
Preserving the open, free, and global Internet
Preventing, identifying, and addressing risks of fragmentation
Promoting stakeholder cooperation

Draft Recommendations arising from the 2025 PNIF cycle

These recommendations have been developed based on the PNIF discussions held during its 2025 cycle. They are intended to inform and support ongoing and future deliberations on **the role of the multistakeholder model in preserving an open, free, and global Internet**, within the context of the **WSIS+20 review and beyond**, and to contribute to the operationalisation of the **Global Digital Compact (GDC) commitment to promote stakeholder cooperation in preventing, identifying, and addressing risks of Internet fragmentation**.

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1. Member states and all stakeholders should ensure that discussions relating to digital sovereignty are inclusive and multistakeholder, so that governance of digital technologies is equitable and reflects the needs of all stakeholders

Feedback:

- yes or at least have transparency to the MS community (2)

Examples:

- a fragmented Internet doesn't work. Web pages won't populate unless they can draw from any web site on the Internet, for example. All kinds of business operations fail when free flow of traffic is impeded. Collaboration is disabled. (2)

2. Policymakers should work closely with other stakeholders, including the technical community, to understand the impact of their actions and policies on the preservation of the open, free, global, interoperable, reliable and secure nature of the Internet. Likewise, all stakeholders must acknowledge the legitimate concerns of governments and civil society

regarding the protection of Internet users and be open to discuss technical aspects of solutions to address them.

Feedback:

- Policymakers should work in sustained and transparent collaboration with other stakeholders — including the technical community, civil society, and private sector — to assess and understand how their actions and policies affect the open, free, global, interoperable, reliable, and secure nature of the Internet. Likewise, all stakeholders should acknowledge the legitimate concerns of governments and civil society regarding the safety and protection of Internet users, and engage constructively in technical discussions to develop proportionate, rights-respecting, and technically sound solutions. (1)
- yes - we really need a true dialog to find solutions to policy problem that don't break the Internet. (2)
- This recommendation is crucial. We have seen repeated instances where government actions, especially those aimed at addressing illegal online content or piracy, do not take into account the technical and economic realities of Internet infrastructure. Mandates that require DNS or IP-level blocking can unintentionally fragment the Internet by breaking name resolution and undermining trust in the DNS. Policies that are designed to protect citizens should be informed by operational perspectives from infrastructure providers, who can explain the cascading effects of such measures. Integrating the technical community early in policy design, before legislative language is finalized, is key to preventing unintended consequences that weaken interoperability and security. (3)

Examples:

- An unsafe Internet is not conducive to business, education, government services. We need safety, privacy and security. Isolating the Internet to geopolitical boundaries eliminates international opportunities for all citizens. (2)
- Italy's "Piracy Shield" system under AGCOM initially required real-time DNS blocking orders, a policy now under revision after concerns were raised about its overreach and technical harm. This case shows the value of structured dialogue between policymakers and infrastructure experts before enforcement systems are built. (3)

3. The reaffirmation of the Tunis Agenda, including of the respective roles of different stakeholders is important. At the same time, there is an increased need for collaboration and coordination across and within stakeholder groups to ensure the inclusivity of the

multistakeholder system keeps pace with the evolution of digital development, so that there is a seat at the table for all relevant actors.

Feedback:

- make it more actionable, e.g: The reaffirmation of the Tunis Agenda — including the respective roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders — remains vital to the stability and legitimacy of Internet governance. At the same time, as digital ecosystems evolve rapidly, there is an urgent need for more dynamic collaboration and coordination among stakeholder groups to ensure that the multistakeholder system remains inclusive, adaptive, and representative. This includes creating opportunities for emerging actors, particularly from the Global South and underrepresented communities, to participate meaningfully in shaping digital development. (1)
- agree with the wording (2)

Examples:

- there is a wide range of stakeholders in the Internet operation, use, application and we need all of their perspectives to guide Internet's continued evolution. (2)

4. Stakeholders should be encouraged to learn from existing examples of effective coordination and collaboration on internet governance issues that involve multiple entities working across borders.

Feedback:

- We can surely learn from our successes and our mistakes; sharing will make things better. (2)
- Cross-border collaboration is essential when addressing issues like DNS abuse, cybersecurity, and fragmentation. The Internet's architecture depends on voluntary coordination among globally distributed actors, so regulatory or enforcement models that stop at national borders are inherently limited.

Organizations such as the Internet Infrastructure Coalition (i2Coalition), eco, and M3AAWG have shown how the private sector can coordinate internationally to develop best practices on topics such as phishing mitigation or responsible DNS operations. Policymakers can learn from these multistakeholder models to create frameworks that preserve technical integrity while supporting legitimate public policy goals. (3)

Examples:

- Experience with the Internet varies widely; we need access to the variety of perspectives and experiences from which to learn what policies work and why. (2)
- The Internet Infrastructure Forum (IIF), a collaborative effort involving i2Coalition, eco, and other partners, is one example of how technical operators, registries, and civil society are working together to develop shared expectations for DNS abuse reporting and evidence quality. This type of coordination helps align operational standards across regions, promoting accountability without resorting to technical interventions that risk fragmentation. (3)

5. Addressing broader societal issues impacted by the internet and digital technologies should take place in open, inclusive and multistakeholder settings – for example, via the internet governance forum model.

Feedback:

- Can we expand scope beyond iNternet and clarify rationale? Discussions on broader societal issues arising from the Internet and digital technologies should be conducted in open, inclusive, and multistakeholder settings that foster transparency, accountability, and trust. The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) model provides a valuable platform for such dialogue, and similar mechanisms could be strengthened or replicated at regional and thematic levels to ensure all relevant voices — including those from the Global South, youth, and civil society — are meaningfully included in shaping digital policy. (1)
- Agree with this perspective. We can all learn from each other. (2)

Examples:

- We need to understand which policies worked or didn't and why; sharing is the best way to achieve that objective. (2)

General comments

- Internet fragmentation often begins with small, well-intentioned technical interventions that accumulate into systemic divides, such as inconsistent DNS resolution, filtering practices, or regional routing controls. Recommendations that emphasize early collaboration and respect for technical governance norms are critical to preventing these outcomes.
I would also suggest including a recommendation encouraging policymakers to evaluate all Internet-related interventions through a “fragmentation impact

assessment” lens, asking how any proposed policy might affect the openness, interoperability, and stability of the global network.

(1) *Responded requested name not to be published*

(2) Vint Cerf, Google

(3) Christian Dawson, Executive Director, Internet Infrastructure Coalition