Date: January 14th, 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on IGF 2018. IGF 2018 was very well organized, thanks to the efforts of the IGF Secretariat, the MAG, the Government of France (the host country) and other host organizations. This submission has been gathered by members and submitted on behalf of the *Civil Society Internet Governance Caucus* (IGC).

Please see our detailed response to the questions:

A) Taking Stock of 2018 programming, outputs, preparatory process, community intersessional activities and the 13th annual IGF: What worked well? What worked not so well?

We believe that the preparatory process and the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) workshop proposal evaluation methods were far from optimal. The shortcomings came from a less effective evaluation process by MAG members, which led to ignoring what the community had identified as the issue areas worth discussing at the IGF. The MAG received enough workshop proposals in each of the categories the public had identified. However, its evaluation method led to an imbalanced selection that did not reflect the community output.

The main sessions were more or less related to Internet governance-related topics, which is encouraging. Yet, the intersessional activities each year become more and more disorganized, without a set agenda. Intersessionals and main sessions should not be organized at the last minute. Moreover, MAG members need to be more consultative with their community and stakeholder groups regarding arranging the main sessions, from setting the topics to inviting the speakers. Some of the main sessions did not even have a description until late and some are missing reports and messages. Main sessions and other IGF initiatives can be used as important opportunities to receive community input. With late preparations, we will not be able to use them effectively.

National and Regional IGF Initiatives (NRIs) were given too many time slots in an already strained schedule. Their representatives are not the only community members, and they were not even actively organizing their sessions and attending them. Though we recognize the importance of the NRIs, we suggest better coordination here for future IGFs.

Many of the sessions at IGF 2018 were not directly related to Internet governance either which may further undermine the IGF's relevance.

We also disagree with the decision to eliminate an official Day 0 event, as many groups coordinate, host side events, and other meetings on this day that cannot fit into the official programme. Given that the programme was already cut to three days, this put

additional strain on the community, and made it harder to justify the cost of attendance in Paris.

We also found it troubling and frustrating that the call for issues was essentially ignored when compared to the final programme. According to the summary, twenty-two percent of the respondents wanted to talk about cybersecurity, trust, and privacy; only seventeen percent submitted digital inclusion and accessibility. And the rest was about other topics. The results of the MAG process show a marked bias. Twenty-two percent of the proposals received by MAG were about cybersecurity, but only twelve percent ended up in the top forty ranked proposals. In contrast, only thirteen percent of the proposals received by MAG were about digital inclusion and accessibility, yet thirty-two percent of the top forty ranked workshops were about digital inclusion.

Logistical issues

Logistics wise, this was one of the best organized IGFs, even though France and the community were given very short notice to prepare for the event. However, Internet access was problematic for people both onsite and those people trying to use remote participation. In many sessions, the remote panelists were not able to speak, and due to the Internet being down on the first day, many remote participants missed the chance of participating in real time. We also noted that some rooms had no remote moderators, therefore, no one to answer queries of remote participants. Remote participation being an important part of the IGF, we suggest looking seriously at connectivity issues at future IGFs as many civil society participants (not able to travel to Paris) were only relying on it. Rooms were too small, many people could not get into sessions, and there was no overflow room.

B) What suggestions for improvements could be made for 2019? (Please focus on programming, the outputs preparatory processes, community intersessional activities and improvements for the 14th annual meeting and beyond.)
Response:

1. Improve on the MAG members selection process by making it more open and transparent and involve the respective communities in the selection process. There should be mechanisms in place to make MAG members more accountable to the stakeholders they are supposed to represent. Encourage MAG members to consult with their respective stakeholder groups about the program, main sessions, and issues.
2. Early preparation of the main session, in consultation with the community.
3. Rethinking the NRIs' stand-alone sessions. While NRIs are important, their session at IGF should be organized in a more multistakeholder fashion.

