

1ST SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS) INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE FORUM (IGF)

REPORT

25 & 26 August 2022 at 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. (AST)

In attendance were:

From CTU:

- Mr. Rodney Taylor - Secretary-General, CTU
- Mr. Nigel Cassimire – Deputy Secretary-General
- Ms. Nia Nanan, Senior Research Analyst of the CTU
- Mr. Gary Kalloo – Director of Business Development & Implementation Support, CTU

Moderators and Panelist:

- DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine) – Host
- Ms. Cherie Lagakali of Fiji
- Ms. Georgina Kiele – Executive Manager Cybersecurity and Government Digital Standards at Papua New Guinea Department of Information and Communications Technology, Papua New Guinea
- Mr. Domingo Kabunare – Information Communication Technology Division, Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport and Tourism Development, Kiribati
- Mr. Peter Rigamoto – Head of Legal, Digicel Pacific, Fiji
- DJ Ultra Simmo (Mr. Jordan Simmons) - Entertainer, Trinidad and Tobago
- Mr. Raj Mohabeer – Officer in Charge at the General Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Commission
- Mr. Andrea Giacomelli – Trade Policy and Aid for Trade Advisor at the Permanent Delegation of the Pacific Islands Forum, Geneva
- Hon. Davidson Ishmael – Minister of Innovation, Science & Technology, Barbados
- Ms. Maureen Hilyard, ICANN ALAC Chair, ICANN, Cook Islands
- Mr. Pablo Hinojosa – Director, Strategic Engagement, APNIC, Australia
- Mr. Kevon Swift – Head of Strategic Relations and Integration, LACNIC, Trinidad and Tobago
- Mr. Bevil Wooding – Director, Caribbean Affairs, ARIN, Trinidad and Tobago
- Mr. Albert Daniels – Senior Manager, Stakeholder Engagement, ICANN, Saint Lucia
- Ms. Dalsie Tolang - Telecommunications Consultant, Vanuatu
- Mr. David Cox – Chairman CANTO, Trinidad and Tobago
- Mr. Kirk Sookram – Deputy CEO, Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT), Trinidad and Tobago.
- Mr. Stephen Bureaux - ITU BDT Deputy Director
- Mr. Tariq Mohammed, Chairman of the Caribbean Youth Internet Governance Forum
- Mr. Tyler Seudath, Associate Professional at UWI CIRP, Trinidad and Tobago
- Ms. Letitia Masaea – PICISOC Board Chair
- Hon. Simon Kofe – Minister for Justice, Communications and Foreign Affairs, Tuvalu
- Hon. Minister Deepak Balgobin – Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation, Mauritius
- Mr. Amandeep Singh Gill – United Nations Envoy on Technology United States
- Mr. Riad Meddeb – Director, Global Centre on Technology, Innovation and Sustainable Development & Senior Principal Advisor for Small Island Developing States, UNDP, United States
- Ms. Sylvia Cadena – Head of Programs and Partnerships, APNIC Foundation, Australia

- Ms. Georgina Naigulevu - Project Manager, Digital and Health Information, Fiji
- Ms. Sarai Tevita Faleupolu – ICT Director for the National University of Samoa
- Ms. Winifred Kula Amini - Chair, PNG Digital Information and Communications Technology Cluster, Papua New Guinea
- Ms. Tereza Horejsova - Outreach Manager at the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCW), Geneva.

Key Points: Day 1 - August 25th 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. AST

Ms. Nia Nanan, Senior Research Analyst of the CTU started out Day 1 of the SIDS IGF by reviewing the discussions held in the Caribbean IGF and Caribbean Youth IGF held on August 24th, 2022.

Hon. Davidson Ishmael, Minister of Innovation, Science & Technology, Barbados was then invited to deliver the opening remarks for Day 1 of the SIDS IGF in which he covered:

- The Ministry of Industry, Innovation, Science and Technology (MIST) is responsible for bringing Barbadians into the digital era through the increased use of digital channels and driving public sector performance through intelligent innovation, science and technology.
- The Ministry recognized the reform needed to create a paradigm shift to establish patterns to bring Barbados fully into the digital era through increased digital channels.
- The Government of Barbados pivoted to be able to provide strategic, effective, and efficient adaptation and deployment of technological solutions needed for the internet to digitally transform the public sector.
- The internet is a global resource which impacts everyone and as such, the rules, policies, standards and practices that govern its continued operation and evolution should be shaped by a global community consisting of government, private sector, civil society and the technical community.
- SIDS IGF provides an opportunity for SIDS to develop a regional approach to Internet Governance. The forum provides opportunities to discuss common issues, consolidate positions to reach consensus and leverage the strength of SIDS to impact global policy development.
- In April 1994, Barbados hosted a global conference on the sustainable development of SIDS. This resulted in 14 priority areas which were elaborated into the Barbados Programme of Action, the first ever intergovernmental policy document to integrate the small islands into the world economy and tackle their socio-economic development problems. Some of these areas include climate change and sea-level rise, transport and communication, and science and technology.
- ITU has also made strategic interventions aimed at speeding up the deployment of ICTs to small islands and helping countries establish appropriate strategies and policies aimed at attracting investment into the ICT sector. This is crucial for ensuring that the region is not disadvantaged in an era that is becoming dependent on technological innovation to drive the delivery of public services and to make businesses more globally competitive.
- The Caribbean Internet Governance Policy Framework has identified areas of national priorities such as:
 - Provision of adequate and affordable local broadband access capacity for all
 - Barbados looks to ensure that everyone has access through funding of programs through the Universal Service Funds (USF)

- Access to affordable devices
 - Internet technical infrastructure and operations management
 - Cybersecurity
 - The CTU worked with CARICOM IMPACS on the development of a CARICOM Cybersecurity and Cyber Crime Action Plan. This consisted of 5 priority areas of intervention: 1) public awareness, 2) building sustainable capacity 3) technical standards and infrastructure, 4) legal environment 5) regional and international cooperation and collaboration
 - Harmonization of legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms at the regional level
 - Content Creation
 - Promotion of awareness building and capacity building programmes and events
 - Research to adequately measure the success of the region's policies.
 - The CTU recently established the Research and Analysis Unit which focuses on implementation of a regional ICT monitoring and evaluation framework to support ICT indicators in the region which can be compared to global best practices.
- Further partnerships can be forged by building a stronger coalition with other SIDS relative to Internet Governance issues to share limited human and financial resources.

The forum moved to the panel discussion on **Key Internet Governance issues such as Cybersecurity, Data Protection, Cybercrime and Digital Justice**. This was moderated by Ms. Cherie Lagakali of Fiji and consisted of the following panel members: Ms. Georgina Kiele – Executive Manager Cybersecurity and Government Digital Standards at Papua New Guinea Department of Information and Communications Technology, Papua New Guinea; Mr. Domingo Kabunare – Information Communication Technology Division, Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport and Tourism Development, Kiribati and; Mr. Peter Rigamoto – Head of Legal, Digicel Pacific, Fiji

Ms. Georgina Kiele – Executive Manager Cybersecurity and Government Digital Standards at Papua New Guinea Department of Information and Communications Technology, was invited to discuss her presentation on Papua New Guinea Government Cybersecurity Information Update. In her presentation, Ms. Kiele outlined:

- **Legislation and Policy:-**
 - **Cabinet Endorsed:**
 - **The National Cyber Security Policy 2021** was approved through the cabinet. The document began developing in 2018 after one of the country's critical infrastructures got hacked.
 - **The Digital Government Act 2022** began developing in 2020.
 - **In Draft:**
 - National Cybersecurity Strategy

- Government Cyber Security Standards. Prior to the draft of the Cyber Security Standards, a Cyber Security audit was carried out on government departments to collect data which was used to shape the standards.
 - On the Queue for Drafting:
 - The Cyber Security Act and the Critical Infrastructure Act are being guided by the National Cyber Security Policy 2021
- **National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and the National Cyber Coordinating Centre (N3C)**
 - The two components of the National Cyber Coordinating Centre are: the Papua New Guinea Computer Emergency Response Team (PNGCERT) which is responsible for incidence response and site investigation
 - The CERT is currently operated under the National ICT Regulator, the National Information and Communication Authority (NICTA).
 - The Policy outlines the CERT and CSOC sit together in the National Cyber Security Centre.
 - The Cyber Security Operations Centre (CSOC) deals with the cyberdefense and monitoring.
 - This began in 2018 when the Australian and Papua New Guinea governments signed a cyber cooperation MOU which established the National Cyber Security Centre.
 - The National Cyber Coordinating Centre (N3C) is also within the National Cybersecurity Policy.
 - The N3C deals with cybersecurity and other cyber issues such as Social Media Misinformation, Cybercrime, Cyber diplomacy, Digital Government, Censorship, Anti-money laundering, Human Trafficking, Drug Trafficking, Cyber Attack and others.
- **Awareness and Training**
 - The Government of Papua New Guinea utilize platforms such as social media, newspapers, radios and youth and school Expos and; trainings through the MOU with the Australian Government, ITU, APNIC and the US Embassy in order to promote online awareness and safety.
- **Digital Government Plan 2023 to 2027**
 - In 2023, the goal is to have the National Cyber Security Centre fully operational in order for the country's cyber resilience to mature by 2027.

Mr. Domingo Kabunare, Senior Information Security Analyst for the Government of Kiribati's Information Communication Technology Division, Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport and Tourism Development, Kiribati, was invited to discuss the experiences of Kiribati. In his presentation, Mr. Kabunare outlined:

- Technology allowed citizens in Kiribati to overcome their isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic and facilitated continued collaboration with international community with telecommunication.

- Telecommunication has been the backbone which allowed low-lying islands comprising of Kiribati to link and connect the people together despite the distance of the islands.
- The Government is continuing to roll out powerful internet networks on all islands across Kiribati. In 2022, only 2 out of the 22 inhabited islands are currently without a mobile network since the project's conception in 2014. At the beginning of 2023, mobile networks will be rolled out on these 2 remaining islands.
- This development of mobile networks provided opportunities to connect small local businesses from outer islands and rural communities to customers or consumers on urban areas boosting commercial activities across the country.
- A Digital Patient System was also established where all health facilities across the country can access a centralized information system for patient management and referral to the three main hospitals which are located on the larger islands.
- An online education platform was also used widely throughout the pandemic to deliver education via the internet while the country was on lockdown.
- Despite the advancements, there has also been an increase in cases where citizens were targeted with evolved phishing and scam attacks where members of the local population have been victimized and suffered financial losses, as well as an increased number of reports of children being exposed to online harms.
- The increased number of unauthorized access reports to online accounts at the leading agency for cyber security development has led the Government of Kiribati to embark on introducing appropriate measures and putting mechanisms to better protect citizens.
- In 2019, the National ICT Policy was passed which allowed for the review and revalidation of the ICT development priorities during COVID such as pushing development to health facilities within the different islands in order to have access to internet connectivity to facilitate better access to health information.
- The National Cybersecurity Strategy 2020 was passed with the provisions for critical national infrastructure protection, child online protection, establishing a computer emergency response team and establishing a cybercrime legislation.
 - o In order to foster digital citizenship in children, work is also being done with the telecommunication regulators and ISPs to provide child friendly SIM cards and Wi-Fi access codes that will better allow children to only access child friendly and educational sites on the internet.
 - o Additionally, mass community and school online safety awareness have been conducted to equip citizens with the skills and knowledge to navigate the internet safely.
- In 2021, parliament fast tracked the National Cybercrime Act which was modeled on the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime. Efforts are currently being made to accede to the convention by 2023.
- Although not fully functioning with anticipated service at the moment, at the end of 2021, the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) was established with a sustainable structure.
- At the initiation of most of the technological development efforts and activities, baseline data is collected to measure how effective the controls and mechanisms are as they progress.
- The pandemic led to the hastening of development within the digital space and implementation of digital solutions that will better protect systems and the provision of effective services.

