

INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

Multistakeholder Advisory Group Meeting

Geneva, 12 May 2010

Summary Report

1. The Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) met in Geneva on 12 May 2010. In accordance with the mandate as contained in the press release issued on 5 May 2010, the discussion focused on proposals with regard to its own future, should the mandate be renewed.
2. The Secretariat recalled the history of how the MAG was created as a compromise between those who called for a replication of the WSIS structure of three bureaus that would meet separately – one each for governments, civil society and private sector - and those who had called for a small programme committee of 10 – 15 members. The compromise reached in 2006 was to combine the two approaches and create an Advisory Group where all stakeholder groups would meet as equals sitting around the same table, while the representation of the different stakeholder groups corresponded to the ‘three bureau approach’. The defining feature of the MAG was its multistakeholder character.
3. It was noted that the status of the MAG was clear as a UN advisory committee constituted by the Secretary-General. The link to the UN was seen as vital in providing legitimacy. While it was felt that by and large the MAG had played a useful role in preparing each annual meeting, its functioning had practically remained the same, while the IGF had evolved. The emergence of workshops, dynamic coalitions and, more recently, meetings at the regional and national level, had not been foreseen in the Tunis Agenda but had proved valuable contributions to the IGF.
4. The original mandate of the MAG was to prepare the annual IGF meeting. Several proposals were made to enhance the MAG Terms of Reference and bring them in line with the IGF mandate and to bring them in line with the above mentioned developments. Some argued that the MAG should review itself against the mandate in the Tunis Agenda for the IGF to see on which aspects the MAG has been adequate or may need evolutionary change.
5. Several suggestions were made with regard to improving the MAG working methods. Several suggestions were made on how to structure the MAG, ranging from creating an executive committee, working groups, or thematic groups. One suggestion was to separate a more strategic function from the more concrete planning of the annual meeting.
6. Some time was spent on discussing the selection of MAG members and their rotation. The point was made that the so-called ‘black box’ approach, where the final decision was left to UNHQ had worked quite well so far. It was noted that it had depended, to a large extent, on the trust the IGF participants had in the Chairman and in the Secretariat. However, there was a general feeling that it would be preferable to develop a system that would depend on a sound structure rather than

just personal trust. Some would prefer a more transparent system and favoured the notion that each stakeholder group would have the means to nominate their representatives. However, the point was made that no single nominating group could claim to represent an entire stakeholder group and that, therefore, there would be the need for some overall selection mechanism, not least also to balance with regard to diversity and expertise. To achieve this, some suggested creating a Nominating committee in which all stakeholders would be represented. Former MAG Members could be candidates for this committee, as they had worked well together and were aware of the necessary qualifications. The MAG agreed to continue the discussion on the different options. It was also recalled that the MAG had previously agreed to an annual rotation of a third of its members, thus creating a three year term limit.

7. Several MAG Members proposed rotating MAG meetings to the different regions as a means of outreach to developing countries. However, the Secretariat pointed out that this had financial implications for potential host countries, as all extra costs for meetings outside of Headquarters had to be borne by the sponsors of the meeting. This was an option that can be further explored. It was also felt that the links to the regional meetings could also be improved through MAG and Secretariat members attending these meetings.

8. The MAG felt that recent open consultations had shown that meetings could be improved in various ways. They could be more structured and more task oriented and allow for better interaction with regional meetings, dynamic coalitions and thematic groups, should it be decided to create such groups. One suggestion was to hold consultations on a remote basis.

9. This discussion in the MAG meeting was the first step of a broad based IGF consultative process. As a next step, the Secretariat would put out a request for comment on the following questions:

- (a) Has the work of the MAG been consistent with the mandate set out in the Tunis Agenda and subsequent decisions?
- (b) How best to nominate non governmental members for the MAG?
- (c) How best to nominate the MAG Chair?
- (d) How best to organize open consultations?
- (e) How best to link with regional meetings?
- (f) How best to link with international processes and institutions?

10. All comments will be made available on the IGF Web site. All comments received by 15 October will be synthesized in a document prepared by the Secretariat as an input into an open consultations, tentatively scheduled for the second half of November 2010.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Name	Position
Chairman	
Mr. Desai, Nitin	Delhi/Mumbai - Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Internet Governance
Members	
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Mr. Bajwa, Fouad	Lahore – Social Entrepreneur
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Mr. Dardailler, Daniel	Grasse, France – Director International Relations, World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)
Mr. Dengo, Manuel B	Geneva - Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations Office at Geneva
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Mr. Disspain, Chris	Carlton - Chief Executive Officer, AU Registry; Chair, Council of Country-Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO)
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