4. Ensure that requests for slot from Dynamic Coalition (DC). The DCs should not be used as a platform for promoting some organization project. The directions of the DCs cannot be decided by one organization or individual. Sometimes one organization or individual is involved or is the creator of multiple DCs.It is absolutely fine if these organizations have the time and the willingness to coordinate the dynamic coalition but they should also be accountable. one way to get MAG to have a check on these DCs is to treat them like workshops. Is their topic related to Internet governance? Are they truly multistakeholder?

5. Paying more attention to what Internet governance actually means and how it has evolved.

6. Change the workshop evaluation criteria in order to attract more Internet governance issues.

7. All MAG members should assess all the workshop proposals

8. Mechanisms for limiting undue influence, patronage of one stakeholder group over programme structure and choice/ favoritism should be in place. Mechanisms to evaluate the influence of certain stakeholder groups stemming from the current MAG composition has on the selection of proposals and topics are needed urgently in order identify and reign in selection bias.

9. In terms of improvements in the functioning of the MAG for the 14th meeting and beyond, it is necessary that the global internet governance community reassess the need of the IGF not only on the mandate assigned to it at the time of its conceptualisation but also in light of the newer and more complex challenges that have emerged over the decade.

10. Make sure that the remote participation is working for people with accessibility challenges. WebEx has many accessibility challenges that have failed to be addressed even though they are raised year-after-year, particularly by the DC on Accessibility and Disability, and we need to have remote participation that works for all or alternative solutions.

11. The scope of topics for workshops and sessions should be clearly stated as to enable the community submit relevant proposal.

12. In line with EuroDIG and other NRIs, each session should produce key messages/policy recommendations to add weight to the session discussions.

C) How could the IGF respond to the recommendations made by the UN Secretary-General during his speech at the IGF 2018 Opening Ceremony?

We agree with the UN Secretary-General that we should not discuss Internet policy in silos as it will lead to suboptimal policies and affect the transnational nature of the Internet. This is specifically true when governments with legislative powers enact laws that affect the Internet.

- The recommendations to move beyond the usual suspects in Internet governance fora is noted. The Multistakeholder Advisory Group has long been working towards bringing in new voices, however what we should prevent is mission creep in the name of inclusiveness. IGF should discuss Internet-related matters, but not all the broader digital issues are within its mandate.
- As to the digital divide, or accessibility and affordability of the Internet, we agree that the community should discuss issues related to them as long as they are related to the Internet. But the digital divide is just one issue to be discussed at IGF. The dominance of addressing digital divide issues should be justified. Moreover, many of the IGF workshops already address this issue, it is important to measure their effectiveness.
- As to holding discussions with the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, we acknowledge the importance of this panel and encourage the members to submit proposals at IGF should they feel there are Internet governance-related issues that should be discussed.

D) How could the IGF respond to President Macron's "call for action" made during his speech at the IGF 2018 Opening Ceremony?

It bears consideration whether it is appropriate to respond to President Macron's call to action and why this is appropriate. The community main sessions, high-level panels, and other IGF initiatives also made recommendations and outputs. Under a true multistakeholder system, states can have roles in Internet governance but they cannot unilaterally declare authority, or collectively assert it without the consent of the rest of the Internet. We need to respond to call for actions that are consensus-based and from multiple stakeholder groups.

Putting aside the issue that recommendations from one head of state or stakeholder group should not be given special attention, we have the following observations about President Macron's speech:

1. Most of the President's call for action fall outside the realm of the multistakeholder model. The president called for lifting anonymity and strengthening law enforcement cooperation on the Internet and argued that governments will not tolerate the hate that is being generated by the Internet due to anonymity. Law enforcement cooperation does not happen in a multistakeholder setting. If law enforcement agencies decide on cooperation, other stakeholder groups role in such processes will be merely advisory. Moreover, the other suggestions that the President made were heavily dependent on intergovernmental organizations such as OECD and UNESCO.
2. There are differences between local platform regulation and global Internet governance that relate to critical internet infrastructure. Nation states can

regulate propaganda, election infiltration and copyright infringement at the local level as long as they do not affect the interconnectedness and global nature of the Internet. However, regulation of the Internet through treaty-based models and unilateral approaches most of the time can affect the overarching values of the Internet that made it scale and trustworthy.