Mr. Peter Rigamoto, Head of Legal, Digicel Pacific, Fiji, was invited to give his presentation on the Pacific Challenges on Cybersecurity, Cybercrime and Digital Justice. In his presentation, Mr. Rigamoto outlined:

- Maintaining communication is important to counteract the dangers Small Island Development States face from being in the sea such as tsunamis.
- In the five Pacific countries, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Nauru, they are many cables. However, Nauru still requires satellite connection and will be receiving cables in a few years.
- The increase in phishing and cybercrime within the last three to five years can be explained by increase in internet utilization. In Fiji, internet usage went from 2.5 Gbit/s to 19.5 Gbit/s.
- The Government of Fiji also implemented COVID relief through mobile financial services which resulted in a dramatic increase in internet utilization and alternate payment methods outside of cash.
- In Fiji, the increase in technology has resulted in an increase of challenges such as large remittance transactions lost, companies losing large sums of money to online scams and citizens being scammed of their earnings.
- In Fiji, they are a lot of different bodies such as the Fiji Police, Online Safety Commission, Fiji Revenue and Customer Service, Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption, Fiji Reserve Bank and other advocates who continually get together to fill the gaps in the cybersecurity space.
- **Regulation and Structures in the Pacific:**
 - o Samoa, Vanuatu, and Tonga have CERTs, however, Nauru and Fiji don't have a CERT as yet.
 - o All countries have a form of a Cybercrime Act. However, Vanuatu has cybercrime provisions and a Bill before parliament.
- Advocacy sessions are carried out in high schools where the do's and don'ts of being smart online are taught.
- Advocates are important in the ICT development agenda because the only way to ensure that individuals fully utilize the power of the internet, is to ensure that they believe that it is safe.

The forum then moved to the Interactive Question-and-Answer portion of the discussion on the Key Internet Governance issues such as Cybersecurity, Data Protection, Cybercrime and Digital Justice.

1. **Are statistics on cyber incidents collected? Do organizations report on cyber incidents willingly?**
 - a. **Ms. Georgina Kiele** – Papua New Guinea CERT will collect statistics. Unfortunately the Papua New Guinea CERT is not within the Papua New Guinea department of ICT which holds the CSOC. Sharing of information is something that is being worked on. To date, CSOC has received three reports of government departments which were attacked.
2. **How did you manage to get the SIM card?**
 - a. **Mr. Domingo Kabunare**- The country has a good working relationship with the regulator and majority of the ISPs. The country utilized the 2018 South Korean initiative where phones carried an age verification mechanism as reference in Kiribati's National Cyber Security Strategy. This led to collaboration with the ISPs to provide the mechanism. The regulators provided certain license provisions to the

ISPs which led them to be able to offer this. From the commercial side of it, the ISPs see it as an opportunity to receive more customers and have agreed to put the necessary controls that will allow for child-friendly SIMs and access codes to Wi-Fi at internet cafes, which only allow access to child-friendly content on the internet. The project is still in the planning phase as the regulation awaits endorsement by the Minister, however it is intended to be rolled out within the next few months. In a few years the long-term impact would be able to be seen through the collected data.

- 3. How can more technical persons communicate with the wider community to get them to start paying attention to cybersecurity discussions?**
 - a. **Mr. Peter Rigamoto** – Safe spaces with interested people allows for the wider community to get involved in the more technical terms.

- 4. Is there any policy or legislative work taking place in your countries regarding personal data protection?**
 - a. **Mr. Peter Rigamoto** – Kiribati is partaking in the Government Digital Transformation Project which is being sponsored by the World Bank. The project will be launched within the next two weeks. The data protection legislation aspects of the project will be completed within the next year and a half. The country has also carried out other preliminary work on the gaps in existing data protection legislation and data protection legislation from other Pacific countries which can be included in their own data protection legislation.
 - b. **Ms. Georgina Kiele** – Papua New Guinea plans to launch a Data Protection Policy which will be followed by a Data Protection Act. The country established the Digital Government Act 2022 which deals with personal data collection, data governance and the type of technology that will be standardized for data collection within the government. Mandates from different agencies which collect data are being considered, however, the focus of the Papua New Guinea Department of Information and Communications Technology are infrastructure, technology, and security standards.

- 5. What are the experiences and lessons learnt gained regarding raising cyber awareness among the vulnerable groups such as the elderly which are not digitally savvy?**
 - a. **Mr. Peter Rigamoto** – Presentations have been carried out to tech savvy groups and a lot of high schools. The high schoolers were savvy with the various types of technology, however, they still had knowledge gaps when it came to the dangers of the internet. As such efforts were made to inform them of cases where individuals in the community were fooled and what to look out for such as phishing, identity theft. With regards to the vulnerable groups, it is important to speak in their vernacular to bring things down to the level they can understand and give them the key takeaways that they can take to others at home.

- 6. Indicate whether there are any initiatives to harmonize relevant digital policies and regulations among the Pacific islands.**
 - a. **Mr. Peter Rigamoto** – There's are past initiatives such as Pacific ICT Regulatory Resource Centre (PiRRC) which is a regional resource centre; Pacific Islands CERT (PacCERT) which is a regional CERT and; Pacific Cyber Security Operational Network

(PaCSON), which dealt with cybersecurity awareness. However, these initiatives do not require countries in the Pacific region to do things in the same way.

- b. **Mr. Domingo Kabunare-** There is also the **Pacific Islands Law Officers Network (PILON)** who have a Cybercrime Working Group which is instrumental in formulating cybercrime legislation. The network is aligned to the Budapest Convention with assistance from the Council of Europe. A lot of the countries are making efforts to accede to the Convention. PILON is also involved in developing e-commerce legislations however, most of the e-commerce legislations are developed through UNDP with the Ministries of Commerce in each country leading the initiative. Overall, efforts are made to be consistent with the regulatory frameworks however, improvement is needed around the synergies so that the regulations and frameworks can be standardized across the region to facilitate simplified discussions around the issues.

The open Question-and-Answer portion of the panel discussion on the “Key Internet Governance issues such as Cybersecurity, Data Protection, Cybercrime and Digital Justice” then ended.

The forum moved to an open discussion on Social Media Platforms and How They Are Central Points of Control on The Internet. This was moderated by DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine) – Host and consisted of the following panel members: Mr. Rodney Taylor, Secretary-General of the CTU and; DJ Ultra Simmo (Mr. Jordan Simmons).

The open discussion covered the following:

1. In layman’s terms what is Internet Governance?

- The internet itself is a global resource that connects people everywhere. There is no one single entity that controls the internet but there are a few key international organizations that manage different aspects of it. Things such as the technical infrastructure, fibre optic cables and the satellite communications are managed by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) which is a specialized agency of the United Nations. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) manages the Domain Name System. There are also other regional registries like the American Registry for Internet Numbers (ARIN), Latin American and Caribbean Internet Address Registry (LACNIC) and others that set regional policies. Governments are also involved in setting policies on soft issues like cybersecurity.

2. How does Internet Governance play a role in providing security to youths as they utilize social media apps?

- Social media is a new space where people socialize and interact. However, it brings in a whole set of issues such as protecting copyright, protection from harmful content, harassment, and fake news. These things are governed by policies and legislation. While they’re global frameworks, local efforts are also needed to protect these areas and ensure that on social media platforms they’re rules and standards and norms that you should abide by. The CTU advocates for things like data protection legislation so that the Big Tech and social media companies understand that there’s certain protections that they must give to their customers even if the service is free.

3. Who enforces these rules?

- They are certain thing that the global community agree on which international organizations such as ICANN and the ITU would have resolutions to address. However, that there are other things that are not so black and white such as freedom of speech. Forums such as the SIDS IGF allow people to understand the policies and for stakeholders to get involved in discussions around these issues to have an impact on local policy and legislation and build an understanding on what is accepted socially.

4. Does Internet governance play a role with regards to everybody's own experience Internet?

- The experience is first determined by the quality of your Internet access. This is impacted by things such as the implementation Internet Exchange Points which means that instead of traffic going out of the country and coming back in, it is routed locally when possible and that allows the foreign websites to cache some of that content locally and improve the user experience. The way the internet is configured helps with its performance and resilience. Efficiently connecting the various networks ensures that traffic is also routed in the most efficient manner.

The open discussion on Social Media Platforms and How They Are Central Points of Control on The Internet then ended.

The forum moved to the panel discussion on Regional Digital Strategies and Digital Economy. This was moderated by Mr. Gary Kalloo of the CTU and consisted of the following panel members: Mr. Raj Mohabeer – Officer in Charge at the General Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Commission; Mr. Andrea Giacomelli – Trade Policy and Aid for Trade Advisor at the Permanent Delegation of the Pacific Islands Forum, Geneva and; Mr. Rodney Taylor – Secretary General, CTU.

Mr. Raj Mohabeer, Officer in Charge at the General Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Commission, was invited to discuss the activities of the Indian Ocean Commission. In his discussion, Mr. Mohabeer outlined:

- **The Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)** is the intergovernmental organization of the five island states of the western Indian Ocean region. The organization's activities are not limited to the geographical region but possibly span the entire world.
- One of the most important aspects of addressing the SIDS development challenges is to recognize that the ICT is now a prerequisite for any local, national, and regional activities.
- Creating a regional policy on ICT poses a challenge.
- A similarity among the SIDS are small economies and the presence of dominant IT companies where governments tended to reinforce that dominance. This resulted in a quasi-monopoly of these companies which prevented new internet companies to enter the market and improve the access, cost, and quality of IT services to the population.
- Up until March 2021, the same company provided broadband Internet services in the Pacific Islands. Countries were linked to submarine cables that were all owned by the same company.
- To address this, the future demand for broadband connectivity was assessed with the existing two submarine cables and how they would manage the increased demand for connectivity and the latest technological advancements.

- It was determined that new infrastructure was required and in 2016, the IOC carried out a feasibility study and developed key principles to achieve the expansion of infrastructure. These principles included: Ensuring that there was no single dominant player in the consortium.
- The studies demonstrated that the market was still very large which allowed for the invitation of private sector companies in the area. A conception was then developed, key private sector partners were selected, and an MOU was signed based on the developed principles. As a result, in March 2021 a new cable without a dominant partner was established. The new infrastructure enabled the democratization of broadband access to the population and fostered competition amongst all the players.
- Efforts were also made to sensitize on the need for including specific and concrete IT components in any particular projects that are being carried out.
- One of the biggest problems experienced in carrying out SIDS' projects is the difficulty in attracting funding partners. In order to counteract this, SIDS should team up to collectively look at how well they are doing in terms of accessing and benefiting from development partnerships and aid to improve on various aspects of connectivity, internet penetration and providing necessary services.
- **To accomplish this, Mr. Mohabeer puts forwards the action for SIDS to work on creating an observatory to measure these key elements and help guide them on how well they are doing.**

Mr. Andrea Giacomelli, Technical Lead of the Pacific eCommerce Initiative at the Pacific Islands Forum, Geneva, was invited to discuss his presentation on the updates on the Pacific eCommerce Initiative. In his discussion, Mr. Giacomelli outlined:

- The Pacific eCommerce Initiative aims to improve the e-commerce readiness across the region.
- The Pacific Islands are the smallest and most distant grouping of SIDS in the world and because of this reducing the impact of the distance and pursuing developmental opportunities that are less affected by the region's small size is a priority.
- As a result, eCommerce was included as a priority of the Pacific's Regional Aid for Trade Strategy which was endorsed back in 2020 by the region's trade Ministers.
- eCommerce allows businesses to use virtual channels to connect with clients and with other businesses across the world and reduces the investment costs to start and operate the businesses. Additionally, in markets such as the service sector, it reduces the impediments to growth which are generated by physical distance and allows qualified workers in the remote Pacific Islands to compete with workers across the globe.
- In 2017, the work on eCommerce began through the undertaking of harmonized diagnostic studies using the methodology provided by UNCTAD which analyzes the eCommerce readiness of the country in 7 policy areas including 1) policy development, 2) readiness of the ICT system, 3) ability of the country to undertake and process e-payments, 4) logistics and trade facilitation for ecommerce, 5) legal and regulatory environment, 6) the presence of development skills programs to develop skills for eCommerce and 7) the ability to source access to finance for developing eCommerce ventures.
- This diagnostic study was undertaken in 11 of the 14 developing country members between 2017 and 2021. In 2021 these assessments were used to inform the Pacific Regional

eCommerce Strategy and Roadmap which was endorsed by the Foreign Trade Ministers in August 2021.

