

## **Points raised at the Internet Governance Forum consultation meeting**

London, 13 January 2006

The World Summit on the Information Society, in the Tunis Agenda, agreed to set up an Internet Governance Forum to provide a framework for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue. The WSIS event brought to the fore the eagerness for a multi-stakeholder approach in formulating national policy to Internet governance issues.

While action to initiate the process lies with the UN Secretary General, making a success of these initiatives is down to the stakeholders – including governments.

To help UK stakeholders contribute to the success of the forum, the Department of Trade and Industry in the UK held a consultation meeting on 13 January 2006, bringing together around 40 key UK stakeholders from industry, government departments/agencies and civil society (attendance list at Annex 2).

The discussion was chaired by David Hendon at the DTI, supported by a panel of experts including Markus Kummer (former Executive Coordinator for the Working Group on Internet Governance) who gave a speech to the meeting on this personal perspective on the developing Internet governance debate. Other panel members included Dr Ian Walden (a board member of the Internet Watch Foundation), Ambassador Nick Thorne (UK Ambassador in Geneva and who led the UK delegation during the negotiations at WSIS) and Emily Taylor (Director of Legal and Policy at Nominet, the not-for-profit registry for .uk domain names).

The aim was to discuss ideas from UK stakeholders on the proposed Forum – what it should be, what it should cover and how it should function. The discussion was held under 'Chatham House' rule (where everything said is made on a non-attributable basis), to encourage a free exchange of ideas, views and thoughts. The points recorded below reflect this wide range of stakeholder viewpoints.

The lively and constructive debate lasted three hours and identified some general points of consensus on key issues for the Forum. The discussion focussed around a series of questions, distributed at the start of the meeting (Annex 3). These provided the framework for the discussion, but participants were free to raise any pertinent points during the event. The report therefore does not follow the structure of the questions, rather reflects the importance stakeholders place on the issues they raised.

## Key issues

In bringing together the summary of points raised, there were some general points of consensus established by the session on key issues for the Forum:

i. The IGF should provide an open, transparent space that enhances cooperation between all stakeholders on an equal basis. Although the process is to be initiated by the UNSG, the action is for “relevant organisations”. Indeed it is for the relevant organisations to identify and create the appropriate environment to facilitate the development of public policy principles. It should not be a decision making body, but a forum for exchanging ideas and examples of best practice. The IGF should have a varying, but focused agenda for each session that provides focus on achievable but not binding solutions where there is a will to address an issue of concern that is not being successfully addressed in the round by any existing forum or organisation.

ii. It should be as open and inclusive as possible. Governments should not have a dominant role, but should engage in dialogue with other stakeholders. In many cases, other stakeholders can help governments understand the issues associated with the use and misuse of the Internet and the options available for addressing issues of concern.

iii. It should not be a UN body, but could be managed as a foundation or trust (maintaining independence, without dependence on public funding for its work).

iv. The views of the public – as Internet users – also need to be brought in, perhaps through a public electronic forum. The press should be included as a key stakeholder contributing to the debate. However, it can also help stimulate the wider dialogue.

v. The IGF should focus on issues which can be resolved and where there is a will to address the issues. Meetings should address a single, or very small number of issues. Capacity building and other issues of importance to developing countries were seen as important.

## Overall

- The IGF presents an opportunity to examine a really difficult set of multi-faceted questions within a clear framework.
- While action to initiate the process establishing the IGF lies with the UN Secretary General, making a success of these initiatives is down to the stakeholders – including governments.
- In the WSIS process many positions became entrenched due to the binding nature of the outcome; the forum framework addresses the need for a dialogue space to consider issues in a less conflictual environment.
- WSIS showed the need to clarify and stimulate the debate with all stakeholders in all countries.
- The process needs to draw on the experiences of other organisations; work through an educating function, exchanging best practice, drawing on experience and collective knowledge of stakeholder groups. That the output from the IGF is not binding is an advantage, as stakeholders will be able to be involved without commitment and without feeling under threat.
- Stakeholders have a lead responsibility to move discussions in the IGF forward, but must be realistic - there must be willingness from all stakeholders to address

an issue of concern and the forum may not find all the answers to Internet Governance.

