

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.*

- 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?*

- a. Overview about current and future trends and problems with regard to Internet Governance
- b. recommendations for actions to stakeholders, including international organisations

(b) *Should there be any other output apart from the report?*

Yes, recommendations to stakeholders (see 1a),

- 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?*

Yes, as a starter. The Forum should be, as the consultation has been, open to everybody. But it should have a more focused agenda and could work also in subgroups on special issues, related to the main subject of the forum.

(b) *How often should the Forum meet?*

There should be one Forum per year (in the 4th quarter of the year), prepared by informal open consultations (in the 1st quarter of the year).

(c) *How long should its meetings be?*

Not more than four working days.

- (d) *Should meetings be considered subject to UN rules, such as accreditation, rules of procedure or languages?*

Accreditation and language should be according to the WSIS procedures, but the procedures of the Forum as such should not be according to UN rules, which give governments a main role and reduce the equal participation of other stakeholders. The IGF Rules of Procedures should be based on the first principle of the WSIS Geneva Declaration (2003), that is “multistakeholderism” with full and equal involvement of all stakeholders: governments, private sector, civil society.

- (e) *How could the IGF make best possible use of ICTs and promote virtual interaction?*

The proceedings of the forum should be fully accessible online with opportunities for remote participants to intervene in real time. All presentations and discussions should be transcribed and made available online, if possible in real time.

Furthermore there should be open online discussion groups around individual subjects between the IGFs. All postings should be documented and made available online.

- 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”)?*

See 2e

- (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?*
- a. Creation of a Fund which would allow participants from third world countries to participate.
 - b. Organizing IGF meetings in developing countries
 - c. Developing innovative mechanisms for remote online participation

- (c) *What should be the focus of capacity-building initiatives?*

Development of local capacities which enable remote online participation in IGF activities.

- 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?*

The model should be the WGIG Secretariat.

- (b) *Would it be a bureau to deal with organizational issues and prepare agenda and programme of the IGF meetings?*

The Secretariat should be mainly responsible for the organizational issues. It could be assisted by a Programme Committee (IGF-PC). The PC would, on the basis of recommendations by an Advisory Committee (IGF-AC), be responsible for the identification of sub-subjects, speakers and moderators of the Annual IGF. The PC should be composed on the basis of recommendations from all three stakeholder groups. It should have no more than 40 members (10 from governments, ten from PS, ten from CS and ten from the academic and technical community) and should be nominated only for one forum.

- (c) *If so, how should it be composed?*

See 4b

- (d) *Alternatively, could it be a high-level senior advisory body to provide overall direction and shape to the IGF meetings?*

Yes. The AC should decide mainly upon the main subject of the Annual IGF and instruct the Programme Committee to prepare a concrete conference programme. The AC should also nominate a chair and two vice chairs of the Annual IGF, representing all three stakeholder groups.

- (e) *If so, how should it be composed?*

The AC should be, on the basis of recommendations by the three stakeholder groups, nominated by the UN Secretary General. It should have no more than 24 members (6 from governments, 6 from private sector, 6 from civil society, 6 from the academic and technical community)

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?*

The IGF should not be linked directly to an existing institution.

- (b) *Alternatively, is there need for an independent secretariat?*

Yes

- (c) *If a secretariat is established,*
(i) *Where should it be based?*

In Geneva

- (ii) *What should be its linkage to the United Nations Secretary-General?*

Informal. It would send the Annual Report to the UN SG. The UN SG would provide logistical and financial assistance, when needed.

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?*

The secretariat, discussed above, would be enough

- (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?*

The Annual IGF – scheduled for the 4th quarter of a year- should be prepared by an open informal consultation in the 1st quarter of a year. The AC would have its meeting in conjunction with the open consultations. In between the secretariat in cooperation with the AC and PC, would steer the process. Participants from the three stakeholder groups should be free to establish online discussion lists or sub working groups around special issues.

- 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 financing of the IGF process (including the secretariat) should be based on a broad variety of sources, including voluntary donations of involved organisations, institutions, governments and corporations. Additional resources, if needed, should come from the UN budget. The Annual IGF should be mainly financed by the Host Country. Participants in the IGF would pay for themselves (travel and accommodation) but there should be no conference fee. A special fund to enable third world country participation should be established and managed by the IGF secretariat.

- 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?

There should be an equal treatment of all stakeholders in all aspects. With regard to an accreditation process, all institutions, PS entities, NGOs and CSOs, accredited under the WSIS process should get automatically an IGF accreditation. For new accreditations, the WSIS rules should be adopted accordingly.

- 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?

Not really

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?*

The WGIG report has a comprehensive list of 16 priority issues. This should be taken as a guideline for the identification of subjects for the Annual IGFs until 2010.

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

See 10a

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

- Security and Stability of the Internet / fighting spam, cybercrime, phishing, pharming etc.
- Development of infrastructure, access, services and human capacity building, financing
- Human Rights (freedom of expression, privacy)
- eCommerce (IPR, regulatory frameworks)

Could these issues constitute a work programme for the coming years?

Yes

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?*

December 2006

(b) *What should be on its agenda?*

One of the four subjects, mentioned under 10c

(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?*

There should be two layers. There should be a main subject (with sub-subjects), but there should be also space to discuss other issues, new trends, general or specific concerns of stakeholders and latest general developments. A four day meeting could be subdivided into three days for the main subject and one day for the other issues.

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

If the IGF would be a four day meeting, it could be structured in the following way:

Day 1: Four Plenary Sessions

Day 2: Four Parallel Sessions of four to six sub groups.

Day 3: Two Plenaries for other issues, two parallel sessions of 2 – 4 sub-groups for other issues

Day 4: Reports from the Parallel Sessions and Discussion of Recommendations.

Each IGF should have a different chair and two vice chairs, representing the three stakeholder groups (nominated by the AC). The secretariat should function as the Rapporteur. For WG Sessions there should be a chair, a moderator and a rapporteur, also representing the three stakeholder groups.

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

No

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

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