- The strategy includes 54 measures which covered the 7 UNCTAD eCommerce areas. Since the Strategy's approval, the focus has shifted on implementation.
- Some agencies have already undertaken significant work which is aligned with the recommendation of the Strategy these agencies include:
 - **United Nation's ESCAP** – which is undertaken readiness assessment in some of the Pacific Island countries and it is promoting the joining of these countries to the framework agreement consolidation cross-border paperless trade in Asia and the Pacific.
 - **E-Trade Alliance** - the UN sponsored alliance of global multinationals which is undertaking work in trade logistics, skills and e-payments.
 - **PPIU** - which is the implementation unit of the regional trade agreement that was just developed in the Pacific that is doing work on policy and strategy development as well as on enhancing the readiness of the postal system for eCommerce
 - **SPC** – the top technical agency which is doing work on eCommerce statistics
 - **PTI** – the network of trade commissions which is doing work on payments and skills development.
 - **UNCITRAL** – working to implement recommendations in different areas
 - **UNCTAD** – working to implement recommendations in different areas
 - **UNCDF** – working to implement recommendations in different areas
 - **PIFS** – conducting specific work in policies and regulations, skill development and eCommerce assessment.
 - **PIFS Implementation Include:**
 - The development and administration of a regional training course for Pacific negotiator on eCommerce regulation
 - Support in the development of national eCommerce strategies which are aligned with the regional strategy and follow the same methodological framework. Harmonization of national strategies is a precondition for all the region to improve and facilitate intra-regional cooperation.
 - With regards to statistics, on August 24th, 2022, the first ever Regional eCommerce Statistical Database was launched. The database includes 37 indicators on their enabling environment for eCommerce in the 7 policy areas for eCommerce.
 - Development of harmonized regional methodologies for providing businesses with the simplified and practical toolkits aimed at helping micro, small, and medium enterprises who want to start undertaking an eCommerce journey.
 - Launch of a regional grant scheme for eCommerce businesses
 - **PIFS Coordination Include:**
 - Pacific eCommerce Portal which was launched on 24 August 2022. This can be found at <https://pacificecommerce.org>. This eCommerce Portal serves as regional repository of eCommerce information in several different fields including the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Pacific Regional eCommerce Strategy Roadmap as well as a statistic Database on eCommerce readiness of the Pacific member states.

- In the process of establishing a small eCommerce Unit at the PIFS which will manage and upgrade the eCommerce Portal and serve as the Secretariat to a regional eCommerce Committee whose members would be the eCommerce focal points of the different countries.

Mr. Rodney Taylor, Secretary-General of the CTU, was invited to discuss his presentation on Regional Initiatives in the Caribbean. In his discussion, Mr. Taylor outlined:

- **CARICOM Single ICT Space:**
- CARICOM seeks to promote cooperation amongst the small states within the Americas region mainly in the Caribbean Sea.
- Beyond ICT there are whole set of other frameworks of cooperation including education, travel, and security for which the CARICOM Heads of Government cooperate.
- The Single ICT Space is meant to provide the ICT enabled foundation for enhancing both CARICOM's functional cooperation and fulfilling the social, cultural, and economic imperatives of the region.
- In 2014, the CARICOM Heads of Government, which serves as the highest decision-making body of the CARICOM Community, gave direction to establish the CARICOM Single ICT Space to encourage, investment and production in the sector and to bring technology to the people.
- The concept covered aspects such as:
 - Cybersecurity safeguards, moving harmoniously from one CARICOM country to the next, with common policies and legislation around cybersecurity.
 - Mobilization of resources to fund the development of the ICT sector.
 - The development of the CARICOM Digital Agenda 2025 and a Roadmap for the Single ICT Space to be completed by the ICT cluster of agencies. The ICT cluster of agencies include the CTU, Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD), Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU), CARICOM Secretariat and the CARICOM Implementing Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS).
- In 2017, the Vision and Roadmap was developed and approved by CARICOM Heads of Government with a three-to-five-year implementation time frame. The implementation would include institutions and national governments.
- The vision of the Roadmap was an ICT enabled borderless space that fosters economic, social and cultural integration for the betterment of Caribbean citizens.
- A harmonized ecosystem across all of the CARICOM Member States will consist of ICT Policies, Legislation, Regulations, Technical Standards and Best Practices.
 - **Regionally Harmonized Policies, Laws and Regulations** would cover aspects such as data protection, intellectual property regimes and business facilitation in particular in the IT sector
 - **Robust Regional Broadband Infrastructure** would cover aspects such as ensuring competition across the market, redundancy, high capacity in subsea fibre systems
 - **Regional Framework for ICT Service Providers and Consumers** would cover aspects such as equitable and affordable access to ICTs, minimization/elimination of mobile voice and data roaming charges.
 - **Regionally Connected Government Networks** would cover aspects such as modernizing government systems and networks to enable the delivery of public services and facilitating regional interconnection and data transfer.

- **E-Delivery of Government, Social and Commercial Services** would cover aspects such as of the applications that support the delivery of the services.
 - **Regional Security Collaboration and Management** would cover aspects such as regionally harmonized service security policy framework.
- **Elimination of Roaming Charges:**
 - While the goal is the complete elimination of roaming, in 2021, discussions were carried out with the two major service providers within CARICOM, Digicel and Cable and Wireless, to negotiate the drastic reduction of roaming charges.
 - Given the single space of CARICOM, consumers should not be exposed to bill shock on mobile data roaming or mobile calls or SMS messages.
 - Successful negotiations were reached with these main providers with other providers coming on board.
 - Efforts are now being placed on moving more closely towards the harmonization of the regulatory framework. The CARICOM Heads of Government have asked for recommendations on the implementation of a single regulator within CARICOM to give effect to the freedom of movement, drive further investment within the sector and to improve the ease of doing business for those operators within region.

The forum then moved to the Interactive Question-and-Answer portion of the discussion on the Regional Digital Strategies and Digital Economy.

Mr. Raj Mohabeer –

- The differences among the SIDS regions highlight areas where the regions can learn from one another.
- Due to the small size of the islands and their varying markets, instead of having a regional strategy and policy the Indian Ocean Commission is trying to come up with regional tools and mechanisms from the bottom-up approach.
- When developing the ICT sector, the economic, social, and environmental aspects should be integrated for the benefit of the people.
- The Indian Ocean Commission has already agreed on the regional framework for the cable security as this is becoming a major issue.

1. How are civil society and individuals being engaged in the creation of the regional strategies?

- a. **Mr. Andrea Giacomelli –** Given the small nature of the Pacific Island countries and high costs to travel between them to hold consultative processes, the technology shift which resulted from COVID has improved the consultative process and made it easier to involve more people. The consultations undertaken for the Regional Strategy were based on virtual focus groups, which included donors, private sector representatives, non-governmental organizations. Online surveys were also carried out. These virtual consultations allowed for the participation of up to 240 individuals. The draft strategy was then shared and validated in a three-day virtual workshop which was open to everyone who had been virtually consulted in the first phase of consultation. The virtual experience offers great benefits, and the focus should be on learning how to use these virtual tools and resources better now that the COVID lockdowns are over.

- b. **Mr. Rodney Taylor** - The Caribbean Internet Governance Policy Framework is a result of many years of consultation across the board. These IGFS are also open to the public and individual participation is encouraged across areas such as security, data protection, and infrastructure development. Efforts should be made to utilize all possible means to promote the inclusion of non-traditional stakeholders so they can also share their perspective.
- 2. How is a consensus reached in efforts to achieve regional harmonization of policies across a cross section of sovereign states who are diverse and are at different stages of their eCommerce development?**
- a. **Mr. Andrea Giacomelli** – Like any strategy compromise is required. Efforts were made to find common denominators which were eventually submitted to the various Ministers. However, the Strategy itself is not a legal document, but provides high level recommendations. When initializing the implementation phase, challenges may still be encountered. There are recommendations in the Strategy for legislation. The recommendations are for the promotion of the development of model legislation that can be tailored to the specificity of each country. UNCITRAL has developed a top-class model legislation on many aspects of eCommerce and the development of eCommerce transaction laws, and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIFS) is promoting the legislation to the different member states in the Pacific Islands. Through partnership with UNCTAD and UNCITRAL, PIFS is attempting to develop model legislation in various areas of eCommerce. In many areas of the Pacific, there are no enacted legislations on eCommerce and as such, model legislations should be easily adopted.
- 3. Give an update on the progress of the Single ICT Space and some of the challenges faced in its implementation.**
- a. **Mr. Rodney Taylor** – The extent to which the political will to implement and agree to those decisions in terms of how the Single ICT Space will be implemented via same or similar legislation across countries will determine its successful implementation. The political will shown through the elimination of roaming charges is a clear demonstration of the possible cooperation in the region.
- 4. What type of synergies do the regional organizations see between their bespoke digital strategies and what learnings and best practices do you think each of these SIDS regions can share with each other. Perhaps this IGF can be the beginning of a mutual digital cooperation between the SIDS regions.**
- a. **Mr. Raj Mohabeer** –
 - i. Establishing an observatory would be key because that would enable us to understand how we are doing compared to each other, across regions and across other developing countries. Publishing the observatory will also incite many discussions that will drive policy making in countries to improve and indicate where we would need to reinforce ourselves areas. The observatory can also cover the SIDS ability to access adequate funds to achieve ICT goals and facilitate the exchange of best and worst practices.
 - ii. **Mr. Mohabeer also put forward the action point that the different SIDS regions establish a working group with one focal person from each region assigned.** Mr. Mohabeer indicated that he would be willing to become the

focal person for the Indian Ocean Commission group. Mr. Andrea Giacomelli later went on to indicate that he believes focal points should also be assigned from all three SIDS regions to collaborate on practical examples on how to carry forward in the area of digital trade.

- b. **Mr. Rodney Taylor** – As was mentioned earlier, in 1994, Barbados hosted a conference which focused on SIDS. This led to subsequent meetings that brought the SIDS together. The ITU had a specific Plan of Action focused on strengthening the IT infrastructure within SIDS. The relationships formed in the SIDS IGF forum should be utilized to make our voices heard within the ITU to form resolutions for SIDS and represent SIDS at ITU’s Plenipotentiary Conference 2022. ICANN started a survey to determine means on how to improve participation of SIDS within the ICANN policy development process within the regional registries.

5. What do you see as the biggest challenges to adoption and growth of eCommerce and digital economies in your region? (Access to infrastructure, Digital Skills, Developing a Business Case or the lack of drive for entrepreneurship).

- a. **Mr. Andrea Giacomelli** - The approach used by PIFS for eCommerce digital trade is an approach that recognizes 7 policy areas of the needs to be dealt with and within each area there are varying constraints that prevent ecommerce to flourish. A holistic approach is recommended in this area of the eCommerce as pursued by the Pacific methodology which reproduces the methodology of UNCTAD.
- b. Mr. Giacomelli stated that in his personal opinion, last mile connectivity and inadequate digital skills, were the two biggest challenges to eCommerce. He also highlighted other important areas such as the need for regulation to ensure consumer trust and e-payments.

All three panelists agreed for the need for collaboration between the SIDS regions to address issues that can be advanced through cooperation and support among the SIDS regions. Mr. Rodney Taylor indicated that a follow up was needed to identify meaningful mechanisms for collaboration.

The Interactive Question-and-Answer portion of the discussion on the Regional Digital Strategies and Digital Economy then ended.

The forum moved to the SIDS IGF Opening Ceremony. This panel consisted of the following panel members: Hon. Simon Kofe – Minister for Justice, Communications and Foreign Affairs, Tuvalu; Hon. Minister Deepak Balgobin – Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation, Mauritius and; Mr. Amandeep Singh Gill – United Nations Envoy on Technology, United States.

