

# **MAG Working Group on IGF Strengthening and Strategy**

**Online Meeting 62  
24 August 2023 at 14:00 UTC**

## **Summary Report**

The 62nd virtual meeting of the IGF MAG Working Group on IGF Strengthening and Strategy (WG-Strategy) was held on 24 August at 14:00 UTC. The meeting was moderated by Titti Cassa, and a recording of the meeting is available upon request.

The co-chair opened the meeting by introducing the agenda:

## **Agenda**

1. IGF Main session on GDC
2. Update on High Level Sessions and Parliamentary Track
3. IGF 2023 Youth Track
4. IGF/MAG SWOT Analysis
  - a. SWOT ANALYSIS of IGF & MAG (July 2023)
  - b. Operational Plan for strengthening IGF and MAG
5. Update from the IGF Secretariat
6. AoB

## **Discussion**

### **1. IGF Main session on GDC**

Titti opened the meeting and shared the [planning document](#) for the session on the Global Digital Compact. Amrita Choudhury noted that there were a range of questions identified, including about the multistakeholder opportunities relating to the GDC development. She urged people to consider possible speakers for the session. It had been agreed that it would be very useful to have one of the Co-Facilitators as a speaker (the Tech Envoy was also considered, but it was felt that he will be speaking in other sessions during the event). A range of names were also suggested. She encouraged participants to join for the next call or leave suggestions on the document.

Celine Bal (IGF Secretariat) also reported that there are plans to follow up with the Co-Facilitators on whether they will be in Kyoto. Amrita also noted it was important to know the speakers in the High Level track. Chris noted that it was also important to ensure close coordination with the other Main session on Digital Cooperation (which will include the GDC, but also look further ahead).

Amrita specifically encouraged people to consider government speakers, especially those from governments who may have reservations or different views.

### **2. Update on High Level Sessions and Parliamentary Track**

Celine noted that a new version of the draft schedule will be published shortly, which will include the titles of the Main Sessions. Regarding the High Level track, Eleonora is the lead, and is working to identify speakers, working with the Japanese host organisation. Celine noted that the High Level sessions are planned on Day 0, along with a session on Day 1 following the Opening Session. Raul Echeberria asked about the format of the High Level sessions - Celine confirmed they will be the same as usual, 90-minute sessions, except the AI session, which will be two hours. Celine assured that stakeholder, gender and regional diversity is being considered in putting together the speaker lists for the High Level sessions.

She noted that the Parliamentary Track is being organised with regional parliamentary sessions, starting with the APriIGF in September (31 August and 1 September). There will be another regional parliamentary track on 19-20 September alongside the African IGF, and the IGF Secretariat is currently working to identify speakers and are open to suggestions. The global parliamentary track sessions will take place on 7-8 October, including a session organised with ICANN, followed by two closed sessions for parliamentarians, focused around issues of digital trust. On Day 1 (9 October) there will be a plenary roundtable, and looking for potential speakers and members of parliament who can take part. The preference is for on-site speakers, but exceptions can be made.

Raul asked whether there was a list of confirmed parliamentarians taking part; and whether there were efforts to ensure that the parliamentarians are also able to actively participate in other sessions during the event. Celine agreed that there had been some concerns about the number of "closed" sessions. She noted that there are up to 20 participants from the African region, and the Secretariat is looking to provide funding for some others from the Global South.

Raul noted that there will be a global summit of parliamentarians at the end of September, with more than 130 participants confirmed - it seems unfortunate that there is no coordination between these events. Raul and Celine will coordinate to try and bridge the gap. Celine noted the cooperation with the International Parliamentary Union (IPU), but that doesn't necessarily mean that all parliamentarians will receive notification.

Chris Buckridge asked whether there were any specific stakeholder groups where speakers would be useful or welcome. Celine noted that most of the speakers were parliamentarians, and there is already an effort to link with the technical community, but there is a general effort to develop a more diverse set of speakers. Any suggestions can go directly to Celine at the Secretariat.

