

CIVIL SOCIETY INTERNET GOVERNANCE CAUCUS

Contribution to IGF Consultations in Geneva, September, 2008

The Civil Society Internet Governance Caucus wishes to bring the following point to the notice of the Multistakeholder Advisory Group and the wider IGF community regarding preparations for the third meeting of the IGF at Hyderabad, India, in December, 2008.

1. The Civil Society Internet Governance Caucus fully supports the letter sent by the Dynamic Coalition on Internet Bill of Rights on "Rights as a core theme of the IGF". The issue of rights and the Internet must remain a central theme of the IGF process.
2. About the main session on 'Taking stock and way forward' at IGF, Hyderabad, we suggest that this session be organized in the same "bottom-up" manner as the other main session workshops and debates. In light of paragraph 76 of the Tunis Agenda,

" We ask the UN Secretary-General to examine the desirability of the continuation of the Forum, in formal consultation with Forum participants, within five years of its creation, and to make recommendations to the UN Membership in this regard."

it is important that a review of the IGF begins promptly and be conducted in an inclusive and transparent consultative process involving all stakeholders. The Civil Society Internet Governance Caucus organized a workshop on "The role and mandate of the IGF" at IGF, Rio, and is organizing another with the same title at IGF, Hyderabad, <http://www.intgovforum.org/workshops_08/showmelist.php?mem=71>. We would be pleased if this workshop, and the Caucus, could help support the organizing of and the discussion during the 'Taking stock and way forward' session, in the same way as the preparation for the other main sessions is being done in collaboration with some workshop organizers. We would be pleased to work with the MAG and all other stakeholders to use this session to begin the process of review of the IGF.

3. The process of merging individually proposed workshops and setting-up the working groups that are to develop the main session workshops has been very unclear. How are some workshop organizers being accepted in these working groups and some not? What efforts have been made to ensure that a balanced representation of views is present in each of the working groups organizing the main session workshops? The Caucus believes that this process needs to be improved and made more transparent. We would like clarification of the process and to be assured that all stakeholders, and holders of all viewpoints, will have an equal opportunity to participate in the working groups that are developing the main session workshops (and therefore will greatly influence the main session debates).
4. Improving participating from developing countries has been identified as a critical issue by the IGFs to date. We are however concerned that this issue is still not being adequately addressed. We will specifically like to know about the funding support available for the participation of civil society from developing countries. We note that the September consultations may be too late to initiate and manage a smooth process for allocating funds, and request that immediate action be taken in this regard, and the Caucus informed about it.