops, main Sessions, BPF, open forms, DC and the NRIs session.

The following were some observation on content for the Berlin IGF, apart from what has been shared above:

On the issue of Best Practice Forum (BPF), the following were some observations:

- i. Implementation of Cybersecurity agreements were considered during the Forum.
- ii. On the issue of BPF Gender access, women and gender diverse people's participation were encouraged on Digital economy.
- iii. Preservation of Cultural heritage and local content best practices were discussed during the Forum.

Regarding National, Regional and Youth IGF Initiatives (NRI), the following were considered at the Forum:

A number of initiatives under NRI were considered under "Emerging Technologies" topics during the Berlin IGF.

In preparation towards the Berlin IGF, the NRI organized some collaborative sessions leading upto the identification of key topics which are as follows:

- i. Access
- ii. Cybersecurity
- iii. Human rights
- iv. Privacy and Data Protection
- v. Online Content Regulation

Dynamic Coalition (DC):

During the Berlin IGF, the IGF DC continued its work as an independent, multistakeholder experts discussion groups on variety of topics, respecting standards of transparency and inclusiveness.

High – Level Panel on Digital Cooperation (HLPDC):

The UN Secretary – General Antonio Guterres in July, 2018 established HLPDC. The panel of a diverse group of Leaders including government ministers, young entrepreneurs, academics, and activist work on digital cooperation with the main responsibilities as thus: “identify good examples and propose modalities for working cooperatively across, disciplines and borders to address challenges in digital age”.

Before the Berlin IGF, the High Level Panel interacted with a lot of stakeholders which yielded positive dividend in the forum.

1.5 IGF 2019 participants:

Regarding the Stakeholder representation in Berlin IGF, key representations for Civil Society, Government, Inter Governmental Organisations, Private Sector, Technical Community and Press / Media were organized. For the first time during the 14th annual IGF in Berlin, we had German Parliament inviting their colleagues Parliamentarians from other parts of the world participating in the Forum. Not just inviting the member of parliaments (MPs), but there was allocation of financial support to MPs from the global south which led to almost 150 MPs from 56 countries being present in Berlin. The MPs meeting resulted in the creation of documents which recognizes the responsibility of MPs in creating regulatory frameworks for the next generation of Internet governance which will help to keep cyberspace free, open, stable, not fragmented and innovative.

1.6 IGF 2019 Village:

The Berlin IGF also had a village where participants of the Forum had the opportunity to exhibit their products in booths. The village had a well designed lay-out with non-commercial booths for the display of the participant’s products. At the Village were the displays or distribution of the relevant information about the activities of the stakeholders of the IGF. The booths at the village were shared on a first come, first served basis; taking into consideration the stakeholder group and also the regional diversity balance.

The IGF Village is a good initiative which the MAG should consider repeating it at IGF 2020 in Poland.

1.7 IGF 2019 communications outreach and outputs:

With regards to communications outreach and output, the Berlin IGF was well organized. The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, through the Under Secretary – General for Economic and Social Affairs, had to send out invitations to all stakeholders of the IGF and in the end it resulted in a good record participation. The following are the breakdown:

- i. Onsite participation : 3,679
- ii. Online participation : 2,952
- iii. Total sessions for the Forum : 200 sections
- iv. Female participation: 42 % and thus have 58% as men.
- v. Number of workshops : 64
- vi. Open Forum for the IGF: 36
- vii. High Level and main sessions: 10
- viii. Number of Dynamic Coalition Meetings : 14
- ix. Number of participating countries : 161

1.8 IGF 2019 logistics (venue, catering, security, registration etc.):

Logistically, the Berlin IGF was organized at a spacious location with good security. On site participants were provided with a good meal which helped to bring down participation fees. Each participant for the program was asked to register which was helpful. On site participants were provided with a badge which was helpful with identification. The hospitable nature of the Germans did help a lot in the Forum.

1.9 Any other comments on the IGF 2019

It must be emphasized that Berlin IGF was well organized.

2.0 **What are your suggestions for improvements for IGF 2020?**

2.1 Preparatory process (timeline, call for workshop proposals, workshop selection, MAG and OC meetings etc.) *

Considering the successes and failures chalked at Berlin IGF with regards to the preparatory process and considering the continuous improvement strategy in Quality management, a good preparatory process will be identified for Katowice IGF in Poland upon further assessment on available information .

2.2 Community intersessional activities (BPFs, Dynamic Coalitions) and National, Regional and Youth IGFs and how they can best connect with the global IGF. *

Berlin IGF organized the Community intersectional activities (BPFs, Dynamic Coalition and NRI's) very well. Most of the activities of the Community Intersessional will also be repeated at IGF 2020 based on a well organized programme at Berlin IGF.

2.3 Overall programme structure and flow (introductory and concluding sessions, main and other sessions, schedule structure etc.) *

General organization for the overall programme structure was done well at Berlin IGF. Although I could not join the Forum on-site, the schedule structure and the daily e-mail communications were excellently done. The Introductory and concluding sessions at the Forum were also organized very well by the Germans.

2.4 Do you think there should be thematic tracks as there were in 2019? Please indicate if you believe the three 2019 thematic tracks should be retained (digital inclusion; data governance; and security, safety, stability and resilience). If not, what should take their place or what theme should be added? *

Please I believe the three 2019 thematic tracks should be retained (digital inclusion; data governance, and security, safety, stability and resilience), since further best practices will be required for IGF 2020.

2.5 Programme content (workshops, main sessions, high level sessions, open forums, other sessions, speakers) *

If we are to maintain the three thematic tracks of Berlin IGF, then with regards to 2020 Programme contents for the workshops, main sessions, high level sessions, open forums and others; I will advise on identifying more useful topics for Cybersecurity, Data Governance and Digital Inclusion.

2.6 IGF 2020 participants *

With regards to pursuing participants for 2020, I believe early communication should be sent to identified stakeholders in order to improve upon the numbers received for the on-site and online participants of IGF 2020.

The invitation of the Parliamentarians from other parts of the world by the German parliament during the Berlin IGF will have to be re-visited for the IGF 2020.

2.7 Any other comments on the IGF 2020

I also believe that the digital applications and re-usable water bottle and water filling stations for the “paperless” environment of Berlin IGF will have to re-visited for IGF 2020.