Hon. Simon Kofe – Minister for Justice, Communications and Foreign Affairs, Tuvalu, was invited to discuss present the keynote address to the Inaugural SIDS IGF. In his presentation, Mr. Kofe outlined:

- In 2021, the Ministry of ICT in Tuvalu launched the Future Now project, which aims at preparing today to secure the future against the direct impacts of climate change. One of

the project's initiatives is the creation of a digital nation and digital preservation of Tuvalu if the physical land is lost due to climate change, as well as a digital copy of the topography of the land which will be able to project realistic forecasts of how sea level rise will affect the country.

- This has led to the discovery of various internet governance issues such as intellectual property confusion and shows that there is still room for improvement.
- Technology solutions must account for and promote the unique cultural values of the SIDS countries

Hon. Minister Deepak Balgobin – Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation, Mauritius, was invited to discuss his experience with Internet Governance. In his presentation, Mr. Balgobin outlined:

- The Samoa Pathway was developed in 2014 to provide a comprehensive framework of action to support the sustainable development of SIDS countries
- Due to the remoteness of SIDS countries, there are difficulties in accessing goods and participating in global value chains.
- Importance of resilience of Internet Connectivity, stimulating competition and reducing Cost of Service. This can be achieved through actions such as connecting to more than one submarine cable.
- There is a need to provide support to SIDS through appropriate governance institutions in areas such as of eCommerce and Digital Trade.
- Some key areas to address:
 - Affordable Internet through competitive Markets
 - Logistics
 - Legislative Framework
 - Cybersecurity
 - Consumer Protection
 - Digital Literacy
 - Availability of skills, especially in AI and Blockchain.
 - Support from and by international institutions
- It is important to Remember that SIDS have their own specifics and idiosyncrasies.
- Benefits will spill over across sectors – Tourism, new innovation et cetera, will drive new products and services.
- Internet Governance is not only about Internet but includes inclusiveness. The voices of SIDS must be heard in UN, ITU, CTU, etc.
- An example of SIDS voice being heard is that of Mauritius who has a candidate for ITU Council.
 - They have achieved much in the ICT Sector but much more is required.
 - Their Mobile Connectivity is 151%,
 - Penetration Rate 120% plus,
 - Rank 1 in Global Innovation Index
 - Rank 1 in Cybersecurity by ITU

Mr. Amandeep Singh Gill – United Nations Envoy on Technology, United States, was invited to discuss his experience with Internet Governance. In his presentation, Mr. Gill outlined:

- It is important to have Youth from SIDS at the forefront in the struggles with Climate Change, Natural Disasters for example.
- Technology and Technological Advancement are bringing SIDS together in fostering change in more ways than one.
- During the COVID-19 Pandemic, progress made on Internet connectivity was made an imperative across sectors.
- What the Pandemic has highlighted is the stark disparities
 - o Some have 25% penetration Rates, and Connectivity
 - o There are multiple reasons for disparities:
 - Geography
 - Economy – income levels, investment levels, accessibilities,
 - Infrastructure
 - Human – education, digital skills, capacity,
 - Innovation (influenced by investments and inherent business culture)
 - Lack of Local Content
- **All these issues bring a greater focus to IGF:**
 - o Expert, as well as political and policy perspectives are imperatives
 - o This year, the Global IGF moved to Ethiopia, Africa and will be held in Japan in 2023.
 - o It brought Regional Perspective and more diverse contribution to the fore and to the Forum
 - o UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has called for **A SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE** – there is a need for a Global Digital Compact on issues that guide Internet Governance that will bring benefit to all. An open call has been placed for inputs in the context of a high-level document that speaks about digital issues – opportunities and challenges, shared principles, and approaches for the digital future for all.
- Internet penetration in the SIDS across the three regions are estimated at 63.5% but there are many disparities between the SIDS member states. Many SIDS countries are not able to contribute to the global discourse and do not have the ability to create meaningful content for education, innovation, or research, but this should be a priority.
- Traditional governance forums have struggled to open their discussions to mighty stakeholder communities but that is why the IGF community is important and advantageous because it is a networked institution and is closer to what is going on.

The forum moved to an open discussion on The Impact of Internet Governance on Entertainers and Content Creators. This was moderated by DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine) – Host and Nia Nanan, Senior Research Analyst at CTU.

The open discussion covered the following:

- 1. How have the ideals of Internet Governance impacted your career as a content creator?**
 - a. DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** –The IGF forums were enlightening with regards to the ways in which Internet Governance impacts human rights, media freedom and understanding the basic rights of a creator.

2. **COVID-19 was disruptive for the industry of content creation, how were you able to pivot during this period?**
 - **DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – Persons had to find their niche and demographic and the level of digital growth throughout the pandemic was very quick.

3. **What are some of the challenges faced when using the platforms?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – Monetization is not readily available for the creators of the Caribbean region for platforms such as Facebook, TikTok and Instagram, which is an issue despite the growth in followers and the use of content creators to push products in lieu of traditional marketing strategies. The geographic location of the Caribbean prevents the monetization of content on some of the platforms.

4. **Do you think that the challenge of monetization is going to hinder Caribbean creators from getting more utility from these digital spaces?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – The issue is that despite the growth in followers and the use of content creators to push products in lieu of traditional marketing strategies, monetization is not readily available. A system is needed where content creations can fully make a living online.

5. **Is there an argument that monetization which is seen in the larger countries, with larger markets to be also allowed in the Caribbean despite the different in sizes?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – Despite the population of the individual Caribbean islands being small in comparison to USA and Europe, when viewed as West Indians, the numbers in the Diaspora would rival larger countries.

6. **How should these challenges be addressed?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – Governing bodies would have to come together and come forward and mediate for content creators and speak to the social media platforms.

7. **Is there an audience for the streaming of cultural events in the Caribbean?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – Having the opportunity to be on large platforms with large audiences would lead to people being enjoy these events and create wider opportunities for exposure for the region.

8. **What advice can be given to the youth who are interested in becoming content creators in the post-pandemic, digitalized world?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – Brand development, consistency, collaborations, and authenticity are key.

9. **In your opinion, what are the topics that would benefit and engage the youth?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – Some of these topics can be safety and security in a virtual space and these online platforms; the rights of a content creator; avenues for monetization of ideas; business plans and models; investments and funding; and finding a balance in social media and reality as an aspect of security.

10. Do content creators who put information online have a responsibility to the type of content they put out and the impact that it may have on their viewers?

- a. **DJ Ana (Ms. Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – Content creators have a responsibility to post content that will not negatively impact their audiences. A balance is needed between authenticity and being mindful of your audience.

The open discussion on The Impact of Internet Governance on Entertainers and Content Creators then ended.

The forum moved to the panel discussion on The Internet & the Environment etc. This was moderated by Ms. Cherie Lagakali of Fiji and consisted of the following panel members: Mr. Amandeep Singh Gill – United Nations Envoy on Technology, United States; Mr. Riad Meddeb – Director, Global Centre on Technology, Innovation and Sustainable Development & Senior Principal Advisor for Small Island Developing States, UNDP, United States and; Ms. Sylvia Cadena, Head of Programs and Partnerships, APNIC Foundation, Australia.

Mr. Amandeep Singh Gill – United Nations Envoy on Technology, United States, was invited to discuss the internet and the environment. In his presentation, Mr. Gill outlined:

- E-waste and large energy consumption for data servers is a problem for the environment. More users, content and data storage capacity and power are needed for emerging technologies such as cryptocurrency, blockchain. This heightens the need for sustainable choices.
- In contrast, digital platforms also remove some of the necessity for travel and therefore lessen the impact of carbon footprint. It allows for more research to ensure the sustainability of the supply chain.
- Movement away from Linear Economic Model to Circular Economic Model – reuse, reduce and recycle.

Mr. Riad Meddeb – Director, Global Centre on Technology, Innovation and Sustainable Development & Senior Principal Advisor for Small Island Developing States, UNDP, United States, was invited to discuss his presentation on the internet and the environment. In his presentation, Mr. Meddeb outlined:

- There is a connectivity challenge. The inequity between the unconnected is stark, 1 in 4 people in lower- and middle-income countries are still unaware of the existence of the internet and the negative consequences of the internet are disproportionately felt by lower income countries and within marginalized communities.
- Despite this, the Internet usage doubled from 2.18b in 2012 to 4.95b in 2022. However, the higher use numbers also add to emissions and have a negative environmental impact.
- The emissions and environmental impact of the internet depend on devices, connections, resolution, time of day and much more. Efficiency of the digital infrastructures around the world should be looked at.
- **Internet Value Chain (foundational infrastructure) – Cities around the world are exploring means to increase the inefficiency of digital infrastructure rollouts.**
 - o Dig Once policies that improve the coordination of fiberoptic installations can reduce emissions caused by traffic congestion.
 - o Use of renewable energy, moving away from diesel.
 - o Renewable Energy as a means of powering cloud

- There is a need to leverage Big Data and AI and exploring more elegant ways to present data
- The behaviour of the Internet End User offers several challenges and opportunities – tackling the e-Waste issue through repairing as opposed to disposal; plastic waste from online delivery apps; and lowering the quality of videos to reduce monthly green house gases by 3.5 million tonnes.
- In addition to user-centred designs, environment-centred designs should also be considered.
- The shifting of Digital behaviour towards more favourability for conservation.
- E- waste a key element in building the Digital Economy
- **We need the Internet to save the planet, but we need to, and must ensure that the Internet does not hurt the planet.**

Ms. Sylvia Cadena, Head of Programs and Partnerships, APNIC Foundation, Australia, was invited to discuss APNIC's role in the Internet and the Environment. In his presentation, Ms. Cadena outlined:

- In 2016, APNIC established a foundation which is centred on building capacity around the what the Internet has to offer. Support to network engineers, cybersecurity professionals and Internet Governance specialists.
- APNIC Academy facilitates online access and face to face to the delivery of courses related to network infrastructure.
- There is a need to improve interconnectivity
- The importance of redundancy in connections as a principle of network management and administration.
- The Academy – granting awards (**Internet and the Environment Grants**); supporting over 100 projects over 15 years.
- Facilitated Transfers from IPv4 to IPv6 with over 1 million for grant.
- Highlighted the EcoInternet Index Pilot Study. The Index is an initial approach about how the community could look at environment data that is available and the different things the data articulates.
- Highlighted the Policy Network on Environment (PNE) E.g., associated with this policy is that of the Island State of Fiji, where Internet based services are provided using utilities and Banking Services.

The forum then moved to the Interactive Question-and-Answer portion of the discussion on the Internet and the Environment.

- 1. How can SIDS be convinced on the cost-effective options available to safeguard the environment given the widespread utilization of energy demanding technology?**
 - a. **Mr. Riad Meddeb** – Some of the countries in the Pacific region are using different big data and AI platforms which help them to evaluate where they could invest for energy transition. When designing ways to transition, the environment and methods to reduce the negative externalities from the existing technologies should be considered. There is need for serious thought on what are the new technologies that will not impact climate but will facilitate growth and development.
- 2. Discuss and expand on the Global Digital Compact.**
 - a. **Mr. Amandeep Singh Gill** – A call for inputs to the compact will be open until the end of the year. Inputs from citizens and youth from SIDS are needed to get their

perspectives and priorities. There is no treaty for the internet or digital issues. The Compact allows for alignment in use of Internet. To prevent the misuse and potential harms of platforms, AI and Big Data.

3. Expand on the lack of sufficient input from SIDS in the Multistakeholder Advisory Groups.

- a. **Ms. Sylvia Cadena** – It is important to understand that technology keeps evolving and communities in the SIDS are trying to keep informed. However, the solutions that work in the larger developed countries will not always be transferable to the SIDS as investments will be harder to justify. Current and emerging ISPs within SIDS require incentives to cope with costs and challenges faced when serving these small populations. Big Tech and social media companies that are deploying these technologies need to be encouraged to join these discussions. The discussions should also result in clear action items and calls to action.

The Interactive Question-and-Answer portion of the discussion on the Internet and the Environment then ended.