- The effectiveness of the forum for stakeholders will depend on what its outputs are and how they are applied to national and international Internet policy making.
- There is a whole range of issues related to the needs of users which are often overlooked and much more relevant to policy making than they may appear on the surface.

### **What is the IGF?**

- The forum is a space for open and transparent dialogue to take place..
- It has the potential to be a valuable tool for public debate, but also a source of guidance to inform government policy thinking.
- It is not a UN body or function, nor should it be; it may be possible for it to be managed as a foundation or trust.
- The Forum's policy and work should be driven and owned by the stakeholder interests.
- A stakeholder driven forum is likely to necessitate a flexible membership with participants coming together to examine a different focussed set of issues at each session, enabling an effective discussion and an opportunity to start the discussion process in advance.

### **What should the IGF be?**

- The IGF should be building on the work of existing institutions and recognising those institutions' remit and expertise.
- Reflect the WSIS objective for the IGF as an enhanced multi-stakeholder approach to Internet policy making.
- It should not be a decision making body – what has been valuable and sustained discussion in the OECD is results through best practice guidelines and collective ownership of solutions because they are tried and tested solutions.

### **Stakeholder engagement**

- An important function of the forum is to bring together the players who don't otherwise meet in discussion, in order to share ideas and concepts in seeking resolution.
- There should be moves to involve the big multi-national backers of social projects who are investing in sustainable social inclusion projects (e.g. banks providing solar powered cafes to provide access to secure online banking in less developed countries). These are companies and organisations that want to bring something to the table and that is something which should be valued and harnessed for adoption elsewhere.
- Nationally there is not currently a space to come together to discuss issues in a wider basis: that is a lost opportunity to consider general policy issues for the UK, although the OII has played a valuable role enabling broader discussion. In France, *Les Forum des droits sur l'Internet* ([www.foruminternet.org](http://www.foruminternet.org)) exists.
- The IGF should be as open and inclusive as possible.
- All participants must be allowed to participate on a level playing field, with the opinion of government and other sectors being equal in the Forum's discussion.
- Individual countries should be free to participate as well as regional grouping representatives to contribute.

- The Forum should seek to proactively enable the technical communities engagement in the discussions, highlighting the relevance of the discussions to them.
- The IGF would bring in the public's views through a public online portal to enable users to make representations and comments to the forum.
- The forum should be inclusive with the Press part of the debate.

### **What should/shouldn't the IGF look at?**

- Issues important to the end users should be a priority as a previously overlooked discussion topic.
- The issue of capacity building in relation to less developed countries and the extent to which the IGF should play a role in this needs further thought.
- The issues discussed in the forum need to take account of the evolving nature of the Internet - it will change and become much more complex moving forward.
- There should be recognition in studying problems that there is also good work that the Internet alone has enabled. For example, whilst the Internet has provided a conduit for distribution of child pornography, it has also provided new solutions for identifying abusers and those wishing to view it.
- The forum should avoid the minefield of the specific Internet governance issues related to structural, issues outside its role.
- There are issues around the role of identities and individuals roles in cyberspace that the forum could examine.
- The mission of the IGF should favour freedom of information and privacy issues.
- Government should have a role in Internet governance, but not a dominating power in the proposed forum.

### **How should the IGF function?**

- The multi-stakeholder approach should drive the agenda, but also support the operation of an effective Forum.
- The IGF should be enabled to work as effectively online as offline, with a policy that values contributions made in person or online equally.
- The Forum should take experiences of CENTR and other bodies in engaging industry.
- The Forum should first seek non-prescriptive, best practice or model solutions (e.g. BT cleanfeed, IWF etc) in its bid to find resolution to debated issues.

