Open Consultations and MAG Meeting

1-3 March 2017

Synthesis Paper

Contributions Taking Stock of IGF 2016 and Looking Forward to IGF 2017

I. Introduction

1. This paper summarizes inputs received from the IGF community in response to an invitation[1] from the IGF Secretariat for stakeholders to submit written contributions taking stock of the IGF 2016 meeting (11th IGF[2]) and looking forward to the IGF 2017 meeting (12th IGF).

2. This synthesis paper is intended to form an input for the first Open Consultations and Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) Meeting (1-3 March 2017) in the preparatory process for IGF 2017. This paper is a summary of the various contributions received by the IGF Secretariat. Some specific suggestions are included verbatim. A complete list of contributions received can be found here: http://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/list-of-contributions-igf-community-public-consultation-call-for-inputs-taking-stock-of-the and in the Annex of this document.

II. Taking Stock of the 11ᵗʰ IGF: General Comments on the IGF, the Eleventh IGF annual meeting and the 2016 community intersessional work and preparatory processes

3. Many stakeholders expressed their deep appreciation to the Mexican hosts for their hospitality during the 11th IGF, as well as for providing an excellent venue and support team on the ground in Zapopan, Jalisco. It was said that the Mexican hosts warmly welcomed IGF participants and that the event was impressively organized and executed.

4. Many contributions also thanked UNDESA, the IGF Secretariat and the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) for their efforts in planning the IGF event and developing its programme, and MAG Chair Lynn St. Amour for her leadership throughout the preparatory process.

5. Many contributions said that the staff in the conference center was outstanding and extremely helpful and efficient and that the professionalism and enthusiasm of the volunteers was to be

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[1] http://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-community-public-consultation-call-for-inputs-taking-stock-of-the-2016-work-program-and

[2] http://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-2016

commended. Many noted that the IGF village booths looked very nice and the coordinators catered for every need. It was noted that for some, finding one's way around the IGF 2016 conference center was not always straightforward; but that this was well managed with the help of the very accommodating and friendly staff and the well-placed signs.

6. Many inputs said that the facilities and rooms were accessible to all, which is a very important necessity and was very well received. Many appreciated that the host country made a laudable effort in providing interpretation, including sign language. It was also noted that providing the option of interpretation for workshops made the sessions more inclusive, however it was not an option all session organizers could afford. The strong Internet connection was also noted and very much appreciated by all participants. It was said that the webcast/video streaming (audio and video) was excellent and that transcripts of the sessions and their availability in some instances shortly after the conclusion of the sessions was very useful. Logistically, sessions were conducted on-time with smooth transition between rooms.

7. It was noted in a number of contributions that availability of a wide-range of food options at lunchtime, snacks and beverages throughout the day was appreciated to accommodate different schedules. Others mentioned that the booth setting as a "village" worked better than previous iterations in hallways, with good quality booths and frequent interactions. The local organizer's cultural side events were also welcomed, adding a nice traditional flavor with local music, dancers and exhibitions.

8. Some inputs did identify some issues that could be improved upon in the future. For instance, some said that in regards to scheduling that many of the topics that were similar were scheduled for the same time even though they covered different aspects of the issues. This made it difficult for some of the participants to choose which session would be most beneficial. Others said that while the lightning sessions mostly worked well and were a great idea, they were sometimes difficult to attend because of scheduling of other workshops. Some noted that some of the workshop rooms in certain instances were too small and the inability to provide translation in all rooms, especially given that the native language of the host was Spanish, made it difficult for some participants. Some inputs mentioned that the small size of some of the workshop rooms resulted a few times in the need to turn people away from popular sessions. It was noted that in the future, if the facility does not have adequate space then the overall schedule should be adapted accordingly – with session types that do not require bigger rooms being assigned the smaller ones.

9. A few contributions mentioned that the lack of an open, inclusive gala or other event sponsored by the host country was disappointing. It was said that while no official welcome reception took place, there was a privately hosted event on the same day that was open only to invited participants, which some felt was not in keeping with the spirit of openness that characterizes the IGF.

10. Many inputs said that the 11th IGF 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 was said that the thematic topics covered in 2016 were timely and represented a lot of the current issues being discussed globally. The overarching theme of IGF 2016 was Enabling Inclusive and Sustainable Growth. This theme successfully broadened the dialogue on global Internet governance as it was neatly linked to the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda. The theme also provided a timely link to the broader UN agenda and highlighted the direct connection between the Internet, information and communication technologies (ICTs) and sustainable development.

