Questionnaire on the Convening the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

Please provide your full name, the entity which you represent and where you are based.

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1
(a) What outcome would you expect from an IGF meeting?
(b) Should there be any other output apart from the report?

The Forum should be a space for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue (TA para 67). It should not be a decision-making body, but a forum for identifying emerging issues, dialogue, and exchange of non-binding best practices – thus improving understanding of complex issues. Our experience in working with colleagues in the CENTR community is that there is rarely, if ever, one best way – and therefore best practice should be understood as the best solution given the local environment, with an expectation of diversity.

The output from an IGF meeting should be publication of any presentations/examples of best practice identified, as well as meeting notes (perhaps a verbatim report as done in the WGIG open consultation meetings), and web casts.

2
(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?

The IGF should be as open and inclusive as possible, with all stakeholders participating on an equal footing. The WGIG open consultation meetings provide a possible model, which could be enhanced through narrowing the focus of each meeting to 1 or 2 issues., enabling proper consideration of issues, structured exchanges and best use of forum discussion time.

We believe that an overemphasis on procedural rules will pull against the vision of a lightweight dynamic space for discussion. Our real concern is that UN rules, as exemplified in the recent World Summit negotiations in Tunis, present little or no opportunity for non-governmental representatives to participate in discussions.

This is in marked contrast to the success of the Working Group on Internet Governance *process*, in which all stakeholders could participate on an equal footing.

3
(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?

We hope that the IGF can use the power of the Internet to facilitate remote participation, for example online fora and portals, web casts, and perhaps also allowing for questions and statements posted during open consultation meetings to be accessible in real time to those physically present.   In addition, the press and mass media can help to raise awareness, promoting wider discussion of the issues.

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?

We had understood this paragraph as referring to a secretariat.

Given the likelihood that the issues considered by the IGF will change, reflecting the evolving nature of the Internet, efforts should be focussed on maintaining flexibility. It is likely that the people who want to participate will shift and change according to the issues on the agenda. Creating a bureaucracy may reduce responsiveness and flexibility.

We would see the commissioning of papers and structuring the agenda as the role of the secretariat.

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?

We believe that, for the sake of continuity, it is preferable to have a single secretariat, rather than a number of institutions taking turns to provide that function.

The Working Group on Internet Governance demonstrated that an independent, small, flexible secretariat can work efficiently, and assist in the delivery of timely output. We believe that lessons can be learned from the success of the Working Group secretariat.

The secretariat could be funded in part through voluntary donations, and also through secondees and contributions in kind – making available skills and expertise from the wider community.

6   […]

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 Internet Governance Forum should be funded through voluntary contributions. Nominet was pleased to donate €15,000 towards the establishment of a secretariat.

8   […]
9   […]

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?

The issues are likely to change, reflecting the fast pace of change in the Internet environment. Therefore a flexible attitude should be adopted.

We would suggest, however, that the forum should initially focus on content issues, such as spam and child abuse images. Many of the issues affecting Internet access and use are best resolved at the local level, taking into account what works in cultural, economic and sociological terms. Therefore, topics at the IGF should be those on which there is a general consensus that they are of *international* concern, and would benefit from being discussed in an international forum.

We believe that multi-stakeholder fora at national level could help to identify examples of best practice, and emerging issues which could then feed into the

international arena. Industry and academics may help bring solutions to some of the problems.

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)?

In our view the meeting should take place towards the end of 2006 and last for 1-2 days. It should focus on 1 or 2 related issues. In this way, participation can be focussed, and participants can self-select according to their levels of interest in the topics.   Meetings of the forum should not address organisational issues.

12   […]