### **On this UK consultation exercise**

- The full stakeholder dialogue adopted by the DTI is a model approach that other countries should follow in stimulating the stakeholder debate on Internet policy issues.
- Stakeholders should encourage other countries to follow suit and demonstrate commitment to the values agreed in the Tunis Agenda of the WSIS.
- Europe should show the importance it attaches to multi-stakeholder dialogue in discussions on Internet governance by consulting widely.

## Annex 1

### EXTRACTS FROM THE TUNIS AGENDA RELEVANT TO THE IGF

**67.** We agree, *inter alia*, to invite the UN Secretary-General to convene a new forum for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue.

**72. We ask the UN Secretary-General**, in an open and inclusive process, to convene, by the second quarter of 2006, a meeting of the new forum for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue—called the *Internet Governance Forum* (IGF). The mandate of the Forum is to:

- a. Discuss public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance in order to foster the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet;
- b. Facilitate discourse between bodies dealing with different cross-cutting international public policies regarding the Internet and discuss issues that do not fall within the scope of any existing body;
- c. Interface with appropriate inter-governmental organisations and other institutions on matters under their purview;
- d. Facilitate the exchange of information and best practices, and in this regard make full use of the expertise of the academic, scientific and technical communities;
- e. Advise all stakeholders in proposing ways and means to accelerate the availability and affordability of the Internet in the developing world;
- f. Strengthen and enhance the engagement of stakeholders in existing and/or future Internet governance mechanisms, particularly those from developing countries;
- g. Identify emerging issues, bring them to the attention of the relevant bodies and the general public, and, where appropriate, make recommendations;
- h. Contribute to capacity building for Internet governance in developing countries, drawing fully on local sources of knowledge and expertise;
- i. Promote and assess, on an ongoing basis, the embodiment of WSIS principles in Internet governance processes;
- j. Discuss, *inter alia*, issues relating to critical Internet resources;
- k. Help to find solutions to the issues arising from the use and misuse of the Internet, of particular concern to everyday users;
- l. Publish its proceedings.

**73.** The Internet Governance Forum, in its working and function, will be multilateral, multi-stakeholder, democratic and transparent. To that end, the proposed IGF could:

- a. Build on the existing structures of Internet governance, with special emphasis on the complementarity between all stakeholders involved in this process – governments, business entities, civil society and inter-governmental organisations;
- b. Have a lightweight and decentralised structure that would be subject to periodic review;
- c. Meet periodically, as required. IGF meetings, in principle, may be held in parallel with major relevant UN conferences, *inter alia*, to use logistical support.

**74. We encourage** the UN Secretary-General to examine a range of options for the convening of the Forum, taking into consideration the proven competencies of all stakeholders in Internet governance and the need to ensure their full involvement.

**75.** The UN Secretary-General would report to UN Member States periodically on the operation of the Forum.

**76. We ask the UN Secretary-General** to examine the desirability of the continuation of the Forum, in formal consultation with Forum participants, within five years of its creation, and to make recommendations to the UN Membership in this regard.

**77.** The IGF would have no oversight function and would not replace existing arrangements, mechanisms, institutions or organisations, but would involve them and take advantage of their expertise. It would be constituted as a neutral, non-duplicative and non-binding process. It would have no involvement in day-to-day or technical operations of the Internet.

**78.** The UN Secretary-General should extend invitations to all stakeholders and relevant parties to participate at the inaugural meeting of the IGF, taking into consideration balanced geographical representation. The UN Secretary-General should also:

- a. draw upon any appropriate resources from all interested stakeholders, including the proven expertise of ITU, as demonstrated during the WSIS process; and
- b. establish an effective and cost-efficient bureau to support the IGF, ensuring multi-stakeholder participation.

**79.** Diverse matters relating to Internet governance would continue to be addressed in other relevant fora.

**80. We encourage** the development of multi-stakeholder processes at the national, regional and international levels to discuss and collaborate on the expansion and diffusion of the Internet as a means to support development efforts to achieve internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals.