11. Many inputs welcomed the strong emphasis of the 2016 IGF meeting on international cooperation and strategic partnerships to bridge digital divides and address global Internet governance challenges. Other prominent themes were related to infrastructure, security, human rights, sociocultural, economic and legal issues, thereby encompassing a very rich and broad agenda. Many inputs appreciated that for the first time a main session was held on trade policy and the Internet, reflecting the growing importance of this area. Many participants appreciated the critical focus on new and pressing issues. It was said that the range of workshops that specifically addressed or touched upon the Internet of Things, Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, technological innovation and the implications for policy, human rights, society and economy more broadly was welcome.

12. Others noted that gender issues were brought up consistently and were fairly visible across workshops and main sessions, with new actors organizing sessions in this area. There were several workshops on gender-based online violence, which indicates that the issue is being taken seriously and being discussed. Issues ranging from sexual health education in Nepal to the use of online harassment to silence women in post-war Sri Lanka were discussed at the 2016 IGF. Some said that the human rights conversation at IGF 2016 broadened significantly to bring in economic, social and cultural rights. In addition, newer issues like sexual rights were also discussed. Many mentioned that the presence, participation and inputs of community network actors were noticeably increased from recent past IGFs, which contributed substantively to taking forward the discussion on access.

13. It was said that the IGF continues to be a constructive venue for both vertical and horizontal linkages in Internet governance. One example of this was that the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression and the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights' Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression held a joint consultation at the IGF relating to freedom of expression and the ICT sector. Others mentioned that there was also a continued trend of increased linkages across Internet policy forums, with the participation of institutions dealing with Internet-related public policy. For example, for the first time UN Women and UNICEF organized events at the IGF.

14. Many noted that the 2016 IGF preparatory process and annual meeting proved to be an important breakthrough for raising the profile of the many national and regional IGFs (NRIs) which have sprung up in the wake of the global IGF. It was noted that the scale of participation in the plenary session on regional and national IGFs underlined how the fully open and inclusive non-decision taking multi-stakeholder forum has secured its rightful place in Internet policy

evolution in an ever-increasing number of countries worldwide. A number of contributions recognized the efforts that were made in 2016 to increase the participation of various IGF initiatives at the global IGF event, and many indicated their support for IGF initiatives as geographically and culturally diverse contributors to the global IGF discussions. Many noted their appreciation and endorsement of the adoption and operationalization by many IGF initiatives of the core IGF principles and practices of being open, inclusive, and non-commercial, and working in a bottom-up, consensus-based process with multistakeholder participation.

15. Youth participation was particularly strong and appreciated. Specific tracks for newcomers helped them navigate through the more than 200 sessions and workshops. In regards to overall participation, it was generally said that though overall the turnout was excellent, some concerns were raised as to the limited number of government representatives from developing countries and non-US businesses. Some noted that there was; however, an encouraging level of government participation in Guadalajara. It was noted that while more government participation can always be encouraged, many were pleased to see such diversity and breadth in engagement by government stakeholders.

16. Many in the community appreciated the daily IGF reports prepared by the Geneva Internet Platform's Digital Watch, in cooperation with the IGF Secretariat, the Internet Society (ISOC), Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and the DiploFoundation. It was said by many that this reporting was extremely useful in keeping up to date with key highlights and insights from a variety of IGF sessions.

17. Many inputs lauded the responsive and flexible programming of the 2016 IGF. The IGF program development process has been and should continue to be flexible enough to accommodate Internet policy issues that emerge after the finalization of the workshop and main sessions in the IGF program. It was said that the new lightning sessions; corner sessions and the 'unconference' spaces are an ideal way for participants to address these issues. The inclusion in the agenda of the lightning sessions was said to have been successful, allowing exchange of information into very specific topics to happen in a horizontal way. New session formats aiming at more participative discussions (e.g. break-outs) were said to have been successful as it makes best use of the expertise in the room.

18. Many contributions appreciated the continuing maturation of the IGF Best Practice Forums (BPFs) which provide the ability to have ongoing and evolving discussions, and to build trust between stakeholders, in areas of critical importance to the future of the Internet. Some mentioned that these community-developed, written outputs of the IGF's intersessional work program are information-rich resources for governments and all others working on pertinent Internet policy issues. Presentations on IGF community intersessional work 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.

