

## IGF 2024

### First Open Consultations and MAG Meeting 27 – 29 February 2024

#### Summary of action items & next steps

The first Open Consultations and [Multistakeholder Advisory Group](#) (MAG) meeting in the IGF 2024 preparatory cycle was held from 27 to 29 February, online and onsite in Riyadh. Ms. Carol Roach moderated the meeting as MAG Chair. The IGF 2024 Host Country was represented onsite by Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, Vice Governor of Strategy and Partnerships at the Digital Government Authority (DGA), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The traditional [three-day meeting](#) started on 27 February with a working session between the MAG and IGF Leadership Panel.

On the traditional [“open consultations” day](#) on 27 February, the MAG heard updates from governments and international organizations on their digital governance-related work, including several UN agencies. In addition to the Government of the United Kingdom, Council of Europe, OECD, Internet Society and Diplo Foundation, UN ECA, the ITU, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICRI, UNIDIR, UNJSPF and the Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology made interventions (UN statements and presentations posted [here](#)).

Forty (40) participants attended the meeting on-site, and up to two-hundred ten (210) participants connected remotely.

This summary provides an overview of action items and next steps raised in relation to future actions and activities, as well as main decisions made. For a detailed record, recordings are available [here](#).

### 27 February 2024

#### Joint Session of Leadership Panel & MAG

In a joint session with the MAG co-lead by the respective chairs of the MAG and LP on 27 February, Ms. Carol Roach and Mr. Vinton Cerf, the Leadership Panel (LP) conveyed its recommendations for the structure of the 2024 annual meeting programme: that it should not exceed five themes and focus on session substance rather than type.

The MAG shared with the panel the need to prioritize the IGF’s positioning with respect to the GDC and WSIS+20 and to engage in proactive outreach leading up to the conclusions of those processes. Their exchanges with one another and stakeholder consultations focused on enhancing IGF visibility and ensuring the Forum as a platform for coherent, action-oriented digital policymaking. It was suggested to:

- Boil down IGF recommendations into short statements to better support their dissemination.
- Develop a comprehensive communications strategy along with the IGF strategy, including story-telling showcasing why the IGF is important. The added value of the IGF should be demonstrated by including every stakeholder’s perspective. Messages from the IGF MAG chair, co-chair and LP chair could be recorded and advertised via online channels.
- Accentuate outreach efforts by going to places where the IGF is not known, yet.
- Support IGF fundraising efforts by making use of communication activities from the above-mentioned strategy.

27 February 2024

### Briefing on the current state of preparation for IGF 2024 by the Host Country and IGF Secretariat

- The Host Country delivered a [presentation on the current IGF 2024 preparations](#), introducing the IGF 2024 logo and the venue (King Abdulaziz International Conference Center), as well as the roadmap activities leading up to the IGF. The Host Country reiterated that everyone is welcome to participate at the IGF 2024.
- Information about visa application guidelines and accommodation will be made available once the official IGF 2024 website has been launched.
- The Host Country informed participants about its intention to plan outreach activities with the IGF community in Geneva and New York during the course of the year.

### IGF 2023 Stock Taking and Considerations for IGF 2024

IGF Secretariat presented the [summary of the inputs](#) received to the stocktaking process touching upon the preparatory process, the programme structure, communications and technical matters, as well as logistics and the Host Country's role. Overall, most respondents suggested to:

- Simplify the programme by lowering the number of thematic tracks, session types, the number of sessions, as well as by starting sessions earlier and ending them later.
- Increase transparency in the selection process of sessions different than workshops.
- Increase the meaningful participation of marginalized and vulnerable groups, as well as of the wider IGF intersessional work into the programme building and during the week of the IGF.
- Enhance the interactive IGF schedule by making it more accessible, publishing it earlier on the IGF website and restrict changes to the session description, times and panelists earlier in time.
- Align the programme with major Internet governance related processes.
- Enhance communications activities, engaging more notable Internet personalities and media.
- Provide clear guidelines, early in advance, on how to obtain a visa to Saudi Arabia.
- Enhance the participation of Government representatives from the Global South, as well as the participation of businesses.

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) conducted [a survey](#) amongst the business community to shed light over their potential lack of participation. The survey analyzed the motivators for businesses to participate at the IGF, the barriers to participation and businesses expectations:

- Motivators:
  - Engaging with government representative and with the stakeholder community
  - Contributing to policy discussions
- Barriers:
  - Corporate visibility at the events
  - Lack of the clarity on the benefits of participation and on the planning process
  - The complex agenda
- Expectations:
  - Provide opportunities for businesses to clearly communicate their value proposition, making it clear what the private sector would miss by not participating, and why they should be participating.
  - Offer networking opportunities and space for public facing meetings.

- Target and tailor the outreach to the business community

## Themes for IGF 2024 and other Strategic Approaches to the Programme

### Summary of inputs received to the open call for thematic input

The IGF Secretariat presented the results of the IGF 2024 open call for thematic input. The PowerPoint presentation can be viewed [here](#).