**81. We reaffirm our commitment** to the full implementation of the Geneva Principles.

**82. We welcome** the generous offer of the Government of Greece to host the first meeting of the IGF in Athens no later than 2006 and **we call upon** the UN Secretary-General to extend invitations to all stakeholders and relevant parties to participate at the inaugural meeting of the IGF.

## Annex 2

### CONFIRMED ATTENDEES

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Desiree Miloshevic         | Affiliat   |
| Karen Banks                | Association of Progressive Communications (APC)                  |
| Chris Coulter              | Ashurst/ICC  |
| Mr Nick Thorne             | British Embassy Geneva   |
| Tony Holmes                | BT   |
| Kathryn Roche              | BT   |
| Steve Marsh                | Cabinet Office   |
| Dr. Jeremy Beale           | Confederation of British Industry (CBI)                          |
| Paul Kane                  | Council of European National Top-Level Domain Registries (CENTR) |
| William Roebuck            | E-business Regulatory Alliance (ERA)                             |
| Kenneth Cukier             | Economist  |
| Philip Virgo               | European Information Society Group (EURIM)                       |
| Carmel Power               | Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)                            |
| Kieren McCarthy            | Freelance Journalist   |
| Chris Godwin               | IBM  |
| Ms Man-Sze Li              | IC Focus   |
| Lucinda Fell               | Internet Service Providers Association (ISPA)                    |
| Tricia Drakes              | Internet Society (ISOC)  |
| Dr Ian Walden              | Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)                                  |
| Malcolm Hutty              | Linx   |
| Elizabeth Kanter           | Marconi  |
| Matt Lambert               | Microsoft  |
| John Carr                  | NCH, the children's charity                                      |
| Mick Morgan                | National Infrastructure Security Co-ordination Centre (NISCC)    |
| Emily Taylor               | Nominet  |
| William Dutton             | Oxford Internet Institute (OII)                                  |
| Murali Shanmugavelan       | Panos  |
| Janette McNeill            | Patent Office  |
| Jeff Watson                | Patent Office  |
| Dame Pauline Neville-Jones | QinetiQ  |
| Christopher Marsden        | RAND Corporation   |
| Markus Kummer              | UN   |

### DTI staff

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| David Hendon (Chair)      | DTI |
| David Love                | DTI |
| Martin Boyle              | DTI |
| Jean-Jacques Sahel        | DTI |
| Geoff Smith               | DTI |
| Maria Burroughs           | DTI |
| Mark Carvell              | DTI |
| Peter Askew (Secretariat) | DTI |

## **Annex 3**

### **TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

#### **Output from the Forum**

1. What should come out of the IGF?
2. How can the IGF best contribute to international discussions and national decision-making?

#### **Participation in the Forum**

3. How can we ensure meaningful multi-stakeholder participation in the IGF? What organisations should be involved? And how can we ensure balanced and representative participation?
4. How can we ensure effective participation from developing countries?
5. How can we ensure that the IGF promotes effective cooperation between all stakeholders?

#### **Organisation of the Forum**

6. What should the IGF look like?
  - a. An open discussion forum?
  - b. Single-issue or single-theme multi-stakeholder events (eg a specific issue such as e-mail security could focus on exchanging best practice, promoting a global culture of cyber security and establishing a level playing field internationally)?
  - c. A smaller body with representative membership? (How could representatives be identified?)
  - d. A combination of open forum (including electronic) consultations and smaller (working group) sessions?
  - e. Other models?

#### **Administrative Issues**

7. How could the secretariat be organised? How could it be funded and resourced? Where could it be based?

#### **Topics**

8. What are the key issues the IGF should address?
  - a. Access issues (eg availability and affordability of the Internet, critical Internet resources);
  - b. Other infrastructure issues (eg security, stability, sustainability, new technologies);
  - c. User and application issues (eg e-mail security, consumer protection, IPR, data protection, cyber crime, VoIP, multilingualism); and

d. Promotion of ICT for all.

What are the priorities? Are there emerging big issues which should be addressed?

**Awareness and Influence**

9. How can we ensure visibility for the IGF?