**IGF - Taking Stock of the 2016 Work Programme and the 11th IGF and Suggestions for 2017 and the 12th IGF**

**ICANN Contribution**

January 2017

**Executive Summary**

ICANN is pleased to have this opportunity to contribute to this important consultation ahead of future MAG Meetings. The Forum in Guadalajara was a significant landmark for the IGF and for the global Internet Community, being the first global meeting since the UNGA (at the WSIS+10 Review discussions in December 2015) approved a further mandate for the Forum of 10 years. It also was held in a year that saw the completion of the IANA Stewardship Transition from the US’s NTIA to the Global multi-stakeholder Internet Community.

In general the view of those participating from ICANN (both the organisation and members of the Community) was overwhelmingly positive on the 2016 IGF. It attracted a substantial array of stakeholders and initiated many innovative and constructive discussions. The new formats for dialogue worked well (especially the Lightening / Flash sessions) though there were still a number of panel-only sessions with little audience participation.

The focus on development was successful, as were the discussions on wider ICT issues such as e-commerce and trade. The discussion on the future of the IGF and the evolving role of the MAG (during the closing session of the IGF) was important; as was the positive and constructive reaction given to the ideas raised by the UN.

We were, of course fortunate in having generous and excellent hosts, along with the splendid array of volunteers; and an (ever) efficient IGF Secretariat.

Looking forward we hope the MAG and IGF Secretariat will ensure we build on the success of Guadalajara, as we look forward to Geneva as host in December this year. Not least we believe the idea of having a theme (for each year) that can be worked on and developed ahead of the Forum should be given serious consideration.

**Detail**

A) Taking Stock of 2016 programming, preparatory process, community inter-sessional activities and the 11th annual IGF: What worked well? What worked not so well?

1. What worked well?

* The exploration of "new formats", that were innovative and creative was very positive;
* The Interactive sessions were very positive; especially those which the MAG facilitated on the ground;
* Presenters and their teams had prepared and presented well for the Session on National and Regional Initiatives (NRIs); they have much to offer; this clearly demonstrates that IG is not only global but also local and national;
* Presentations on Inter-sessional work and BPFs were generally thought to be positive; noting that they were (on the whole) making very good progress, with the output documents becoming more structured, visible and thus influential;
* The depth and breadth of topics was generally regarded as positive, including such issues and topics as the SDGs, security and the IOT, global and regional trade agreements; gender equality, and of course the IANA Transition;
* The diversity of Open Forums (as long as the organisations have something interesting to impart) was considered positive; with those from UNESCO, and WEF, praised for the engagement they facilitated;
* The Host Country special workshops, and the High Level Event (HLM) on Day 0 were thought positive; as was the high level social event (*though see below)*;
* Excellent Closing Session; with UN/DESA and Mexico greatly adding to the quality by their encouragement of diverse views;
* Generally it was thought that the quality of workshops has improved; mainly thanks to the rigorous analysis by MAG and its leadership;
* As noted above the excellent organization and local host’s support team on the ground was considered critical; this also extending to the IGF Village and the small meeting rooms.

2. What did not work so well?

* Though the turnout was excellent, concerns were raised as to the limited number of government representatives from developing countries and non-US businesses;
* Though many liked the Venue; there were issues with the confusion with navigating the venue and finding rooms; thus the suggestionfor some form of mobile Application (phone) allowing interactive maps and ease of navigation;
* That there were calendar conflicts with similar sessions (ie on same topic) at the same time;
* While small workshop rooms were liked; some had bad acoustics due to portioned walls; this was particularly so with bilateral rooms;
* The distance between hotels and venue caused some issues;
* The system of “lunch tickets” was thought a problem by many; perhaps better to ask folks to pay for lunch (if they want it) at the physical registration;
* While the quality of workshops was generally thought good, there were concerns that despite the new “MAG rules” some sessions still had panelists inserted at last minute and that some sessions did not allow audience interaction;
* Some were confused over mixed message on the “social event”; also generally thought that best to have no event, or a paid event, rather than a function only open to VIPs

B) Suggestions for improvements in 2017? (Programming, preparatory processes, community inter-sessional activities and improvements for 12th annual meeting)

In addition to these comments, ICANN (as well as other stakeholders of course) will take the opportunity afforded by the Open Consultation part of MAG Meetings to outline suggestions for the on-going IGF process, as well as for IGF 2017.

The prime improvement we believe should be considered is the adoption, for each IGF, of a prime theme / issue which would be a feature of the preparation for the Forum (through for example inter-sessional work) and for the Forum itself. Clearly the theme chosen would only be a part of the overall Programme, as each year new dynamic ideas are forthcoming, but would perhaps be spread over each day of the Forum. Ideally the MAG would be able to decide on a theme so that background work with policy papers etc could be potentially be developed in an inter-sessional setting, as has proved successful for the work on Connecting the next Billion.

In addition, and in relation to the IGF in Geneva, we believe the MAG should address the need to attract a greater array of stakeholders (and particularly governments and business) to the Forum. Geneva, given the diversity of the international working population, should enable a wider diversity of players to attend and be involved in the process. These would include the UN Missions, the IGOs present and the strong non-governmental Internet Community.

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