19. Specific inputs on IGF National and Regional Initiatives (NRIs) expressed very positive views on the NRIs presence at the annual meeting, conveying appreciation to have been given

the opportunity to hold a main session. Many also appreciated the work undertaken throughout the year aimed at reinforcing linkages among NRIs and with the IGF Secretariat. The secondary coordination session was also seen as an important face-to-face opportunity for initiatives to exchange perspectives and share experiences. NRIs' intersessional work, with coordination support from the Secretariat, was deeply valued as it saw beyond the main session planning. For instance, the development of the first-ever NRIs Toolkit, a useful practical guide for new and emerging initiatives produced in 2016, was lauded. Furthermore, the NRIs booth was a welcome addition to help highlight NRIs' participation in the annual meeting.

III. Suggestions and Recommendations Looking Forward to the 11th IGF

20. On the next IGF, which will be held in Geneva, Switzerland in December 2017, community members generally referenced the many advantages and opportunities of the Geneva location. However, a couple expressed concerns at logistical implications, particularly the cost of accommodation and the proximity of the meeting dates to winter holidays, which would also raise the cost of travel. To address the former, one suggestion was that the Swiss Host Government partner with the Geneva Welcome Centre (Le Centre d'Accueil - Genève Internationale - CAGI) to facilitate subsidized accommodation, as is done with other major international meetings held in Geneva. This would help ensure the in-person participation of civil society groups and stakeholders from the global South. It was mentioned that the venue should be close to area hotels and connected by fast and affordable transportation. In addition, practical and logistical information surrounding the meeting, including the final dates, should be posted on the appropriate website as soon as possible for participants' planning purposes.

21. Some suggestions were made regarding the rooms within the meeting venue. In particular, it was suggested that if workshop rooms are not large enough to accommodate the expected number of participants, "overflow rooms" with webcast screens be considered. It was also noted that bilateral rooms should be as suitable as possible for the necessary closed and in-depth conversations that take place in bilateral settings, both in terms of the privacy they provide and acoustics. An additional "study hall" style room was proposed that could act as a quiet space with plugs for participants to work in, especially for those with hotels not in the vicinity.

22. Regarding IGF Village booths, it was noted that the cost of rental equipment should be fair and accessible to all booth holders, and that logistical details (shipping details and shipping deadline) should be communicated as soon as possible.

23. Several general recommendations on the programme were made, including improving the display of sessions on the IGF's online interactive schedule (which uses 'Sched') to feature fuller session details; real-time notifications on the meeting in a smartphone app; better room allocations according to session type; less overlap between sessions on similar themes and with the same speakers; and the possibility of interpretation in more rooms beyond the main session room. One input suggested reducing the overall length of the IGF, as three days for the programme could be sufficient. Many contributions also expressed the wish to see more creative and interactive sessions, some of which has been fulfilled with the launch of new

lightning and unconference sessions at the IGF in 2016. A few inputs also emphasized the need to strengthen and allocate more resources to online participation and to increase the number of people participating online.

24. A couple of contributions raised Day 0 and underscored its importance to the overall programme. The suggestion was made to discuss this day together with the rest of the programme in MAG meetings, to better clarify the objective of Day 0, and to consider the possibility of referring to it as Day 1. A further suggestion was made to partly use this day for dedicated stakeholder group meetings, as these are already taking place in a self-organized way.

25. Contributions on main sessions generally remarked that they should be made more attractive, more creative, more substantive, and that perhaps there should be fewer of them. It was also noted that they lend themselves more to content than to IGF process discussions, as participants are more likely to engage on substance of wide appeal. Some suggested that the MAG revisit the practice of giving main sessions to IGF intersessional groups (BPFs, DCs, NRIs), and that these could be highlighted but maybe given a separate space in the schedule. The focus of the main session programme, rather, should be on securing broad content appeal for a wider IGF audience along with diversity of representation and perspective. Furthermore, care should be taken to ensure that main sessions are better paced, with less time devoted to panel discussions and more to participant engagement, and that they are better promoted overall. As they tend to compete with workshops in the programme, they should also strive not to duplicate workshops' themes.

26. It was remarked that although this had greatly improved already, more could be done in 2017 to refine the workshops evaluation and selection process by the MAG. It was suggested the process be clearer for both the workshop proposers and MAG members who evaluate proposals. The option of break-out sessions in the workshop programme was also praised and it was suggested that organizing these as or within workshops be further encouraged. It was noted that break-out sessions tended to work best when starting with a panel overview, followed by the break-out discussions led by the panel members on their subjects of expertise, and ending with conclusions fed back into the room. It was argued breakout sessions allowed for more intimate talks off-camera and more candid discussions.