Key Points: Day 2 - August 26th 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. AST

Ms. Maureen Hilyard, ALAC Chair, ICANN, Cook Islands started out Day 2 of the SIDS IGF by reviewing the discussions held on Day 1 of the SIDS IGF held on August 25th, 2022.

The forum moved to the panel discussion on SIDS IGF Governance/ Way Forward. This was moderated by Ms. Maureen Hilyard and consisted of the following panel members: Mr. Nigel Cassimire – Deputy Secretary-General, CTU; Mr. Pablo Hinojosa – Director, Strategic Engagement, APNIC, Australia; Mr. Kevon Swift – Head of Strategic Relations and Integration, LACNIC, Trinidad and Tobago; Mr. Bevil Wooding – Director, Caribbean Affairs, ARIN, Trinidad and Tobago and; Mr. Albert Daniels – Senior Manager, Stakeholder Engagement, ICANN, Saint Lucia.

The panelist gave brief introductions.

1. **What meaningful impact does your company expect to get from your involvement with Internet Governance and what can your company provide to Internet Governance development within our regions?**
 - a. **Mr. Kevon Swift** – LACNIC is one of the three founding fathers of the LAC IGF process. LAC IGF is a regional discussion space where regional priorities are and iterated to come up with insights, comparative data and feasible working points for the region. LACNIC launched the traditional Líderes program which was a twofold program that sought to provide advice to national communities on how to convene a national IG space through the provision of the multi stakeholder practices, the design of these initiatives, speakers on various topics and advice on the financing elements. The second part of the traditional Líderes program, LACNIC provided financial support to national IG coordinators and leaders to attend and participate in the LAC IGF.
 - b. **Mr. Bevil Wooding** – ARIN is heavily involved in supporting Internet governance activities throughout the region through supporting youth initiatives, policy development initiatives, law enforcement and justice sector capacity building initiatives. A large part of the regional responsibility of the organization is relationship brokering bringing different stakeholder groups together causing people to see beyond their silos. This allows the stakeholders involved to gain a multi-dimensional view of what it takes to govern the Internet.
 - c. **Mr. Pablo Hinojosa** – APNIC plays a technical role and remains committed to supporting the participation of communities and supporting regional, global, and cross regional Internet Governance Forums. The organization’s commitment in the Pacific has been technical capacity building and how to upgrade skills of network engineers. There is a challenge in the region with keeping the digitally skilled individuals in the sector at the local and community level.
 - d. **Mr. Albert Daniels** – ICANN works with its partners to ensure that there is a single stable open secure and interoperable Internet globally. The organization aims to help in the production of an Internet that is of value to the stakeholders, meeting the economic and business needs of stakeholders. ICANN seeks to encourage and guide participation of stakeholders in policy discussions which develop into policy proposals that are sent to the organization to be implemented. Currently there are low levels of participation in these processes among the SIDS. As such, ICANN has launched a SIDS survey to reach out to the SIDS regions to determine the causes of the low participation. The survey can be found on the CTU website, www.ctu.int under the **18th Caribbean Internet Governance Forum and Caribbean Youth IGF Workshop in collaboration with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) IGF event**.

2. How has the CTU maintained such a large influence in highlighting the importance of the Internet in the CARICOM group?

- **Mr. Nigel Cassimire** – The political infrastructure in the Caribbean called CARICOM is an organization set up by a treaty among the independent Caribbean states and associate members states in the region. CARICOM is based on the foundation that the governments of the Caribbean come together to try to create a common market and pursue common initiatives for the development of the region to counteract the small island size and limited resources. At the functional level are specialist organizations of CARICOM that handle specific issues. The CTU created the Caribbean Internet Governance Forum with the CARICOM Secretariat and utilize it as an annual forum to coordinate Caribbean policies related to internet governance.

3. How can youth engagement in Internet Governance be developed and are the current efforts effective among youth?

- a. **Mr. Bevil Wooding** – One of the challenges of engaging the youth is that they have very a wide range of interests. Having targeted, specialized areas of conversation around Internet Governance issues is essential to engaging youth. Prior to the pandemic, ARIN had the Network Operators Group for youth who were interested in networking, computers, and an interest in understanding how the Internet works. ARIN is also currently involved in the justice sector and getting young attorneys involved in the intersection of law of the Internet and technology. ARIN established a Caribbean Justice Forum which was split into two streams for attorneys and judicial officers respectively.
- b. **Ms. Maureen Hilyard** - In the Pacific, there is the lack of people in the legal area in relation to ICT.
- c. **Mr. Albert Daniels** –ICANN’s Next Gen program is a program for university students which prepares them for a role in Internet governance within the ICANN multi stakeholder community. University students in the relevant region’s would be able to apply for funding that will cover travel and accommodation costs.

4. What do you think are the next steps for the SIDS IGF?

- a. **Mr. Kevon Swift** – The SIDS IGF platform is needed as a common platform to work together and further development of SIDS. The Líderes 2.0 program also seeks to develop concrete policy outputs that can inspire and inform digital policing communities. Currently, approximately 47 independent researchers have been given grants and received mentorship to come up with lasting inputs into what would be their internet experience from their communities. The SIDS forum can be utilized to create similar policy research inputs and a similar framework to the Caribbean Internet Governance Policy Framework.
- b. **Mr. Bevil Wooding** – If the SIDS IGF is to become a truly dynamic coalition of SIDS then the next step can be the identification of specific streams of priority beyond events, such as the establishment of protocols for research that can inform presentations, papers and analysis that can be considered.
- c. **Mr. Albert Daniels** – Forums like the SIDS IGF will facilitate the sharing of solutions, economies of scale supported by regional and international organizations. ICANN’s Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) Team’s mandate is to encourage stakeholders

to participate in the determination of the type of Internet that they want for economic and social development.

- d. **Ms. Maureen Hilyard** - Ms. Hilyard indicated that she wanted to start a SIDS subgroup targeting youth under the ALAC's Outreach and Engagement Working Group.
- e. **Mr. Nigel Cassimire** – Mr. Cassimire highlighted the need to continue periodic meetings to foster collaboration, identify some common focus areas and share information. He also indicated that hosting of the SIDS IGF should be rotated to ensure that everyone is involved.

5. How would the SIDS IGF relate to the dynamic coalition that is being proposed?

- a. **Ms. Maureen Hilyard** - One of the goals of ALAC is to achieve collaboration among the different areas. Subcommittees allow for a multistakeholder model where different groups can talk about specific issues which can make the global discussions more impactful.

The panel discussion on SIDS IGF Governance/ Way Forward then ended.

The forum moved to the panel discussion on Telecoms Regulatory Issues : Are Telecom Regulations in SIDS fit for purpose to support internet development? This was moderated by Ms. Dalsie Tolang - Telecommunications Consultant, Vanuatu, and consisted of the following panel members: Mr. Nigel Cassimire – Deputy Secretary-General, CTU; Mr. David Cox – Chairman CANTO, Trinidad and Tobago; and Mr. Kirk Sookram – Deputy CEO, Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT), Trinidad and Tobago.

Ms. Dalsie Tolang opened up the session with the following brief on Pacific Islands regulations.

- It is clear that regulations in the SIDS are not fit for purpose to support the Internet development.
- Majority of the regulations in SIDS are focused on mobile services, decent access to mobile services, management of spectrum, market and competition, quality of services and ensuring that there is access in the rural communities.
- In the Pacific region, none of the regulations captured the activities such as governance of broadband despite the offering of 4G and LTE services across the region.
- According to the ITU Regulatory Tracker of 2020, majority of the regulation's range from Generation 1-3.
- The generation of these regulations should effectively promote role out of Internet development and online businesses which requires the role out of Generation 4 and 5 in the region.
- In the region Internet organizations, regulators, ICT policymakers and ISPS are still working in silos when it comes to the governance of Internet. Additionally, digital literacy at the decision-making level is another issue that needs attention.
- In the Pacific region, some of the island nations have not an established regulatory framework and majority of the Pacific Islands are at G1-3 on ITU's Regulatory Tracker. These factors impact the lack of efficient internet development roll out in the rural areas.
- More awareness raising and education is needed at the decision-making level to allow them to be part of the discussions.

Mr. David Cox – Chairman CANTO, Trinidad and Tobago, was invited to discuss the state of regulation in the Caribbean. In his presentation, Mr. Cox outlined:

- Regulation in the Caribbean lags behind the development of technology. It is currently focused on fixed and voice technology and neglects the incredible changes that are being seen in the telecommunications sector.
- Regulators are missing the opportunity to prepare their regulatory regimes for the future.
- The bureaucratic nature of the telecommunications regulation in the Caribbean leads to lengthy execution times for things such as the distribution of Spectrum licences to Operators.
- Within the telecommunications space in the SIDS, there is a dramatic decline in revenues in all traditional lines of operations such as traditional voice, roaming and text messaging and an exponential increase in the demand for data. In order to support this new demand for data, Operators are having to invest more money annually to keep their networks running at a time when their revenues are plummeting. Meanwhile, the exponential increase in data isn't sufficient to compensate for the loss of traditional revenues from the other services mentioned.
- The levels of capital injection from Operators to maintain customers' expectations is unsustainable and the current quality of internet access and access to the desired services will be impacted.
- Regulation needs to adjust the licensing regimes to adapt to the modern world.
- The current regulatory regimes are deterring investments in the space and holding back the sector. Within the regulatory space, stakeholders need to partner to advance development with the primary responsibility to promote investment and competition that will improve the welfare for consumers.
- Currently, there is no business case to support the rollout of 5G in the Caribbean and the region is at risk of missing a whole technological step because the current economic conditions prevent it from being sustainable.
- Tax burdens on Operators need to be addressed and mechanisms to promote the sharing of revenue between OTTs, Operators and Big Tech need to be developed.

Mr. Kirk Sookram – Deputy CEO, Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT), Trinidad and Tobago, was invited to discuss his presentation on Telecoms Regulatory Issues : Are Telecom Regulations in SIDS fit for purpose to support internet development? In his presentation, Mr. Sookram outlined:

- The telecommunications regulation in the region are not yet fit-for-purpose, but countries are on the journey to having fit-for-purpose regulations.
- **Regulatory Framework As It Pertains to Trinidad and Tobago:**
 - o The Telecommunications Act was fully promulgated in 2004
 - o The logistics framework was founded on technology and service neutrality which would account for technological development as time progressed.
 - o TATT is an independent regulator for both the telecommunications and broadcasting sector and is also the Spectrum Management Authority. As such, the organization handles the management of frequency for users in Trinidad and Tobago.

- TATT aimed to establish an authorization framework; however, improvement can be made to the level of convergence and other changes being seen with the provision of public telecommunication and broadcasting services.
- The authorization framework is the license to rights and obligations, not limited to a specific service, but recognizing public telecommunication services in general.
- Any entity with the licensed authorization has the ability to do an array of public telecommunication services within the area of voice and Internet access.
- The various moods of provision of service in Trinidad and Tobago are classified under international, fixed framework in both wired and wireless and mobile networks.
- Spectrum management is also technology neutral which facilitates Operators to maximize the value of the spectrum by choosing the most appropriate technology based on their business model which has allowed Operators to adopt up to 4G networks.
- During the pandemic, the country was able to utilize the Universal Service Fund to assist in closing the broadband gap and connecting marginalized population groups.
 - TATT has a program where smartphones with accessibility features are subsidized for Persons with Disabilities.
- Public libraries, public transport hubs and unconnected schools were supported to boost community connectivity.
- During the pandemic, 10,000 tablets were donated with a subscription from the mobile operator to provide mobile Internet access to students without appropriate devices and connectivity.
- **Gaps in current regulatory framework:**
 - There's a need for modern legislative framework. This is being developed with the country's Ministry of ICT.
 - Enhanced competition framework to promote sustainable competition
 - Net neutrality:
 - Currently consulting on a framework on the balanced treatment of net neutrality within the industry.
 - Impact of OTT services:
 - This has been commenced through public consultation on a separate framework which can be found on the TATT website. The first two rounds of the consultation end on the 26th of September 2022.
- **Attaining G5 ITU Regulatory Status:**
 - **ITU's ICT Regulatory Tracker tracks the transition of countries through generations one to five.**
 - G1 is more of a monopolistic environment where regulation is handled within the government or by a policymaker
 - G3 has an independent regulator which liberalizes the environment however, competition in the market is still insufficient.
 - G4 has a regulator that can enforce and the level of competition in the market is starting to mature.
 - G5 is the ideal market.

