Internet Rights and Principles Coalition (IRPC)
2020 Annual Report

Introduction

The Internet Rights and Principles Dynamic Coalition (IRPC) based at the UN Internet Governance Forum (UN-IGF) is working to uphold human rights on the internet and to root internet governance processes and systems in human rights standards.

The dynamic coalition sets out to promote, and provide a space for multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration. The IRPC also aims to be an umbrella platform for facilitating collaboration on human rights issues in the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) process.

Members of the coalition work individually and in partnership to promote processes and instruments to frame and enforce rights on the Internet. More specifically, the coalition aims to:

• Raise awareness of fundamental human rights and what they mean on the Internet.

• Discuss and anchor global public policy principles to preserve the openness of the Internet and ensure that its continued evolution is framed by the public interest, through open and extensive stakeholder involvement.

• Encourage all stakeholders to address issues of human and civil rights in policy-making, contributing to a people-centric discourse and policy formulation in the Internet governance space.

• Identify ways in which human rights can be applied to the Internet and other ICT technologies, and evaluate the applicability of existing formal and informal guidelines and regulatory frameworks.

• Identify measures for the protection and enforcement of human rights on the Internet, while pushing for people-centric issues and public interest based Internet governance policy-making.

• Describe the duties and responsibilities of Internet users and other stakeholders, which, together with their rights, will serve to preserve and promote the public interest on the Internet.

The IPRC was formed during the Hyderabad IGF in 2008, following a decision to merge the Internet Bill of Rights and Framework of Principles for the Internet coalitions and and joined later by the Freedom of Expression Coalition.

The Coalition's main output document is the **Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet**. This document, which is the result of an extraordinary collaborative exercise among all stakeholders, was launched in 2011 and it is currently translated into 12 languages. It connects existing human rights law and norms with rights-based aspirations for the online environment.

The Charter comprises 21 articles and 10 principles and articulates existing international human rights law and norms and translates them to the online context. The Coalition's outreach work draws on the Charter and its 10 broad principles which are available in 26 languages.

Through the Charter, the IRPC has supported rights-inspired initiatives and has engaged in collaborative work with partners from other dynamic coalitions, civil society networks, universities,

political representatives and civil servants and the technical community, to raise awareness on the need to implement rights-based frameworks for the online environment.

Some of the human rights issues online highlighted over the past few years have covered:

- The right to access and protection of rights of minorities, including as migrants and refugees
  See: <u>IGF2018 WS346 Refugee Rights and Emerging Technologies: Building Digital Futures for all</u>,
  IGF2016 – [Lightning Session] <u>Human Rights Online: What has Internet Governance got to do with Refugees?</u>,
  EuroDIG2016: <u>Confronting the Digital Divide : WS2 Internet Access and/as Human Rights for Minorities and WS10 Refugees, human rights and Internet access</u>)
- Privacy and data protection
  See: EuroDIG 19 WS 2: GDPR Implementation – Blind spots, opportunities, and the way forward,
  IGF19 <u>WS #282 Data Governance by AI: Putting Human Rights at Risk?</u>.)
- Online abuse of human rights activists, media workers and women and the need to put in place more efficient and transparent regulations to tackle online harassment
- See: IGF2016 – IRPC Meeting (with Amnesty International)
  "<u>When death threats go viral: defending human rights in the face of orchestrated harassment campaign on social media</u>"
- Emerging technologies and human rights
  See: <u>IGF2018 WS346 Refugee Rights and Emerging Technologies: Building Digital Futures for all</u>,
  EuroDIG 19 <u>WS 2: GDPR Implementation – Blind spots, opportunities, and the way forward</u>,
  IGF19 <u>WS #282 Data Governance by AI: Putting Human Rights at Risk?</u>.)
- Environmental sustainability and the ICTs
  See: IGF18 "<u>Sustainable Futures: The Internet, Human Rights, and Environmental Issues</u>",
  EuroDIG19 "<u>Fighting climate change with emerging technologies – for good or ill?</u>",
  IGF19 "<u>Internet Futures and the Climate Crisis – Paths to Sustainability or Extinction?</u>")

Internet Rights and Principles Coalition in 2020

IRPC Governance
The IRPC started its activities in 2020 with the establishment of the new Steering Committee following the annual election. The role of the IRPC Steering Committee (IRPC SC) is to coordinate the Coalition's outreach work. The IRPC SC meets regularly throughout the year to update on ongoing and future activities.

