

Questionnaire on the Convening the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

*This questionnaire addresses some issues that came up following the Tunis Summit. It is meant to stimulate the discussions in the open consultations on the convening of the IGF on 16 and 17 February and help clarify some open questions with regard to the functioning of the IGF. The questionnaire aims to provide an open framework for discussion – additional remarks, comments or questions are welcome and should be sent to wgig@unog.ch *. Responses will be published on this website.*

Please see proposed mechanism at the end of this questionnaire.
It proposes the means to provide answers to all these questions.

- 1 The Tunis Agenda sets out various functions for the forum. Paragraph 72 (g) indicates that a possible outcome of its meetings could be recommendations (“where appropriate”). Paragraph 72 (l) asks the IGF to produce a report (“to publish its proceedings”) as its output.

- (a) What outcome would you expect from an IGF meeting?*
- (b) Should there be any other output apart from the report?*

- 2 The Tunis Agenda describes the IGF as “multilateral, multi-stakeholder, democratic and transparent” (para 73) and sets out many functions it should assume (see paras 72 and 77). However, it leaves open questions of participation as well as periodicity, duration and type of IGF meetings, including on-line aspects and virtual collaboration and participation. Several delegations endorsed the proposal contained in the WGIG Report, i.e. to create a Forum that should be modelled on the WGIG open consultations, where all stakeholders participated on an equal footing.

- (a) Could the WGIG open consultations constitute a possible model for the IGF?*
- (b) How often should the Forum meet?*
- (c) How long should its meetings be?*
- (d) Should meetings be considered subject to UN rules, such as accreditation, rules of procedure or languages?*
- (e) How could the IGF make best possible use of ICTs and promote virtual interaction?*

- 3 The Tunis Agenda has a strong development focus. It raises questions related to access to the Internet (para 72(e)) as well as to developing country participation in Internet Governance mechanisms (para 72 (f)). It also emphasizes that the IGF needs “to contribute to capacity-building for Internet Governance in developing

countries, drawing fully on local sources of knowledge and expertise” (para 72 (h)).

- (a) *How should the IGF approach access issues (“availability and affordability of the Internet”)?*
 - (b) *Para 72 (f) indicates that special measures ought to be taken to facilitate developing country participation in the IGF itself. What should be done?*
 - (c) *What should be the focus of capacity-building initiatives?*
- 4 Para 78 (b) calls on the Secretary-General to “establish an effective and cost-efficient bureau to support the IGF, ensuring multi-stakeholder participation”.
 - (a) *Does this para refer to a bureau as it is normally used in an intergovernmental context, such as the WSIS bureau?*
 - (b) *Would it be a bureau to deal with organizational issues and prepare agenda and programme of the IGF meetings?*
 - (c) *If so, how should it be composed?*
 - (d) *Alternatively, could it be a high-level senior advisory body to provide overall direction and shape to the IGF meetings?*
 - (e) *If so, how should it be composed?*
- 5 Para 78 (b) can also be interpreted as referring to a secretariat function.
 - (a) *Could this function be assumed by existing institutions, which could take turns in providing the secretariat for the IGF?*
 - (b) *Alternatively, is there need for an independent secretariat?*
 - (c) *If a secretariat is established,*
 - (i) *Where should it be based?*
 - (ii) *What should be its linkage to the United Nations Secretary-General?*
- 6 Para 73 addresses aspects related to the structure of the IGF, which should be “lightweight and decentralised” and build on “existing structures of Internet governance, with special emphasis on the complementarity between all stakeholders involved in this process”.

What does this mean in practice?

- (a) *Does the decentralized structure refer to a support structure (secretariat) or the Forum itself, or both?*
 - (b) *Does it point to additional expert meetings and / or programme committees, which could report back to the IGF and help prepare its meetings? Should possible sub-structures be supported by organizations with the relevant expertise?*
- 7 The Tunis Agenda does not elaborate on aspects related to the funding of the IGF.

How do you think the IGF should be financed?

- 8 Para 74 mentions the “proven competencies of all stakeholders in Internet governance and the need to ensure their full involvement”.

What steps should be taken to identify and engage all stakeholders and what needs to be done to make best possible use of their competencies?

- 9 Para 74 also encourages the Secretary-General “to examine a range of options for the convening of the Forum”.

Are there any other options not addressed in the questions above? What are these options as you understand them?

- 10 Paragraph 72 (a) of the Tunis Agenda gives the IGF the mandate to “discuss public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance in order to foster the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet”.