- The ITU Regulatory Tracker features 4 main pillars:
 - Regulatory Authority Status
 - Regulatory mandates
 - Regulatory regime
 - Competition Framework

- In 2020, Trinidad and Tobago reached a G4 regulatory environment which features and integrated regulation-led economic and social policy goals.
- **Strategic focus of TATT 2019-2022**
 - **Stakeholder Relationship Management** – The introduction of a collaborative approach within the IT industry and also reaching out to adjacent sectors that utilize ICT for their development.
 - **Stability of the Industry** - The reduction in revenue in the telecommunication and broadcasting sectors of the industry was a big issue which led to efforts to deter the loss of revenue in the industry.
 - **Universal Service, Connectivity and Digital inclusion** - This focuses on the initiatives of digital transformation across Trinidad and Tobago
 - **Organization Effectiveness** - Ensuring that the country is equipped to undertake the digital transformation journey.

- **Reasons to achieving collaborative regulation G5**
 - ICTs, powered by internet development, have moved from the realm of simple “communications”.
 - ICTs have dramatically transformed all sectors across the economy.
 - Silo-style ICT sector regulation isn’t viable in the digital world and for digital transformation.
 - Collaborative regulation is people-centred regulation. It looks at sustainability and long-term gains as opposed to industry profit maximization and exclusive economic growth.

- **Current Collaboration Approaches in Trinidad and Tobago amongst ICT policy makers, regulators and Internet Industry:**
 - Government in collaboration with the private sector and civil society for national ICT planning. Current National Digital Strategy 2022-2025.
 - TATT’s approach to establishing regulatory framework is collaborative with public stakeholder engagement as can be seen with the Net Neutrality Framework and OTT Paper Framework that were mentioned previously.
 - Engagements with the industry groups by a public forum on contemporary issues. The industry has moved towards a collaborative approach to dealing with internet issues and internet development. Multi-stakeholder Groups such as the Trinidad and Tobago Multistakeholder Advisory Group (TTMAG) which is an independent entity for the promotion of development of best practice policy standards for the country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) and the local internet ecosystem in the interest of the internet community.

- **Ensuring digital literacy at the decision-making level**
 - TATT invests heavily in the training of staff and decision makers in both local and international training to ensure that they are aware of the contemporary issues and challenges to better involve decision making.
 - The Ministry of Digital Transformation recruits expertise from the private sector to advise on policies and recommendation for involved decision-making at the Ministerial and Government level.
 - ICT seminars to boost stakeholder awareness and understanding of predominant issues within the ICT space. Regional and international ICT conferences were set up to increase exposure to the local industry.

The forum then moved to the Interactive Question-and-Answer portion of the discussion on the Telecoms Regulatory Issues: Are Telecom Regulations in SIDS fit for purpose to support internet development?

1. How can the regulators and policy makers cater to eCommerce?

- a. **Mr. David Cox** – The Caribbean is vulnerable to cyber security breaches. Cyber security is really the responsibility of the user and as such every user online has a responsibility to educate themselves about the dangers of being online and about the need to become “human firewalls”. However, there are some areas where public policy can assist such as an update to the laws to punish and to criminalize the online criminal activity and abuses that are occurring. Mr. Cox states that the needed legislation should be enforced primarily under criminal law and not the regulators or telecommunications agencies. ICT regulators who have a vast stakeholder network can bring this ecosystem together to assist in the public education about the importance of online activity and how people can go about protecting themselves. Additionally, the Caribbean region is lacking sufficient collaborative efforts to develop and create the structures to promote resilience to the dangers and vulnerabilities of digitization.
- b. **Mr. Kirk Sookram** – The telecommunications regulator will have a role to play. This role would be defined from the standpoint of awareness and education of the public. Other roles may include overseeing service provisioning by ISPs to ensure that their subscribers understand the dangers of the internet. In Trinidad and Tobago, a distinction is seen between cybercrime and cybersecurity. Where cybersecurity is seen to under the purview of the ICT sector, whereas cybercrime is led by the Ministry of National Security in consultation with the ICT sector and other actors.
- c. **Mr. Nigel Cassimire** – Regulators within the region are usually between G2- G4 on the ITU’s Regulatory Tracker. Additionally, the varying types of regulation pose challenges to Operators. Regulatory harmony across the countries would aid this situation and as such CTU are making attempts to address some of the shortcomings. CTU runs other forums which are inclusive of regulators, Operators, and policy makers to bring together different perspectives on the issues faced such as the dominance of the Big Techs and OTTs. Efforts are in train to study and develop a consensus on policies that can be recommended to the Caribbean Heads of Government to make their regulatory efforts more suitable to the development services and technology. In September, the CTU is going to have meetings within the

CTU framework that will propel the region to find solutions that are acceptable to all.

2. Based on experiences in the Caribbean, who should be responsible for the implementation of regulation on data privacy within a country?

- a. **Mr. David Cox** – Part of the challenges of having the internet as open as it is, is that the instances of potential harms increase. Regionally and worldwide, users are generating a lot of personal data that is being used by foreign firms for the purpose of profits. The collected data could be abused or misused and as such citizens in the region need a basic level of protection for their private data. It is pivotal that harmonized rules that provide these protections without overreaching are developed.
- b. **Mr. Kirk Sookram** – The Government of Trinidad and Tobago advanced the thrust to digital transformation during the pandemic. When considering data privacy and other laws, it is important to not just putting laws in place but enforcing them as well. Concurrent to the thrust to digital transformation, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago are looking at protecting the data as they move towards the digitalization of government information, which would consist of individuals personal information. One key area of focus for TATT during the pandemic was the online protection of children which was also a big drive by the UNDP and the ITU over the last 4 years. In 2020, the ITU developed guidelines for Child Online Protection looking at raising awareness and education of children, parents, and teachers on the threats in the online world. TATT has campaigns where they have gone online with the dissemination of information to make sure that the persons knew how to use the devices and awareness on the safe use of the internet. Educating and making sure the user is aware and properly understands the consequences of their online activities is paramount to ensuring the protection of personal data.

3. When doing consultations on regulatory documents, there is a lack of consumers who come out to share their inputs, how can these consumers be shown the importance of their involvement in the development of regulations and the impact that it has on their lives?

- a. **Mr. Kirk Sookram** – Those that are most affected get involved in the consultations and development of regulatory frameworks, however, a lot of people are still unaware. Even though TATT has several outreach programs, there is still a need for more active efforts to raise this awareness.
- b. **Mr. Nigel Cassimire** – Consultations result in a more durable result because those who are most impacted get involved.

The Interactive Question-and-Answer portion of the discussion on the [Telecoms Regulatory Issues: Are Telecom Regulations in SIDS fit for purpose to support internet development?](#) then ended.

The forum moved to the panel discussion on [Introductory Keynotes on Access, Connectivity and Inclusion](#). This panel was moderated by [DJ Ana \(Ana-Leesa Ramnarine\)](#) and the panel consisted of following speakers: Mr. Riad Meddeb – Director – UNDP Singapore Global Centre on Technology,

Innovation and Sustainable Development & Senior Principal Advisor for Small Island Developing States, (UNDP), United States of America; Mr. Stephen Bureaux, The Bahamas.

Mr. Riad Meddeb, Director of the UNDP Singapore Global Centre on Technology, Innovation and Sustainable Development & Senior Principal Advisor for Small Island Developing States, (UNDP), United States of America, was invited to discuss his presentation on Access, Connectivity, and Inclusion. In his presentation, Mr. Meddeb outlined:

- Connectivity is crucial for economic development, access of information, opportunities and service delivery. It is key in education, healthcare innovations, public services and lives above and below water.
- From the continent of Africa, an increase of 10% in mobile internet penetration can lead to a direct impact on GDP per capita of 2.5%.
- For SIDS, connectivity offers great opportunities for addressing common challenges. However, based on the result of UNDP's Digital Readiness Assessment, an assessment tool which was carried out in several SIDS along with a large scale of public surveys, show that only 24% respondents think that people are being reached by digital services.
- The pandemic is increasing the gap between those who have connectivity and can benefit from it and those who do not.
- In a 2021 report by the UN Tech Envoy, for LDCs including several SIDS, the promise of connectivity remains unfulfilled. Only 2 LDCs have met the 2020 SDG target 9.c on universality and affordability, with several others on the way to reach the target in 2025. However, 26 countries remain far off this target.
- **Access to Connectivity:**
- Approximately 3 billion people around the world are still offline. Divides are widening between high income and lower income countries, rural and urban areas, along income, gender, ethnic lines and Persons with Disabilities.
- The GSMA splits the challenge of the divide into two areas: the Coverage Gap and the Usage Gap.
- **Usage Gap**
- There are 3.4 billion people who live within the footprint of a mobile broadband network but don't use it. 93% of these people live in low- and middle-income countries. This can be contributed to the lack of awareness of the internet and the potential it offers.
- Nearly 1/4 of the adult population in some countries don't know about mobile Internet
- This can be improved by giving people access to devices, products and services that are useful for their lives and livelihoods. **Google's Camera Go Initiative** looks to develop a high quality and affordable smartphone camera.
- Beyond this, issues such as digital literacy, data and device affordability exists and still need to be addressed if we are to shape inclusive digital societies.
- In many parts of the world, the digital infrastructure financing gap is also increasing. This can be seen in many lower income countries and is particularly evident from the lack of investment from the private sector. This will impact economic growth by reducing the export opportunities around connectivity driven industries such as smart cities.
- Access isn't linear particularly in poorer households and amongst women and girls. Nuances such as these between aspects such as access and ownership need to be considered.
- Access shouldn't be seen as a binary definition of whether people have access to connectivity or not, but rather how connectivity is or isn't useful.
- **Connectivity:**

- **Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)** highlights the concept of meaningful connectivity which means that access alone isn't enough, and focus should also be on delivering the experience that is needed to function in the digital economy, including with bandwidth heavy activity such as remote working and education.
- Billions lack the meaningful connectivity they need to make the most of the internet. In a recent study by the A4AI, users with meaningful connectivity were 1/3 more likely to do essential activities online such as access healthcare online, remote work, online education and participate in the digital economy.
- In 2021, the Internet Exchange Point in Haiti and Panama were strengthened, while in Papua New Guinea the country's first community network was established.
- Experiences that meet the needs and realities of citizens are needed. This may require connectivity efforts particularly for rural communities where the benefits and potential of the technology are different.
- **Inclusion:**
- After years of progress towards women's equal digital inclusion, deceleration and in some cases a reversal is being seen. Women remain 7% less likely than men to own a mobile phone and 264 million fewer women than men are accessing the mobile internet.
- The exclusion of women in the digital world has resulted in countries missing out on USD \$1 trillion in GDP. In 2020, this loss to GDP was USD \$126 billion.
- **Future Proofing Inclusion:** By 2025, a billion more people will have smartphones. Studies by Google show that these new users will likely have less income, formal education and live in less developed areas with more unreliable internet.
- To ensure that these people can play a meaningful role in the digital economy, UNDP is launching a global survey on Whatsapp and Facebook Messenger to explore the hopes, concerns and challenges that young people across SIDS face in the context of the digital economy.
- Mr. Meddeb invited individuals to reach out to his colleague Calum Handforth at calum.handforth@undp.org with inputs for the survey. He also indicated that a session could be established with participants to share the findings of the survey towards the end of the year.
- **UNDP's work for enhancing connectivity in SIDS**
- In the area of access, UNDP is seeking to improve data-driven decision making including exploring connectivity data to cover key coverage challenges. In August 2022, UNDP launched the largest data platform with machine learning for all the SIDS.
- In areas of connectivity, Mr. Meddeb and his colleagues have been working with the World Economic Forum to develop the "Dig Once" policy model to accelerate the roll out of connectivity. Efforts are also about to begin on the drafting of an encore tenancy to support government in making available public assets to host network infrastructure.
- In areas of inclusion, UNDP the Digital Strategy 2.0 ensures that digital economy works for everyone.