The Structure of the SC in 2020
- Minda Moreira, Co-Chair
  (also Council of Europe CDMSI Observership Coordinator with Marianne Franklin)
- June Parris, SC member, Secretary
- Marianne Franklin, SC member
  (also Outreach and Partnerships Coordinator, Council of Europe CDMSI Observership Coordinator
- Mohamed Farahad, SC Member
- Sahajman Shrestha, SC Member
- Michael J. Oghia, SC Member

Regional Experts
- Africa: Rigobert Kenmogne
- Asia-Pacific: Marianne Franklin and Sahajman Shrestha
- Latin America And Caribbean: June Parris
- Middle East and North Africa: Mohamed Farahad
- Europe – Minda Moreira and Marianne Franklin

Ongoing Projects
- Charter Booklet Project Coordinator: Marianne Franklin
- The Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet Educational Resource Guide (v2) Coordinator: vacant

IRPC SC Meetings
In 2020 the Steering Committee met four times to discuss, review and approve the Coalition's programme of activities. On its first meeting the IRPC SC agreed to focus on Articles 1 to 4 of the Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet. It was also agreed that collaboration with other groups and like-minded initiatives would continue.
Throughout the year the IRPC SC discussed and coordinated the IRPC participation in internet governance activities at national, regional and international level, collaboration with partners, such as NGO's, dynamic coalitions and individuals and organisations that work to advance human rights in the online environment.

IRPC Website Restructure

The migration and restructure of the IRPC website had been focus of discussion for some time and in 2020 the IRPC SC had the opportunity to migrate its website to a green hosting company, as part of its commitment to ensure a human rights-based and environmentally sustainable internet. The website was also redesigned and restructured to improve efficiency and to reduce its carbon footprint.

The IRPC Activities in 2020

The challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic brought human rights online to the spotlight and stressed the importance and the urgent need of upholding the fundamental rights and freedoms offline and online. Despite the adverse impacts of the pandemic, the commitment of this Coalition to pursue its work remained unchanged. Throughout the year the IRPC contributed and participated in regional and national initiatives, such as the European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG), the Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APrIGF), the UK IGF, among others, worked on ongoing commitments such as its observer's role to the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI), participated in rights-based initiatives such as the RightsCon, and engaged in new partnerships and collaborations.

1) European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG)
The IRPC participated in the European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG) and was part of the organising team for EuroDIG2020 <u>Plenary 4: Greening Internet Governance – Environmental sustainability and digital transformation</u>, which took place June 12 2020. This session asked representatives from governments, the technical community, and civil society to present clear, and feasible action plans for their contribution to ensuring the environmental sustainability of internet design and use.
Key messages of this session highlighted the need for:
• sustainability at the core of Internet governance
• standardised methodology and indicators to assess and monitor the environmental and social impact of digital technologies and enable evidence based decisions.
• A circular economy and green powered infrastructure.
• More collaboration among all stakeholders , efficient regulation and corporate accountability

This Plenary led to the creation of the intersessional group: <u>Greening Internet governance</u>.

2) Internet Governance Forum - IGF 2020
The IRPC organised Workshop #266 on ICT sustainability and human rights, hosted its Annual Meeting, which included an discussion on the IRPC Charter's Article 4 - The Right to Development Through the Internet and participated in the Main Session: Environment and in the DCs Main Session. The IRPC was also present at the IGF Village.

• **<u>IRPC Annual Meeting: Sustainable Internet Governance & the Right to Development</u>**

The IRPC Annual Meeting took place online during the first phase of the virtual Internet Governance Forum 2020 and it was structured into two parts:

- The first was an introduction to the Coalition to new participants, followed by a brief update on the IRPC activities throughout the year and a call for new participants to join the work of the Coalition.
- The second part was a discussion on the Charter's Article 4, the Right to Development Through the Internet, which inspired our meetings in Paris back in 2018, and our session Internet and the Climate Crisis at the IGF2019 in Berlin.

The session looked on how the environmental impact of internet-connected technologies affect human rights especially the right to development and how to work together to ensure an environmentally sustainable and rights-based Internet.

- **Workshop 266: Environmental Sustainability and Human Rights**

  The IRPC organised workshop 266: Environmental sustainability and Human Rights, one of the 12 workshops in Environment track on its first year at the IGF.

  The objective of this session was to map out concrete steps to ensure that environmental sustainability can be fully integrated into the design, manufacturing, implementation, and procurement of Internet-dependent technologies; from raw materials, to data storage and energy consumption, to disposal at the end of hardware lifecycles.