### Open Discussion on IGF 2024 overarching themes and subthemes, and programme structure

- While AI and cybersecurity dominated the polls, the importance of balancing the programme with other themes was noted.
- When designing the programme, the MAG should refer to these results to attract stakeholders or regions that participate less in the IGF.
- It was suggested to use the IGF 2024 as a platform to respond to ongoing global processes (e.g., G7, G20, Summit of the Future, COP discussions).
- The agenda needs to provide space to discuss the future of the IGF.
- It was reiterated that the MAG should opt for a manageable number of tracks to simplify the agenda.

The Host Country made initial IGF 2024 theme proposals (*Our common digital future, Leading towards unity, Limiting the Risks – Unleashing the potentials, Navigating digital frontiers*). The wider IGF community mentioned the importance of including a reference to multistakeholderism, making the IGF 2024 people centric and inclusive.

### Discussion about the international Internet governance processes and initiatives

The Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology provided an update on the Global Digital Compact. While the co-facilitators are still in the process of gathering views during informal consultations, they noted the need to monitor, review and follow-up on the compact by building on existing mechanism to avoid duplications.

Thirteen (13) interventions were made by organisations with ties to Internet governance and seeking to deepen their cooperation with the IGF. Written contributions as well as informative links have been published [here](#).

## 28 February 2024

### Addressing outcomes of the Open Consultations and exchange with the Leadership Panel

Reflecting on the exchange with the Leadership Panel and with IGF stakeholders, the MAG contemplated the opportunity to organize a side event alongside the Summit of the Future, in combination with a third MAG meeting, providing the necessity to meet again in-person. To maximize the visibility, such a side event should take place in the week prior to the Summit. The UNSJPF could provide a meeting room. The Host Country mentioned again their intention to organize outreach activities with the IGF community in Geneva and New York.

The MAG mentioned the importance of participating at the WSIS high-level forum and providing an opportunity to have a stronger impact on broader IGF engagement. It was also suggested to take part in the ITU annual council meeting taking place in Geneva in June 2024, which is a meeting attended by high representatives of the telecommunication administration and business community.

As outreach and engagement should be a continuous activity, the IGF Secretariat will start a working group with interested journalists and participants from the wider IGF community to work on various communications activities (e.g., video clips, short interviews, stories...). The MAG WG on Strategy offered to support activities of this working group. The Leadership Panel should also join forces on communication activities to leverage their reputation.

As an attempt to mobilize resources and raise awareness to the IGF mandate, the MAG suggested that LP members should arrange meetings with various groups working on digital cooperation such as G7 and China, the Non-Alignment Movement or the European Union.

### IGF 2024 overarching theme and sub-themes

After the Host Country has provided few new proposals, the MAG agreed on the IGF 2024 overarching theme on 29 February:

- **Building our multistakeholder digital future**

The MAG agreed to lower the number of tracks between three (3) to five (5) subthemes, taking into account the feedback received from IGF 2023 participants.

The MAG considered referring to the 5 themes of the Internet We Want vision paper as IGF 2024 sub-themes but noted that the paper is still undergoing consultations. The 5 themes may also not be concrete enough for session organizers to submit proposals under the correct category.

The MAG opted for the following four (4) IGF 2024 sub-themes and will continue work on descriptive paragraphs:

1. **Harnessing innovation and balancing risks in digital space**
2. **Enhancing the digital contribution to peace, development, and sustainability**
3. **Advancing human rights and inclusion in the digital age**
4. **Improving digital governance for the Internet We Want**

### IGF 2024 Programme structure

Considering the stock taking from the IGF 2023, the MAG agreed to simplify the programme by reducing the session types and restricting the number of selected sessions, which differ from workshops. The MAG also welcomed the creation of the Business and the Judiciary Track to further attract the private sector and the start-up scene and develop capacity building of judges increasingly dealing with digital affairs.

- **Townhall** sessions have been discontinued.
- **Open Forums** will be kept as the session type has successfully attracted governments and treaty-based organizations at past meetings.
- **Launches and Awards** will be reviewed by the MAG and only a limited number will be scheduled in the beginning or at the end of the day.

- **Networking Sessions** will be reviewed by the MAG, but only a limited number will be scheduled in the programme.
- **Lightning Talks** will be kept in the programme. While the MAG will not necessarily evaluate the proposals received, it will have an insight into the selection process. It was suggested to place Lightning Talks in the IGF Village (as well as potentially other session types). It was not agreed whether Lightning Talks will remain in-person, only.
- **Dynamic Coalition sessions** will be kept in the programme. DCs are cooperating with the MAG on an efficient and bottom-up programme integration. The DCs will submit their programme integration proposal in writing to the MAG.
- National, Regional and Youth IGF Initiative (**NRIs**) **collaborative sessions** will continue to be integrated in the program, respecting their inclusive, multistakeholder and bottom-up nature, to foster internal cooperation and learning about local specificities in countries and regions.
- The IGF Secretariat will share in advance **pre-events (Day-0 Events)** with the MAG to support a better preparation of the remaining schedule.