Mr. Stephen Bureaux, Deputy to the Director of the ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau, was invited to discuss the causes to the lack of meaningful connectivity and digital economies. In his presentation, Mr. Bureaux outlined:

- While social and physical interaction must not be understated, once enabled, the use of technology to interact with the world is often cheaper, more environmentally friendly, efficient and convenient than the previous ways of living and working.

- A sound framework is needed for the transformation of all countries in the world which promotes meaningful, affordable and secure access to digital infrastructure and connectivity for all people everywhere and the social changes that will create an environment where we can have safe and trusted adoption of technologies.
- The problem faced by SIDS are drastically different from other developing countries and in the context of digital development may be even more difficult to overcome.
- The small land masses, small populations and remote nature of SIDS have an adverse impact on building ICT infrastructure. It results in the cost of infrastructure being uneconomically higher to justify expenses to the operators.
- The impact of frequent rebuilding of networks due to disasters such as hurricanes, floods, typhoons, tidal waves must also be considered in regards to justifying the investment for the commercial player and results in SIDS often paying higher cost for services that do not match the quality of those delivered in continental countries. In many cases, the nature of the SIDS economy is not developed to the stage where the population could afford these high prices.
- The ITU's Global Connectivity Report 2022, notes that while the coverage gap is largely closed with 95% of the world in reach of a broadband network, 32% of the world is still not online and this is most often due to a lack of affordability. The report also shows that in the last three years, while internet usage increased significantly, affordability of Internet access decreased due to COVID-19's impact on economies
- Digital transformation of a country must have a core of experienced and educated people including those from government to drive the enabling policy and regulatory framework, to bring government services online and teach the necessary skills to the population. The private sector must also be involved to develop the apps and services and create the economic conditions that create digital value.
- Also, SIDS face relatively poor aid funding. Compared to LDCs, SIDS are the beneficiary of a tiny level of international development aid with an even smaller amount going to digital development.
- From a digital perspective, SIDS deserve more attention than they have gotten as connectivity is critical for access to the rest of the world.
- The international community needs to recognize that the digital development of SIDS needs tangible financial and human resource support to aid countries through their whole digital transformation.
- This will require many partners and agencies providing coordinated support with a full understanding of the country's needs that builds transformation that can cut across the whole society and bring the country into the digital future.
- New financial contributors need to be identified. This can include digital companies such as those with eCommerce or online focuses, companies deriving profits from broadband, multilateral development banks, corporate social responsibility funds and philanthropic donors. These contributions can come in various forms including investments and in-kind contributions such as digital skills training.
- ITU BDT's Digital Transformation Wheel enables the identification of the needs of countries when combined with ITU's data and collected statistics.
- There is also the Partner2Connect which creates a framework to bring together stakeholders to make the needed interventions in countries.
- Climate change presents an opportunity as its understood that assistance is needed, however, digital transformation needs to be included in these conversations as it provides solutions to climate change issues.

- SIDS need to expand their voice through a collaborative approach that bring together all SIDS across the Pacific; the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea (AIS) and the Caribbean to better reach the UN agencies, International Development Banks, Philanthropic Organizations and Operators, Operating agencies.

The forum then moved to an open answered discussion session called the “Voice of the Youth” which sought to recap the events of the Caribbean Youth Internet Governance Forum and discussing youth involvement in ICT. The segment was moderated by DJ Ana (Ana-Leesa Ramnarine) consisted of panelists: Mr. Tariq Mohammed, Chairman of the Caribbean Youth Internet Governance Forum and Mr. Tyler Seudath, Associate Professional at UWI CIRP, Trinidad and Tobago.

- 1. How can more youth be encouraged to get involved in the ICT sector and actively participate in future Internet Governance forums?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – A more simplistic approach will be key to getting more youth involved. More emphasis on the social impact of Internet Governance may also attract more youth.
- 2. Would interactive sessions at the universities in different regions would assist in getting more youth involved in Internet Governance?**
 - a. **Mr. Tariq Mohammed** - This would be an excellent step. The Caribbean ICT Research Program of the University of the West Indies has been hosting fireside chats called the Caribbean Communications for Development.
 - b. **Mr. Tyler Seudath** - The Caribbean Communications for Development (CC4D) was founded by Dr. Kim Mallalieu, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering to discuss the development and employment opportunities in the ICT industry. The participants were able to delve into the standards of the International Telecommunications Union, interact with professionals in the ICT industry and build their professional confidence.
- 3. Would starting similar initiatives from the level of high school aid the youth in obtaining employment opportunities and building professional confidence?**
 - a. **Mr. Tariq Mohammed** – More youth need to be involved in the decision making and policy development. Increasing the awareness of young people to international development agencies involved in the ICT space at a younger age would improve their involvement.
- 4. How can the youth and content creators respond to companies and organizations unwilling to pay them their asking price?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – Knowing your worth and value is key. Content creators should set a price and stick to it. This not only impacts the individual, but also the entire sphere of workers in the field and as such a unified approach is necessary.
- 5. What steps could the CTU take to close that gap and make a more accessible space for content creators?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – A lot of content creators in the Caribbean are unaware of their ability to monetize. Educating content creators in the Caribbean

about monetization is key. Having a unified organization in the Caribbean for the content creators to share ideas, challenges and issues would also benefit content creators. The CTU could be a possible mediator between the unified Caribbean organizations and platforms like Facebook and Instagram which would aid content creators to find a balance and build the industry.

6. **How do content creators try to get the attention of those in underserved areas?**
 - a. **DJ Ana (Ana-Leesa Ramnarine)** – With regards to poor access due to affordability, zero rating and subsidizing important services and apps helps to increase usage. Subsidization can be achieved through advertising by more companies like internet and cell phone providers. Reducing taxation also should be considered as high taxation rates deters Operators from further expanding infrastructure. Additionally, the corporate work should be more involved in the sponsorship of devices.

7. **What advice can be given to youths that want to get involved in ICTs and Internet Governance from a youth perspective?**
 - a. **Mr. Tariq Mohammed** – Mr. Mohammed encouraged youth to reach out to him, network with the professionals in the sphere and keep abreast of all the ongoing and upcoming initiatives. LACNIC’s Lideres yearly program provides grants and mentorship.
 - b. **Mr. Tyler Seudath** – Various internet organizations such as ISOC, ARIN and ICANN have fellowship programs where ICT students would be able to voice their ideas and projects on a more international level. This year’s Caribbean Communications for Development (CC4D) events would be broadcasted on the Caribbean ICT Research Program (CIRP’s) twitter page and individuals will also be able to email tyler.seudath@my.uwi.edu to join the mailing list.

8. **How would you advise youth in primary school to get involved in Internet Governance? Do you think it is important for them to know the fundamental principles of Internet Governance?**
 - a. **Mr. Tyler Seudath** – At such a young age, these individuals should still know the principles of safety of internet usage.
 - b. **Mr. Tariq Mohammed** – Parents should also be involved in learning the principles of safety of internet usage and how to properly supervise their children.

9. **Should the internet platforms and apps implement more parental safety guides for children when using these apps?**
 - a. **Mr. Tariq Mohammed** – The users must also be a focus in this regard. Critical assessments should be taken to identify what is needed to create proper tutorials or guidelines on how to use the app safely.

The open answered discussion session called the “Voice of the Youth” then ended.

The forum moved to the panel discussion on **High Interest SIDS-IGF Panel – Access, Connectivity & Inclusion**. This was moderated by Ms. Letitia Masaea and consisted of the following panel members: Ms. Georgina Naigulevu, Project Manager, Digital and Health Information, Fiji; Ms. Sarai Tevita Faleupolu – ICT Director for the National University of Samoa; Ms. Winifred Kula Amini,

Papua New Guinea and; Ms. Tereza Horejsova, Outreach Manager at the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCW), Geneva.

Ms. Tereza Horejsova, Outreach Manager at the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCE), Geneva, was invited to discuss her presentation on how prominent the issue of access is on the IGF agenda. In her presentation, Ms. Horejsova outlined:

- **IGF Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG)**
- Access is one of the main themes of the 2022 global IGF under the title “Connecting all people and safeguarding human rights”
- Ms. Horejsova encourage members of the SIDS and other members of the community who want to get more involved in the IGF to join one of the global IGFs teams and shaping what the global IGF will bring to the table.
- MAG members are appointed by the UN Secretary General based on nomination, currently there are only a few members from the following SIDS countries on the MAG. (Bahamas, Comoros, Fiji, Tuvalu).
- The deadline for nomination for the 2023 rotation of the MAG is September 5th, 2022.
- Additionally, the IGF Leadership Panel which brings the IGF to the attention of high-level policy global leaders has no representation from the SIDS.
- **Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCE)**
- GFCE is a platform that unites over 170 member and partners with many governments and other stakeholders. The aim is to assist in more efficient coordination of cyber capacity building efforts.
- There is a need for presence in the various regions in order to cater to the specific needs of these regions. As such, the GFCE is seeking to establish hubs in the global regions of Africa, Southeast Asia, the Pacific Island States, and Latin America and the Caribbean.
- The Pacific Island States, and Latin America and the Caribbean hubs already exist and the current government members of the GFCE include Dominica, Dominican Republic, Mauritius and Papua New Guinea and the GFCE invites other countries to get involved.
- On November 18th, 2022 during the Cyber Festival in the Dominican Republic, the Latin America and the Caribbean hub will host a regional meeting to discuss cyber capacity building priorities for the region.
- The Cybil Portal is a repository which shares an overview of international cyber capacity building projects and hosts a large library of resources for projects to use. This can be useful by resulting in less duplication of efforts and more efficiency in terms of building projects.
- Development and cyber related issues should be considered and discussed in tandem. In 2023, GFCE will organize a global GC3B Conference to connect development and cyber related issues and their respective communities. Efforts to include SIDS perspectives and participation will be pushed for in this discourse. The four pillars of the GC3B Conference include: Cyber Resilience for Development, Collaboration to Secure the Digital Ecosystem, Cyber Capacity Building for the Stability and Security of the Digital Environment; and Solutions for Safeguarding Development from Digital Risks and Threats.

Ms. Winifred Kula Amini, Chair of the Papua New Guinea Digital Information and Communications Technology Cluster,, was invited to discuss the context of the Papua New Guinea economy, challenges to infrastructure and internet cost, education, and the work of the Papua New Guinea Digital ICT Cluster. In her presentation, Ms. Amini outlined:

- The Papua New Guinea (PNG) Digital ICT Cluster was established in 2014 through an EU program in the Pacific Islands which came out of the **Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization (PIPSO)** and sought to promote the concept of clusters and how clusters provide that opportunity to accelerate both economic and social growth.
- When the study was completed, ICT came out as the sector that provided the most potential.
- The PNG Digital Cluster promotes and advocates for changes in policy and promoting ICT development.
- Papua New Guinea has a population of 9 to 11 million, of which only 30% of the population has internet access.
- Efforts to improve internet access are ongoing with the usage of a coral sea cable from Australia, however internet access still remains expensive and slow.
- Not a lot of the schools have access to the Internet in the country and majority of the population still do not fully understand the scope of the internet.
- According to the World Bank, the country's lower middle income poverty line is approximately 325 Kina per month. 30 gigabytes for 30 days is equivalent to the cost of 46% of that monthly income for the majority of the lower-middle income population.
- Since 2000, the educational curriculum has not been updated. Efforts are being made to advocate that the school and the university curriculum is on par with industry standards.
- The lack of promotion of local content and ventures from local entrepreneurs reinforces the country's current dependency on looking externally to procure ICT services and labour. These challenges had a major impact on SMEs during COVID-19.
- Despite these challenges, the utilization of off the shelf software platforms opens up opportunities for the vast amount of local talent to customize these platforms to the specific local settings and needs, for example software within the tax system.
- The PNG Digital ICT Cluster is entering an MOU with the Papua New Guinea Government and looking at a clustering policy to help promote and foster local software developers and content providers.
- Two technical policy developments the PNG Digital ICT Cluster have contributed to are the contributions to the Electronic Transactions Act 2021 and the Digital Government Act 2022.
- Efforts are being made to create the National Cluster Policy to promote local talent and developing the local ecosystem.
- An annual tech innovator conference is held to support women and youth in the internet economy. A hackathon was also launched in 2020 where youth are assisted in identifying problems, creating, and pitching solutions related to the UN SDG goals.
- Startup investments in the country are limited and majority of startups are unqualified to receive loans. As a result, the PNG Digital ICT Cluster launched the DEFINE Business Skills Program for Women Entrepreneurs. The initiative is a private sector collaboration between PNG Stock Exchange, PNG Digital ICT Cluster and a venture capital firm from Sydney called Unkapt, which aims to help boost business skills in Papua New Guinea. The program is funded by UNCDF under their Rapid Finance Facility Project which is aimed to supporting women entrepreneurs in Papua New Guinea with business, financial and digital skills.
- The project will seek to train 300 women with foundational, intermediate and advanced skills in financial literacy, business literacy and digital literacy to build the capacity of female entrepreneurs to grow their business.

