

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. You may write your comments on any of the questions directly into the form or submit more general comments separately. Please provide your full name, the entity which you represent and where you are based. If you are responding in your personal capacity please state so and describe your involvement in Internet Governance issues. Responses will be published on this website.*

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- 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?*
Resolutions with recommendations on the agenda issues
 - (b) *Should there be any other output apart from the report?*
See above

- 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?*
In principle it could be a model, but there should be some modifications such as:
 - 1. it should be less hierarchical in its seating order**
 - 2. instead of one chairperson there should be a group of co-chairs with each stakeholder appointing a co-chair for this group; chairing should take place on a rotational basis changing with each IGF meeting; the actual chair should consult questions regarding chairing the meeting with his/her co-chairs**
 - (b) *How often should the Forum meet?*
Twice a year (every six months)
 - (c) *How long should its meetings be?*
3 days
 - (d) *Should meetings be considered subject to UN rules, such as accreditation, rules of procedure or languages?*
No, participation should be open to everybody; accreditation should be handled by the secretariat; accreditation criteria should be discussed at the IGF consultation
 - (e) *How could the IGF make best possible use of ICTs and promote virtual interaction?*
The question should be: how can virtual interaction be promoted across the digital divide

- 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”)?*
It would be essential to develop a consultation process with affected groups and to promote research about their needs, aspirations, possibilities and obstacles to bridge the digital divide
 - (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?*
Fellowships should be available to attend the meetings; the criteria for fellowships should be discussed at the IGF consultation
 - (c) *What should be the focus of capacity-building initiatives?*
Should be developed from results of consultation and research suggested under 3a)
- 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?*
Not necessarily
 - (b) *Would it be a bureau to deal with organizational issues and prepare agenda and programme of the IGF meetings?*
Yes
 - (c) *If so, how should it be composed?*
It should be a multi-stakeholder bureau with an equal number of seats for the stakeholders
 - (d) *Alternatively, could it be a high-level senior advisory body to provide overall direction and shape to the IGF meetings?*
No
 - (e) *If so, how should it be composed?*
Not valid
- 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?*
No
 - (b) *Alternatively, is there need for an independent secretariat?*
Yes
 - (c) *If a secretariat is established,*
 - (i) *Where should it be based?* **Possibly in Geneva, preferably other location**
 - (ii) *What should be its linkage to the United Nations Secretary-General?*
It provides the UN Secretary-General with the documents resulting from IGF meetings, the communication from the UN Secretary-General to the IGF should go via the bureau

- 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?*

It refers to the Forum itself

- (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?*

Yes

- 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?

The IGF should be financed through a mix of sponsors, particularly governments, private sector, international organisations and foundations

- 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?

Ensure that information on the IGF and its work is widely and broadly distributed; participants in the meetings should fill in a questionnaire about what expertise they have to offer; the data on the available expertise should be administered by the secretariat and should be published on the IGF web-page

- 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?

Currently no other options can be seen

- 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?*

Besides the issues mentioned in the Chapter on Internet Governance in the Tunis Agenda it is cultural diversity and public domain issues as cross-cutting (international public policy) issues

- (b) *Are they all the issues mentioned in the Chapter on Internet Governance in the Tunis Agenda?*

See above

- (c) *Which issues should be treated as priorities?*

Multilingualism, cultural diversity and public domain issues

- (d) *Could these issues constitute a work programme for the coming years?*

A list of stakeholder priorities should be compiled. These priorities should be divided into thematic blocks and then organized into a working programme.

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? **October or November 2006**

(b) What should be on its agenda?

Formalisation of organisational issues for its constitution (e.g. bureau, secretariat etc.), if solved before the first IGF meeting; agreement on an outline for organising a working programme for the next years and on a rough agenda for the next meeting; stakeholder presentation of issues to be discussed according to thematic blocks

(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?

The first IGF meeting should deal with a wide range of organisational questions (if still to be solved) and be open to discuss a wide range of issues; the following IGF meetings should partly focus on one or two issues to be dealt with in depth; however the IGF should as well always be open to identify new emerging issues and discuss issues that are felt pressing by participants, and should be flexible enough to include them into their working agenda

(d) How should its programme be designed (time-management plan, organizational aspects)?

Generally there should be a mix between Working Groups and Plenary Meetings; the bureau should have preparatory functions (e.g. drafting resolution texts) supported by the secretariat; for the first IGF meeting there should be much space for Plenary discussions, specific aspects should be dealt with in Working Groups who present their results to the Plenary for discussion and decision-making; parts of the following IGF meetings should focus on thematic work in Working Groups with exchange of results in the Plenary; in principle a 3 day meeting could have the following structure:

Day 1: Work on one or two thematic issues in Working Groups

Day 2: Plenary discussion and decision-making on Working Group results

Day 3: Adoption of related resolutions; open consultations on emerging or pressing issues

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

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

1. Decision making – decision making should take place on the basis of consensus between all stakeholders

2. Stakeholders - Indigenous Peoples are a stakeholder in their own right

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