



# Internet Rights & Principles Coalition

## Internet Rights and Principles Coalition Meeting Report

09.00-10.30, Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November (Day 4), Room 7

The Internet Rights and Principles Dynamic Coalition is a network of individuals and organisations that is working to uphold human rights on the Internet, and to root Internet governance processes and systems in human rights standards. The Internet Rights and Principles Coalition was formed in response to a call for a Charter for Human Rights for the Internet. Over the past few years the IRP has created the Charter for Human Rights and Principles for the Internet – a document applying existing human rights standards to the Internet; and the 10 Internet Rights and Principles – a shorter advocacy document based on the Charter. The IRP had a fantastic meeting in Baku despite difficult circumstances (a Friday 9am slot and a clash with the first Human Rights Roundtable).

The meeting began with a discussion about the work that the IRP doing with the Council of Europe to produce a Compendium of Human rights for Internet Users. The bulk of the meeting was focussed on discussing how the IRP Coalition should develop and what work to focus on over the next year – this included results of the IRP participant survey, and elections of a new co-chair and steering committee.

### The IRP and the Council of Europe

A number of IRP members are sitting a new committee at the Council of Europe on the Rights of Internet Users (MSI-DUI). The aim of the committee is to develop a compendium of existing human rights for internet users to enable users to understand their rights and to exercise them, particularly in terms of seeking effective recourse from key internet actors and government agencies. The work of the committee leads on very clearly from the work of the IRP on the Charter and the 10 IRPs. It is an attempt to move from lofty principles to practical enforcement of those.

Wolfgang Benedek and James Lawson presented the work that the IRP are doing with the Council of Europe to clarify user rights in the internet environment and to identify redress mechanisms that users can employ when their rights are violated. This conversation quickly turned to a debate about privacy and anonymity online, and on the responsibilities of businesses to respect human rights.

### The Future of the IRP

The bulk of the meeting focussed on what the IRP should be working on over the next year. The results of a survey of IRP members were presented (see textbox) and then there was a lively discussion. The overall message was: publicise, publicise, publicise! Many people in the room were new to the IRP – they had never heard of the 10 IRP or the Charter initiative but thought it was relevant to their work and others in their countries and they wanted to be a part of it. The other ideas were about going deeper by, for example, taking a Charter article every year and examining more closely to see when, where and how it is violated, to identify best practice for different internet actors in relation to that article, and to raise awareness.

## IRP Survey Results 2012

### Who responded?

- 25 people from 21 different countries!

### From which regions?

- Europe: 13 people
- Latin America: 3 people
- South Asia: 3 people
- Africa: 2 people
- South East Asia: 2 people
- North America: 2 people
- No one from East Asia or Central Asia

### Which stakeholder group did people consider themselves (note – many people sit in more than one stakeholder group!)

- Civil Society: 19 people (76%)
- Academia: 10 people (40%)
- Business: 5 people (20%)
- Technical: 3 people (12%)
- Intergovernmental: 3 people (12%)
- No one from governments!

### Why did the respondents join the Coalition:

- Three out of four joined because of the Charter

50% or more also responded that they joined because they thought the IRP would be useful for sharing information about human rights online, or because they thought it would be a focal point for human rights issues at the IGF.

Others commented that they joined because they hoped it would bring opportunities for learning and networking – and one person commented that they joined because they liked the broad approach.

### What did the respondents think the Coalition should do going forward:

Joint most popular answers for what the Coalition should do going forward (15 people each): exist as a space to share information about human rights and the Internet and that we should work to promote the 10 IRP.

10 people think that we should work with other forums (and many specified that they want us to work with the Council of Europe!)

9 people think that we should continue to refine the Charter

7 people think we should start a campaign for a Global Treaty on Internet Rights

And (thankfully!) no one said that the IRP should close down!

**Some more specific ideas included:**

- Need more depth – should build debates based on individual charter provisions
- Identify topics for joint activities – human rights and business in the internet environment.
- Monitor human rights on an annual basis according to the 10 IRPs

## **IRP Elections – Co-Chair and Steering Committee**

The most important job on the agenda was to elect a new co-chair to work alongside Matthias Kettemann as Dixie Hawtin's term has come to an end. In the event there was enthusiastic and unanimous support for our new IRP co-chair: Marianne Franklin from Goldsmiths (University of London, UK). Marianne has been an active IRP Steering Committee member for many years and has proved herself a real asset to the Coalition.

**A Steering Committee:** At the meeting we also called for nominations for the IRP Steering Committee. We had lots of interest in the room and Norbert Bollow, Allon Barr, Michael Gurstein, and Parminder Singh all expressed interest. The decision was made to open a call to the list and arrange online elections after the IGF.