The IGF Secretariat indicated that approximately 225 sessions and 85 lightning talks could be scheduled in the programme starting at 09:30 a.m. and ending at 18:00 p.m. This would not include the sessions scheduled in the main hall.

## 29 February 2024

### Process for calling for session proposals

The MAG working group on workshop processes presented the [IGF 2024 workshop proposal form](#) and reintroduced the [IGF workshop manual](#).

Among other few changes, it was agreed to require at least one moderator and one speaker on-site. The MAG also advised to keep the list of speakers manageable, namely no more than five (5) speakers, including the moderator, for a 90-minutes session and four (4) speakers, including the moderator, for a 60-minutes session, or less, to allow enough space for meaningful participant engagement.

The documents reflecting the discussed changes will be shared with the MAG prior to the call for session proposal on 15 March 2024.

### Selection of the IGF intersessional work

Besides the Policy Network on Artificial Intelligence, which has already been officially re-chartered for a second term before the first Open Consultations and MAG meeting took place, the MAG further selected intersessional work streams for the IGF 2024 cycle as follows:

- The [Policy Network on Meaningful Access](#) (for a fourth term)
- The [Policy Network on Internet Fragmentation](#) (for a third term)
- The [Best Practice Forum on Cybersecurity](#) (for a third term)

The facilitator of the [Policy Network on Artificial Intelligence](#) (PNAI) introduced the 2024 workplan.

### Updates from the NRIs, DCs, capacity development and 2024 MAG Working Groups

The first in-person Open Consultations and MAG meeting ended with updates from the IGF intersessional work, as well as from MAG working groups.

- The IGF Secretariat presented the IGF 2024/2025 [capacity development strategy](#) and reminded that its implementation depends on funds availability. It also presented the [IGF 2024 Youth Track](#) whose structure will follow the last year's structure focusing on AI governance. Also, an update on the NRIs was provided, noting that currently 168 NRIs are recognized and listed on the IGF website and underling the need for the NRIs and MAG to cooperate more closely as outlined in the NRIs annual work plan.
- Besides the presentation of the DC co-facilitator on the IGF 2024 programme integration of the coalitions, the IGF Secretariat introduced the [DC workplan for 2024](#). The MAG was asked for a volunteer to act as a MAG-liaison to the Dynamic Coalitions.
- Since the deadline for the CSTD online questionnaire was postponed to 31 March, the MAG Working Group on Strategy agreed to collect further inputs from MAG members by 8 March 2024.

Due to a lack of time, the agenda item discussing the **strategic vision for future IGFs** has been postponed to a virtual MAG meeting.

### **Annex 1:** Agenda and support documents

The online agenda of the First Open Consultations and MAG meeting, including input documents is available [here](#).

### **Annex 2:** Participant List of MAG Members, representatives to the MAG and Secretariat

<b>MAG Chair</b>		
Roach	Carol	In person
<b>IGF 2024 Host Country Co-Chair</b>		
Almutairi	Abdulrahman S.	In person
<b>MAG Members</b>		
Amuge	Peace Oliver	Online
Anastasiadou	Melpomeni	In person
Atilio González Mongelós	Ángel	In person
Birarda	Carina	In person
Bergström	Ola	Online
Bloch Veiberg	Cathrine	Online
Buckridge	Chris	Online
Carter	Jordan	In person
Denis Polanco	Maria del Carmen	In person
Dundas	Neil	Online
Fair	Justin	In person
Fudzulani	Bram	In person
Guðrúnar Jóns	Oktavía Hrund	Online
Gul	Sumair	In person
Heaver	Alisa	In person
Ibarra	Rafael Lito	In person
Kawauchi	Junko	Online
Kyryliuk	Olga	Online
Le Gall Maláková	Martina	Online
Martins dos Santos	Bruna	Online
Mbow	Alhagie	In person
Miliza	Josephine	Online
Mustapha	Brahim Ousmane	In person
Niyonkuru	Audace	In person
Oteguy	Paula	Online
Ramírez García	Alan	In person
Sultanov	Talant	Online
Tiku	Saba	In person
Zhang	Xiao	In person
<b>Past and prospective IGF host countries</b>		
Gluschenko	Vadim	In person
Lois	Isabelle	In person
Schulte	Philipp	In person

<b>Representatives of intergovernmental organizations (IGOS) and European Commission</b>		
Dell'Accio	Dino	In person
<b>UN DESA</b>		
Kwok	Wai Min	In person
Susar	Deniz	Online
<b>IGF Secretariat</b>		
Bal	Celine	In person
Bobo	Luis	In person
Gengo	Anja	In person
Masango	Chengetai	In person
Mazzucchi	Eleonora	In person