27. A few other key suggestions were made regarding workshops. It was recommended that workshop organizers be encouraged to bring in diverse viewpoints and to engage discussants in a more interactive format. It was also recommended that organizers be given stronger guidance and rules of conduct, to both avoid a panel-style discussion which is not conducive to participant engagement, and to further foster diverse views. It was suggested that the number of panellists should be limited, as well as the length of their presentations, and preparatory outreach done to attendees from different stakeholder groups. Finally, better integrating the work of NRIs into workshops was recommended, with the workshop organizers encouraged to connect with initiatives covering topics of mutual interest. This would also help to enhance the diversity of speakers in workshops, which was another issue many community members said should be

worked on, referring to geographical diversity, gender/age diversity, and across stakeholder groups.

28. Many in the community have clearly articulated a wish to see Geneva as the location of this year's IGF fully capitalized on in terms of its importance as a base for permanent missions to the UN. Raising the level of government participation in the IGF, in particular participation of governments from the global South, was mentioned as a priority by several contributors. It was said, moreover, that many governments from small and developing states have participated in Internet governance issues through their permanent missions in Geneva since the WSIS in 2003. Outreach could be achieved this year by making national missions in Geneva aware of the IGF meeting as soon as possible, involving them as early as possible in the preparatory process, and sending them and their ministries formal meeting invitations in a timely way. It was suggested that further outreach opportunities to governments throughout the year be consistently explored.

29. Many inputs pointed out that the uniqueness of Geneva as a hub for international organizations, UN agencies, specialized technical agencies and Internet governance-focused civil society organizations represents a greater opportunity still for the IGF to include a wide diversity of stakeholders. Fostering this diversity would be critical not just for ensuring the perspectives of under-represented groups are taken into account but also to reflect the expanding range of Internet-related public policy issues into other sectors. In this context, the presence in the Geneva area of CERN, the École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and the University of Geneva, which conduct research on emerging issues such as artificial intelligence and robotics, was cited. Taking advantage of UN networks, as well as scientific and academic networks in Geneva, would be an asset to the next IGF.

30. Several inputs underscored the need to enhance outreach to businesses ahead of the annual meeting, which were felt to be insufficiently present in IGF processes. It was said that engaging business would be important in light of the rapid process of digitization occurring in the private sector and the discussions which have emerged around this phenomenon. The recommendation was also made to seek out links with start-ups based in Switzerland pioneering secure communications and robotics.

31. Regarding possible themes for the IGF, many contributions emphasized closely aligning these with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It was widely felt that alignment with the SDGs would help engage governments, better integrate the IGF with other UN processes and broaden the appeal and relevance of IGF issues to all stakeholders in the global community. Specifically, a closer relationship between the IGF and the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), through the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation (WGEC), was recommended. In parallel, within the themes selected it was said the IGF should ensure national and regional-level issues are taken into account, while maintaining relevance to the broad issues affecting citizens' lives and current political debates on the sometimes disruptive digital transformation of societies and economies. The topics of digital economy and jobs in the digital age, as well as 'Connecting the

Next Billion' and connectivity, should continue to be discussed. It was mentioned that cybersecurity sessions seemed to have decreased at the last IGF and the recommendation was made to re-emphasize this critical Internet governance topic, perhaps by inviting the UN's Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on cybersecurity to participate in or hold a session at the IGF, in a format that would facilitate inputs from non-governmental stakeholders.

32. Some comments were made on how themes were selected and treated in annual IGFs. It was remarked that efforts are usually made to find an all-encompassing general theme to cover all Internet-related topics, but that this risks being too unfocused and without meaning. Concrete suggestions to address this were to decide on one timely and specific issue, or to select one to three of the SDGs, if the SDGs are agreed up on as a thematic context for the meeting. A further suggestion was that once a specific theme is selected, a unified process take place in support of that theme through established intersessional groups, and during the meeting the thematic work would be given dedicated space on each day of the programme alongside emerging and other issues traditionally covered at IGFs.

33. Many in the community praised the continuing development and strengthening of intersessional work through BPFs and DCs, suggesting moreover that a mechanism be found so as not to suspend work done by BPFs when a new MAG is being established. It was noted that the support given to these groups through the Secretariat should continue, especially as the groups grow, and that in particular, issues related to cybersecurity and gender should be renewed as the thematic focuses for BPFs. Emphasis was also placed on the sharing of BPF and DC outputs, recommending that these be better promoted and searchable on the IGF's website as information-rich, community-driven resources. One contribution suggested that through intersessional activity measures be taken to move toward fulfilling part of the IGF's mandate to "where appropriate, make recommendations" (as stated in the Tunis Agenda). Pointing out that DCs were already experimenting with survey methodologies and BPFs use a document review platform, perhaps a polling mechanism for intersessional outputs, like the one implemented by Stanford University, could be considered a logical next step, supported and closely supervised by the MAG.