- (a) What are these issues?*
- (b) Are they all the issues mentioned in the Chapter on Internet Governance in the Tunis Agenda?*
- (c) Which issues should be treated as priorities?*
- (d) Could these issues constitute a work programme for the coming years?*

- 11 The first meeting of the Internet Governance Forum should take place “no later than 2006”

- (a) When would be the best time for the meeting?*
- (b) What should be on its agenda?*
- (c) Should it focus on one or at the most two issues that would be dealt with in depth, or should it discuss a wide range of issues?*
- (d) How should its programme be designed (time-management plan, organizational aspects)?*

- 12 Any other comments, suggestions or questions that should be addressed?

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IGF Mechanism 5.0

This mechanism has 2 parts: the plenary (the decisional body) and the working groups (for consultation and final text elaboration).

Plenary

- Composed of entities divided in 2 groups:

- governments (GOVs),
- accredited organizations (ORGs), including Civil Society, Business, NGOs,

Academic and Technical.

- Discusses (but cannot change) resolutions supplied by working groups and votes on their adoption.
- Votes accreditation of new organizations.
- Expected to conduct its business online whenever possible. Online communications will be in English (due to the costs that translating all email would entail).
- One yearly physical meeting is held in a room large enough to seat at least one delegate for each plenary member. When room allows, an equal number of additional delegates from each entity can be present in the room.
- All entities have equal speaking rights.
- Interpretation is available in the 6 UN languages for physical meetings.

Working groups

- Open to all (including non-accredited individuals and organizations, accredited entities and governments). Only Chair and Secretariat cannot participate.
- They do all their business online.
- Their job is to agree on votable resolutions that are passed on to the plenary.
- Working group leaders call rough consensus.
- Because working groups must be global by nature, their working language is English.
- All resolutions submitted to the plenary must be made available in all UN languages.
- In case of deadlock, Chair and Secretariat can be brought in together by any WG participant as facilitators.
- All working groups use the same online tools.

+++ Procedures

Bootstrap loader

1. Interim Chair is Nitin Desai and interim Secretariat is Markus Kummer.
2. All UN-recognized governments are members of the plenary.
3. All WSIS-accredited orgs that express the wish to be part of the plenary are accepted "a priori".
4. A plenary vote is held on accreditation of each org in step 3 in order to reconfirm their accreditation.
5. After an open call for nominations, Chair and Secretariat are elected for a 2-year term. Both can be re-elected for any number of terms.

Voting

- All voting requires a 2/3 majority within each plenary group (GOVs and ORGs) and both groups must vote the same way.
- For votes on resolutions, if both groups do not vote the same way or a 2/3 majority cannot be obtained within a group, the resolution is returned to the working group for amendment.
- For votes on accreditations, if both groups do not vote the same way, or if a 2/3 majority cannot be obtained within a group, or if accreditation is refused, the

organization must wait one year before re-applying for accreditation.

- For votes on the creation of working groups, the working group is created only if both groups vote for it.
- For votes on working group leaders, voting rounds last until both groups agree on each leader.

Accreditation

- Any organization can apply for accreditation.
- Secretariat pre-screens applications for accreditation and provides online plenary with his opinion on validity of each application as a pre-evaluation.
- Before each new physical meeting, the plenary discusses and electronically votes on accreditation of each new organization.
- Loose accreditation criteria are based on past or perceived future contribution to governance debate.
- Accreditation can be revoked by a plenary vote on a resolution submitted by the working group on procedural issues.

Working group creation

- Proposals for working groups are submitted to Chair/Secretariat by interested parties along with their suggestions for co-leaders (one from GOVs and one from ORGs).
- An open call for WG leader nominations is issued by Secretariat.
- Chair-Secretariat can veto creation of ill-defined working groups (irrelevant to IGF mandate, unrealistic scope, scope overlap with existing WGs).
- Plenary votes on working group creation.
- Plenary votes on WG leaders.

Default working group

- A working group on procedural issues is created by default.
- Its leaders are the Chair and the Secretariat.
- It is responsible to create votable resolutions on:
 - changes to IGF mechanism,
 - setting the agenda,
 - outline of meeting logistics,
 - software tools to be used by IGF.

Chair

- Presides over meetings.
- Reviews and approves proceedings reports submitted by Secretariat.

Secretariat

- Prepares Proceedings report.
- Administers web site and public communications of IGF.
- Handles logistics of IGF online and physical meetings.
- Receives nominations.
- Receives applications for accreditation by orgs and proceeds to pre-evaluation.
- Receives applications for the creation of working groups.

Chair-Secretariat (together)

- Can be brought in working groups as facilitators.
- Not allowed to participate in working groups except as co-leader of default working group.
- Can veto on creation of working groups prior to Plenary vote.

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Please let us know your views on any other issues that ought to be addressed.

**Please send all submissions in either .rtf, text or .pdf via email.*