  The discussion focused on the interconnections between human rights, environment and Internet connected technologies and looked into concrete steps to achieve an effective multi-stakeholder collaborative effort to ensure human rights and sustainability by design.

  The speakers agreed that only concerted solutions resulting from multi-stakeholder collaboration could lead to effective change and that more needs to be done to promote dialogue and shared experiences, in existing spaces such as the IGF and the NRIs.

The IRPC also participated in the

- **Main Session: Environment** exploring how technologies are used and developed throughout the world to measure, understand and fight the impacts of climate change and showcasing solutions and commitments for climate action across all layers of the global digital ecosystem.
- **Dynamic Coalition's Main Session** focusing on altering the thinking from scenarios of a global recession to scenarios of a post-covid upliftment in the way we govern, do business and live.

  The IRPC contributed with a substantive paper and was part of the organising team. At the Main Session the IRPC joined the discussion on the relevance of the DCs work during and after the pandemic to help cause a socio-economic renewal and highlighted the urgent need of upholding human rights in the online environment in times of crisis and beyond.

Following the IGF 2020, the IRPC also joined new intersessional work project: Policy Network on Environment and Digitalisation, which will focus on assessing and gathering best practices on environment matters of relevance for the digital public policy.

3) Council of Europe - Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI) Observership

Since 2014 the IRPC is also observer to the **Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI)** at the Council of Europe.

As part of its observer status the Coalition attended the virtual 18th Plenary Meeting in November. Throughout the year the IRPC also contributed by giving input and feedback to the outputs of the CDMSI.

4) Other Collaborative work

- **APC and RightsCon 2020**
  The IRPC teamed up with the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) for stronger collaboration ICT sustainability. At RightsCon 2020 the IRPC participated on the panel Environmental sustainability and internet governance: a roadmap for policy action, a strategy session co-organised by the APC.

- **Youth IGF Summit (Youth IGF Germany)**
  The IRPC participated in the Youth IGF Summit (Youth IGF Germany) by joining the webinar Digitisation and Sustainability: How shutdowns, quarantine and home office impact the environment and what we can do about it

- **Youth4Digital Sustainability: Greening the Internet Webinar**
  The IRPC joined the this Youth4Digital Sustainability webinar to discuss environmental sustainability of the ICTs

- **Dynamic Coalition on Core Internet Values (DC-CIV)**
  The IRPC teamed up with the Dynamic Coalition on Core Internet Values (DC-CIV) to give input and to support the "Statement on excessive Internet controls".
  The IRPC also participated on the DC-CIV Session at IGF2020: Internet in Crisis Management and Renewal.

- **Youth Coalition on Internet Governance (YCIG)**
  As part of IRPC's commitment to work with sister Dynamic Coalitions and to amplify the voice of younger generations within the IG community the IRPC invited Youth Coalition on Internet Governance (YCIG) to join the IRPC annual meeting and to take part on the focused discussion.

5) The Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet

A very important part of the work of this Coalition has been the translation of the Charter. Translation teams all around the world made this document widely accessible. The IRPC Charter is currently available in 10 languages and its 10 "punchy" Principles are translated into in 26 languages. In 2020 we completed the Italian translation of the Charter and it will be launched at the EuroDIG 2021 in Trieste.

The 10 Internet Rights and Principles have been translated into Nepali and Georgian and the translations of the Charter in Catalan and Georgian are in progress.

6) Membership and Social Media Engagement

The IRPC membership continues to grow and more than 400 individual and organisations across all stakeholder groups have now joined the IRPC mailing list.

The Coalition's presence on social media networks has also been growing steadily with over 2K followers on Facebook and more than 1.5k on Twitter.

7) Articles, Podcasts and Blog Posts

The IRPC furthered the discussion on the importance of upholding human rights and sustainability in the online environment through published articles podcasts and interviews:

- "To Green the Internet, We Need RIPE", RIPE Labs
- "How Our Clicks Cost the Planet: The Internet, Climate Change, and Human Rights", Oxford Human Rights Hub
- "Refugees digital rights: the vitality of the right to Internet access during the Covid-19 pandemic", Visto International
- "Fair societies need digital rights", Digital Future Society

Prospects for 2021

2021 marks the 10th Anniversary of the Charter of Human Rights and Principles for The Internet. We will take this opportunity to reflect upon the work of this Coalition, on the relevance of the Charter after one decade and a pandemic, and to continue to highlight the urgent need to address and uphold Human Rights in the online environment.