### **3. IGF 2023 Youth Track**

Anja is leading the work regarding the youth track, and was not on the call.

### **4. IGF/MAG SWOT Analysis**

Sooki Dofel noted that she had been involved in driving the SWOT analysis, but had not been able to attend the last WG-Strategy call, and was keen to understand the next steps.

Amrita noted that there was concern in not reinventing the wheel, and ensuring consistency with recommendations from the EGM. Titti noted that there was some open discussion about the way forward.

Chris echoed Amrita, noting that everyone is focused on the IGF for the next six weeks, and that there is not much time for the working group members (collectively) to dedicate to this.

Wout de Natris countered that efforts of this kind are too often stalled by the fact that attention turns to the IGF organisation and logistics. He feels it's important to continue this so that there is an outcome that can be actioned by the new MAG members and the new MAG Chair.

Sooki noted that she is keen to lead further work on the SWOT analysis. Raquel Gatto also volunteered to work with Sooki on the documents.

Chris noted the concern that the risks and weaknesses may not reflect the consensus view, but just the view of one or two people, and that without a more involved consultative process, it will be difficult to ensure that the outcome is representative of the community's feelings or observations.

Anriette suggested that the SWOT might most useful focus on the MAG rather than the IGF more broadly. That would mean that the MAG itself can take accountability for addressing and building on the strengths, weaknesses, risks and opportunities identified. There was support in the chat for this suggestion.

Wout felt that the WG remit is to advise the MAG, so we should not worry about scope or mandate, and that we should not be fearful of honestly appraising the risks and weaknesses of the current model.

Amrita noted that the MAG's remit is itself limited. She also noted that there is a need to put the most positive image forward. Chris recalled that many of the recommendations from the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) were not implemented, and that further identification of risks or weaknesses that are not acted upon could further diminish support for the IGF.

Raquel proposed to work with Sooki to re-draft the SWOT document, integrating past work, including the EGM, and to present a draft at the next WG-Strategy meeting to consider and agree the next steps. Raquel also proposed to hold a WG-Strategy session in Kyoto.

Chris asked about where this could be reported at the IGF in Kyoto. Wout suggested it could be input to MAG meetings in Kyoto, or perhaps other sessions like the open mic session. Raquel noted that it could also just be useful to provide the material to people, who can then reference it in discussions.

Anriette also suggested that the WG-Strategy could write to DESA to ask for an update on EGM implementation to be covered in the regular MAG meeting with UN DESA and the Under-Secretary General.

Anriette mentioned that sharing the MAG SWOT with the community during the open mic may be a good initiative, as well as sharing the work of the WG-Strategy more widely.

## **5. Update from the IGF Secretariat**

Celine noted that the Secretariat is working closely with the Japanese hosts. She also reported that there is an upcoming youth track workshop ("human rights online") that will be held at the APriGF, and there will also be common tracks with the youth and parliamentary tracks at both the APriGF and the African IGF.

## **6. AoB**

The next meeting will be 7 September 2023 at 14:00 UTC.

### **List of participants**

1. Anriette Esterhuysen IGF former MAG Chair
2. Lynn Saint Amour IGF former MAG Chair
3. Celine Bal, IGF Secretariat
4. Chris Buckridge, Group's Co-Chair, IGF MAG member
5. Amrita Choudhury, Group's Co-Chair, IGF MAG member
6. Concettina Cassa, Group's Co-Chair, Former IGF MAG Member, Italian Government
7. Markus Kummer, IGF former MAG Chair
8. Dino Dell'Accio, UN JSPF
9. Ms. Dofel, Sook-Jung, IGF MAG member
10. Shinji Sato, Independent Expert
11. Giacomo Mazzone, Independent Expert
12. Flavio Wagner, CGI.br and Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil
13. Jim Prendergast, Independent Expert
14. Raquel Gatto, Former IGF MAG Member
15. Kenneth Merrill (NTIA)
16. Wout de Natris, Independent Expert
17. Vera Major (ICANN)
18. Raul Echeberria, Independent Expert
19. Valeria Betancourt, Independent Expert