



Taking Stock: 2010 IGF in Vilnius, Lithuania

October 22, 2010

The Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) is the not-for-profit corporation responsible for operating the .ca country code top level domain. CIRA is a member of Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) country code Name Supporting Organisation (ccNSO) and a member of CENTR, an association of Internet Country Code Top Level Domain Registries. CIRA is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in the IGF Secretariat's Taking Stock of the Vilnius meeting.

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

CIRA was pleased to participate for the third time in the IGF in Vilnius, Lithuania. We believe the greatest value of the IGF is that it fosters debate, dialogue, and the sharing of best practices, thus leading to shared understanding and development of solutions. Unlike other forums, it allows participants to address important questions of economic and social development in a non-threatening, non-operational environment, with far better global representation of stakeholders, thus better contributing to capacity building and enhanced cooperation.

The IGF successfully embodies the Tunis Agenda design. The objectives, format and structure of the IGF permit Internet operators, such as CIRA, to participate, learn from and directly influence valuable policy and governance discussions. The IGF's multi-stakeholder, de-centralized internet governance structure, void of decision-making obligations, has not only been key to the development and innovation associated with the Internet but will also be key to its success in the future. The spreading of the IGF model to regional and national IGF processes is also a witness for its validity.

CIRA therefore supports the preservation of the multi-stakeholder governance model presently in place at the IGF. Changes to the IGF's structure, or its non-renewal, could eliminate the critical functions carried out by the Internet technical and operational communities as key stakeholders in internet governance policy discussions and developments. This would be detrimental to both these communities and to the continued rapid development and internationalization of the Internet.

Feedback on the 2010 IGF

As usual, the IGF was a place where stakeholders from around the world came together to share best practices, discuss and debate, numerous internet governance issues. It was highly illuminating and informative, and we left the IGF with deeper knowledge and understanding of a number of issues, and having forged new or better relationships with other stakeholders. We were also very pleased to have

the opportunity to present Canada's first IGF, and are grateful to the Secretariat for granting us the time and space to introduce our exciting project and gain valuable feedback from participants - those present in the room as well as those participating remotely. We were also pleased to see attendance by new government and industry representatives, helping the IGF achieve its goal of being truly multi-stakeholder.

Feedback that we would like to provide to improve the IGF process centres around operational and logistical issues. While the round table set up of some rooms was conducive to discussion and openness, we found the structure of the meeting rooms, which left open gaps above all the walls, meant at times hearing what was being said very difficult. At times speakers were drowned out by the noise coming from other rooms. In addition, on many occasions technical difficulties meant sessions were not being webcast, or webcast with no sound, and the transcriptions were inaccurate or unavailable.

As well, while we understand that finding a venue to host so many participants can be challenging, we would like to encourage more frequent and more reliable shuttle service between the hotels and the venue. With only one shuttle per day in each direction, it was at times difficult to find adequate transportation to and from the IGF.