34. The community inputs also expressed much support for the increased linkage between NRIs and the global IGF and wished to see this further developed. As part of this development several recommendations were made, including to: continue reaching out to new NRIs; have the IGF Secretariat or MAG attend NRI meetings whenever possible; invite the Secretariat and MAG to contribute to NRI organizing committees; develop Youth IGF initiatives; and continue coordination of NRIs through a Secretariat focal point. This would be done with the understanding that the relationship between NRIs and the Secretariat, and NRIs and the MAG, remain horizontal and that initiatives maintain their independence and continue to self-organize. Regarding a potential future NRIs main or other special session, several specific recommendations were also made. These involved strengthening participant and online interaction during a possible main or special session, so as to maximize the impact of NRIs' sharing of local experience; continuing to coordinate the session through a MAG and Secretariat focal point; and better planning by having a mock-up of the room in advance and securing a

room which is appropriate to the large number of NRIs now active. It was further suggested that NRI outputs from 2016-2017 be tied to specific themes and channelled into a roundtable, problem-solving discourse. Beyond a main or special session, the suggestion was made that a track of 'flash'-style sessions by individual initiatives be considered.

35. A few contributions referenced the role of the MAG in the organization of the annual meeting, suggesting that perhaps it should focus its efforts less on workshop and main session programming, and more on providing high-level thematic guidance and look to preserve the future and relevance of the IGF. The issue of MAG members' bias potentially influencing workshop and main session planning was also raised. It was said with regard to main sessions, while MAG "liaisons" could be retained, the expectation should not be that members be involved at the detailed level.

36. Some general observations were offered concerning the future of the IGF beyond the year ahead. It was emphasized that the IGF should take into consideration the accelerating effects of the digital transformation and, accordingly, strive to make its processes as flexible and agile as possible. Related to this, it should have a more explicit long-term and strategic framing of its work, perhaps in 3-4 year cycles. It was further suggested that the re-establishment of the post of UN Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Internet governance would help raise the political profile of the IGF and the visibility of its outcomes. The hope was expressed that the possible presence of the Secretary-General in this year's IGF would similarly make a political impact.

Annex

List of Contributions (*listed in order as received by IGF Secretariat***)**

- **Michael Oghia**
- **Shreedeep Rayamajhi**
- **Glenn McKnight**
- **Amrita Choudhury**
- **Instituto Federal de Telecomunicaciones, Mexico**
- **Nadira Alaraj**
- **Jeremy Malcolm, EFF**
- **IGF Dynamic Coalition on the Internet of Things (IoT)**
- **Internauta Argentina, Marcelo Telez**
- **Internet Society (ISOC)**
- **Deirdre Williams**
- **Some members of the Civil Society Internet Governance Caucus (IGC)**
- **Maheeshwara Kirindigoda**
- **Organization of American States (OAS)**
- **Fotjon Kosta**
- **Janna Anderson, Elon University's Imagining the Internet Center**
- **Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)**
- **Association for Progressive Communications (APC)**
- **Emma Llanso and Matthew Shears, Center for Democracy & Technology (CDT)**
- **Carina Birarda**
- **Government of the United States of America (USA)**
- **ICC - BASIS**
- **DiploFoundation**
- **United Kingdom Government**
- **Government of Switzerland, Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM)**
- **European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG)**
- **European Commission**
- **Joint submission by the following IGF initiatives (NRIs):**
  - **Albania IGF**
  - **Arab IGF**
  - **Armenia IGF**
  - **Asia Pacific regional IGF**
  - **Asia Pacific Youth IGF**
  - **Chad IGF**
  - **Colombia IGF**
  - **Ecuador IGF**
  - **EuroDIG**
  - **Finland IGF**
  - **German IGF**
  - **Hong Kong Youth IGF**

- IGF 2016 Host Country, Government of Mexico
- IGF-USA
- Indonesia IGF
- Italy IGF
- Japan IGF
- LAC IGF IGF
- Mexico IGF
- Nepal IGF
- Nigeria IGF
- SEEDIG
- Sri Lanka IGF
- Sri Lanka IGF
- UK IGF
- Ukraine IGF
- West Africa IGF
- Youth IGF Uruguay