3. One concrete proposal that the president made was to make IGF a body that produces tangible proposals and IGF be moved directly under the United Nations and have its own secretariat. It is unclear what the President means by "tangible" proposals. IGF is a non-binding forum where discussions related to Internet governance happens. It has been issuing best practices and other documents, as well as reports of the meetings and various stakeholder groups after their multistakeholder sessions have put forward policy recommendations. How can IGF "reform" without binding outcomes is not very clear. But we disagree that IGF should have any active role in "reforming" public policies or be used as a monitoring body.

4. At the global level, in order to keep the Internet multistakeholder, open, interconnected, secure, stable and global, such decisions should be made through a bottom-up process involving all the stakeholder groups. Decisions related to Internet governance should be made by the multistakeholder community in Internet governance institutions. If there is a need to identify another multistakeholder Internet governance organization with an Internet governance mandate, we can have a discussion about it at IGF. IGF, however, is not the right venue to operationalize such ideas, nor to make binding decisions. IGF's soft policy approach is a feature not a sign of its ineffectiveness. It prevents one stakeholder group gaining power over another, and because IGF is UN based, if its outcomes become binding, unfortunately, it will lead to the domination of states over the process.

5. Making IGF independent and more powerful at a United Nations setting will mean that states will have more power to discuss Internet governance in a sovereign state system.

6. The president's speech, unfortunately, did not resonate with the multistakeholder community. Demonizing anonymity and criticizing those who fought against copyright overreach on the Internet to keep the Internet open are not in line with our values. The president applauded the UN universal rights and values that have been established for the past 100 years while stating that the Internet should not remain neutral and should adopt values. The Internet is not a coalition of nations. There are already values that the Internet infrastructure adheres to. The Internet is a medium for global interconnectedness based on the values of openness, security, stability, and interoperability. It is up to the actors that use the Internet to uphold universal values. For example, states should stop militarizing the Internet and not be at the forefront of the cyber attacks, applying their universal United Nations values to their behavior on the Internet.

7. The President suggested that IGF should be used as a venue to operationalize the Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace. He stated: "But the real challenge will be implementing it. In agreement with the Secretary-General, I suggest that we entrust the Internet Governance Forum with monitoring the text's evolution, recording those who support it and identifying the cooperation initiatives and measures necessary to reach its goals. The time to implement this initiative is now. This is an essential combat."
The Paris Call might have been signed by various stakeholders however the text was not drafted in a consultative, multistakeholder manner. While the Paris Call can be discussed at the IGF should the community want to, or the outcome of the call can be on the agenda to be discussed, IGF should not be given a new mandate to follow the progress of the Paris Call.
8. The president also called for the artificial intelligence experts to establish ethical and scientific dimensions and discuss them during IGF in Berlin. We would like to make it clear that artificial intelligence has to be closely connected to Internet governance to be discussed at IGF.

E) What other organizations/disciplines should the IGF be collaborating with and how/to what purpose?

The IGF is a forum where various stakeholder groups participate and share knowledge, policy issues, and ideas. It presents a rare opportunity for all of them to get together to talk about their work in various settings without the pressure of having to make decisions, while consulting with their peers and their colleagues. The IGF on its own is not an entity to collaborate with other venues and organizations. Considering the IGF's minimal resources, we recommend it focuses on achieving its mission.

F) The Secretary-General set up a High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation (HLPDC) to "identify good examples and propose modalities for working cooperatively across sectors, disciplines and borders to address challenges in the digital age"
        1. How can the IGF contribute to the work of the HLPDC to help foster these aims?

2. Do you have any specific inputs for the HLPDC in relation to the IGF?