

CONTRIBUTION OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO THE INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM SECRETARIAT CONCERNING THE WAY FORWARD FOR THE INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

Canada strongly supports the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) as a meeting place for multistakeholder policy dialogue. The IGF's working methods should continue to be fully multilateral, multi-stakeholder, democratic and transparent. We are open with regard to the timing of the UN Secretary General's examination of the desirability of the continuation of the Forum, in formal consultation with Forum participants, as called for in the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, within five years of its creation.

It is Canada's view that expanded understanding, improved dialogue and enhanced cooperation among stakeholders are the best concrete outcomes from the IGF.

We regard the recent appointment of a Co-chair of the IGF Advisory Group as an experiment for the 2nd meeting of the IGF, to be evaluated after the Rio meeting. In future, Canada could consider supporting continuation of this mechanism, providing that it is well understood that the host-country co-chair role is to be focussed primarily on logistics and promotion and not on content. In future, consideration should be given to the appointment of non-governmental individuals to the Co-chair role, in order to be consistent with the multi-stakeholder, democratic and transparent nature of the Forum itself.

Canada supports the continuation of an Advisory Group appointed by the UN Secretary General. We regard the form and function of the Advisory Group as consistent with the reference to "a bureau" in the Tunis Agenda. Canada would not support the creation of Bureau in the formal sense of the word.

We support the principle that Advisory Group membership be renewed on a rotational basis, with not more than 30% of the membership changing each year. Care must be taken to improve or at least uphold the regional, stakeholder, and gender representation achieved in the appointment of the first Advisory Groups. Canada recommends that the UN Secretary General should seek to introduce a measure of transparency in the process of selecting new members of the Advisory Group.

Canada supports the recent steps taken by the Advisory Group to increase its openness and transparency by publishing its agenda before the meeting and a summary report following its meetings. These steps augment the openness and transparency achieved by convening open consultations before Advisory Group meetings. However, we believe that there must be a balance between openness and effectiveness. For example, the Advisory Group meetings should continue to be held *in camera* because of the confidential nature of program discussions.

With regard to the role of the host country Chair of the IGF meeting itself, Canada supports the preparation of a summary statement upon conclusion of the meetings. As at the first IGF meeting in Athens, it must be made clear that the summary statement is the sole responsibility of the host chair, and that it does not represent any sort of negotiated or consensus view of the IGF participants as a whole. If the host country chair chooses to prepare a summary statement, every effort must be made to ensure that the summary is balanced and that it accurately reflects what went on during the Forum meeting. The summary must not be seen as imposing any requirements on future meetings of the IGF, nor on participants in the IGF. The IGF itself has a mandate to publish its proceedings, a role best fulfilled by making available the transcripts and webcast of the sessions, accompanied by a short summary document.