Ms. Georgina Naigulevu, Project Manager, Digital and Health Information, Fiji, was invited to discuss her work on digital and health information. In her presentation, Ms. Naigulevu outlined:

- The Internet has become a critical infrastructure to our global health sector.
- Within Fiji, advances in medicine and technology have improved early detection and improved care, checkups and referrals on continued care and monitoring of rehabilitation.
- A wealth of information is online to help medical professionals collaborate for better patient care and public health. Things such as the use of electronic exchanges by e-mail, instant messaging and dialogues now reduce those waiting times.
- Digital health is defined as the field of knowledge and practice associated with the development and use of digital technologies to improve health. Digital health expands the concept of e-Health to include digital consumers with a wider range of smart and connected devices. It encompasses other uses of digital technologies such as the Internet of Things, advanced computing, big data analytics, artificial intelligence including machine learning and robotics.
- Quality of connectivity is critical for the healthcare industry. However, the digital divide has highlighted that access, connectivity and inclusion required for the digital economy for SIDS vary depending on the digital infrastructure investment and financing for healthcare.
- Data-driven decision-making allowed researchers and epidemiologists to study the relevant information and improved their coordination in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Fiji has endeavored on the development of a national digital health strategy for the next five years to help map out what the needs are for digital future in healthcare.
- WHO and ITU developed the National e-Health Strategy Toolkit in 2012 which is an expert guide that provides governments and stakeholders with solid foundations and methods for the development and implementation of a national e-Health vision action plan and monitoring framework. Ms. Naigulevu encouraged all countries regardless of their level of development to adopt those toolkits for your own circumstances.
- At the World Health Assembly held in 2020 there was an adoption of the WHO Global Strategy of Digital Health 2020-2025 which serves as the roadmap to link the latest developments in innovation in digital health and put these tools in action to improve health outcomes.
- The health sector still carries a lot of different complexities such as the interoperability of medical devices to the electronic medical health records to facilitate the ability to treat patients while they are being examined.
- ICT professional with the appropriate skill sets in networking, utilizing the IP addresses to ensure connectivity of medical devices, understanding of the network topology and the ability to resolve issues are needed.
- In Fiji, capacity in these areas remain low but can be improved through more partnerships, advocacy in digital health and a deep dive into the different local talents that encourage sustaining the healthcare system.

Ms. Sarai Tevita Faleupolu, ICT Director for the National University of Samoa, was invited to discuss the effects of the recent pandemic to education in terms of access, connectivity and inclusion during and post COVID-19. In her presentation, Ms. Faleupolu outlined:

- COVID-19 saw an increase to connectivity access in schools and personal lives, however, the quality of connectivity and affordability challenges still remains the same in the Pacific Islands.

- According to the World Economic Forum, during the COVID-19 pandemic about 1.6 million children globally were affected by school closures.
- Educators had to shift the way that they delivered and engaged with students, colleagues and stakeholders.
 - o During lockdown restrictions, usage of video conferencing tools increased drastically in online education and other sectors.
- While some individuals were able to successfully access digital connectivity, many students, parents and educators were unable to access the digital tools needed and now they risks being left behind by the digital divide.
- The National University of Samoa bought 20 zoom licences to cater for online education during COVID-19.
- While the National University of Samoa utilized the MOODLE system, TVET councils faced technological challenges in the delivery of their vocational training courses because they lacked access to similar a learning management system.
- There is also a need for businesses to reconsider their priorities given the role the Internet played as an enabler that enable them to continue their businesses.
- Operators also have an important role to play in collaboration with the education sector and all the relevant stakeholders involved in supporting the students in providing access and devices to promote online education and reducing the digital divide.
- Despite challenges caused where students lacked the necessary devices to access online courses, the National University of Samoa and education sector utilized various means to reach students, such as Facebook Messenger to push necessary messages to enable learning from home.
- Procurement of the internet data via SIM cards increased in households as this was the main way students accessed online courses.
- Ensuring security of networks was also a main priority as the VPN was only shared out to authorized staff.
- The education sector approved the Education Sector Strategic Framework that addresses the four areas that the education sector is moving towards. – 1) Digital Future Skills Marketplace, 2) Data Transparency, 3) Technology Essential and 4) Digital Workforce.
- Education sector consists of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture; Samoa Quality Authority Unit; and National University of Samoa who put together the digital framework for education for the way forward.

The forum then moved to the Interactive Question-and-Answer portion of the discussion on the High Interest SIDS-IGF Panel – Access, Connectivity & Inclusion.

1. **What are your thoughts for increasing SIDS input to the IGF MAG apart from the nomination?**
 - a. **Ms. Tereza Horejsova** – The IGF MAG is a group of 40 which requires an inclusive stakeholder representation. There are currently MAG members from SIDS which leaves a footprint on the IGF. Ms. Horejsova once again encouraged members of the SIDS community to consider being nominated to the IGF MAG. MAG members decide what the main theme and focus of the annual Global IGF, shape the criteria for the selection of workshops as well as for the main sessions.
 - b. For the IGF leadership panel, this is a small group still in its nascent stage.

- 2. Majority of the persons that presented in the SIDS IGF and whom the CTU worked with on the organizing committee and preparatory work for the SIDS IGF were women. Is this representative of the ICT sector in the Pacific region or coincidental?**
- a. **Ms. Letitia Masaea** – There are very few women in ICT in the Pacific Islands. Most of the women on the High Interest SIDS-IGF Panel – Access, Connectivity & Inclusion panel are members of the Pacific Islands Chapter Internet Society and represent women in ICTs in their own countries. Women in ICT from Solomon Islands and Tonga are pursuing awareness and advocacy of ICT to the younger generation highlighting the opportunities in the field.
 - b. **Ms. Sarai Tevita Faleupolu** – In Samoa, there are few women in ICT. While on the educational level, more women are involved, when switching to the workforce, fewer women remain on the technical side of the ICT sector. Currently the Samoa ICT Association. The World Wide Web Foundation Pacific Scorecard is used to identify why there are so little women in the ICT field. Accessibility does not serve as a barrier, but rather cultural and social factors.
 - c. **Ms. Georgina Naigulevu** – For women with disability in the ICT field in Fiji, Ms Naigulevu is the only lady who has been an IT Manager and Software Developer for the country. However, the Pacific Islands Chapter facilitates learning and community building in order to get the various groups going. Despite the challenges with fewer females in ICT, the Pacific Islands also offer opportunities where women within the region can be seen together championing some of the hardest topics on ICT.
 - d. **Ms. Winifred Kula Amini** – In the Papua New Guinea economy, women in ICT are still underrepresented in formal employment. Opportunities are given for entrepreneurs in the Pacific Islands to get together and connect which creates opportunities for women to enter the sector. Part of the Papua New Guinea (PNG) Digital ICT Cluster’s educational skills program is to reach out as many women as possible to build the foundation of business, financial and digital literacy. Having access to Internet and platforms will support the initiatives of these women.
- 3. With regards to the DEFINE Business Skills Program for Women Entrepreneurs, what is the foreseen impact of the initiative on access, devices and digital literacy with regards to women and youth?**
- a. **Ms. Winifred Kula Amini** - A lot of people are below the middle-income range and it's important that they're given the platforms, access to connectivity and investors, information, and the ability to convert them into a more formal business especially being in a very agriculture dominated country.
- 4. How large are the women in ICT groups that the panelists are members of?**
- a. **Ms. Winifred Kula Amini** - Ms. Amini is part of the women in STEM, who’s founder is Priscilla Kevin. When events are hosted, around 100-150 women are in attendance. There are very few women that are driving the associations, however, with regards to membership for women in ICTs is still small. For women in entrepreneurship, membership among women is much larger with approximately over 5000 women.
 - b. **Ms. Georgina Naigulevu** - Ms. Naigulevu is part of five different women groups that are affiliated with ICT. There are around a handful of women in these ICT groups, and they mostly operate across the government, financial and banking sectors. She also is a member of the Innovation for Change group which advocates towards innovation for civil societies and the usage of technology. Other smaller groups

include groups for entrepreneurship and cyber groups. The Pacific Information Network consists of approximately 20 ladies involved in data analytics in banking, finance and the health sector. Despite the many smaller groups, sharing across different groups is key. ISOC is the largest group due to its activities on a regional level which facilitates the interaction with more people across the region.

- c. **Ms. Letitia Masaea** – Within the Solomon Islands, there's approximately 14 to 15 female members of the association.
- d. **Ms. Sarai Tevita Faleupolu** – There are 14 women who are full members of the Samoa ICT Association, however, about 20 women are associated members. Majority of the ICT projects undertaken at the National University of Samoa are led by Professor Ioana Chan Mow. At the National University of Samoa, more lecturers are women more lecturers in computing studies are women
- e. **Ms. Tereza Horejsova** – The GFCE is looking at how women from SIDS can be represented in global negotiation on digital policy internet governance. To achieve this, GFCE's Women in International Security and Cyberspace Fellowship Program involves women from underrepresented countries in negotiations such as the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group and sets tailored activities for them to participate in. This program will be led from the Pacific Islands Hub and this will hopefully bring more opportunities for women from Pacific Islands States to represent their countries internationally.

The Interactive Question-and-Answer portion of the discussion on the High Interest SIDS-IGF Panel – Access, Connectivity & Inclusion then ended.

Mr. Nigel Cassimire, Deputy Secretary General of the CTU and Ms. Letitia Masaea, panel moderator brought the second day of the SIDS IGF to a close.

The meeting ended at 5:30 p.m. AST

Next Steps:

- Participants are encouraged to visit www.ctu.int and register for CTU's ICT Week which will be held from September 5th-9th, 2022 in the Bahamas.
- CTU will examine the role and follow up actions they can take with policymakers to assist Caribbean content creators to better facilitate monetization.
- The initial linkages made at the SIDS IGF will be utilized to enhance the sharing and engagement among SIDS.
- Opportunities to coordinate and pool advocacy resources for SIDS concerning access, connectivity and inclusion in global forums will be examined.

Action Points: –

- The Pacific Islands Chapter of the Internet Society is planning an IGF targeting the youth in 2023 and extended an invitation to the CTU team.
- The CTU is revitalizing their online forum on the CTU website where they manage online discussion forums. This online facility will be utilized to advance the work associated with updating the Caribbean Internet governance Policy Framework. Individuals are invited to register and participate in the forums.
- The UN Envoy are requesting inputs from across the globe to complete their Global Digital Compact. SIDS should take the opportunity to share their specific interest.

- Ms. Maureen Hilyard indicated that she wanted to start a SIDS subgroup targeting youth under the ALAC's Outreach and Engagement Working Group.
- On November 18th, 2022 during the Cyber Festival in the Dominican Republic, the Latin America and the Caribbean hub will host a regional meeting to discuss cyber capacity building priorities for the region.
- In 2023, GFCE will organize a global GC3B Conference to connect development and cyber related issues and their respective communities.