

1. What are the most important **achievements** arising from WSIS that should be highlighted in the Zero Draft? *

Internet Society France would thank the co-facilitators, H.E. Amb. Suela Janina, Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations and H.E. Amb. Ekitela Lokaale, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, for the opportunity to provide feedback on some aspects of the WSIS+20 review Elements Paper.

The WSIS was a key step in the development of the internet, following on from the IETF and ICANN, as well as numerous regional and national efforts.

It is important to emphasize at this stage that the WSIS goal of digital inclusion and development must remain at the heart of the Zero Draft, as well as the construction of an inclusive and trustworthy digital society. Today, the Internet is used by everyone: governments, businesses, end users, civil society, academia, etc. The factors for success of the Internet are openness, global reach, the use of open and interoperable standards, and its decentralized nature. Internet governance, as practiced for more than 20 years in all its diversity, from the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), to the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) to local IGF, like the French IGF, etc, is also essential to the development of the Internet and its legitimacy for users and other stakeholders.

2. What are the most important **challenges** to the achievement of WSIS outcomes to date and in the future that need to be addressed in the Zero Draft? *

The rapid digital transformation since then has also brought new challenges and exacerbated digital divides. Among the difficulties encountered, the digital divide and the many forms it can take, including an usage divide, have been an obstacle that must be taken into account.

The development of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies today raises the question of a new divide. The same is true of the development and deployment of Internet infrastructure and digital services.

Issues relating to online safety, privacy, and personal data protection must also be at the heart of discussions. Trust in digital technologies and the Internet is a prerequisite for the success and development of a digital society. In France, we have observed a lack of trust among citizens on the ground regarding privacy and the concentration of power in the hands of a few actors. This affects social media, but also a number of other digital services: search engines, streaming platforms, travel platforms, etc.

Another key element, closely linked to the preceding ones, is the importance of strengthening cultural diversity and linguistic diversity on the internet. Whether in today's debate on emerging technologies or the development of new digital services, it is essential that diversity, including languages, opinions, and cultures be a priority. Internet Society France aims at representing end users and organizations alike in France and promote the variety of viewpoints in the digital space at the national, regional and global level.

3. What are the most important **priorities** for action to achieve the WSIS vision of a 'people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society' in the future, taking into account emerging trends? *

Internet Society France believes that an open, interoperable, permissionless, and trustworthy internet is essential to the success of the information society and must remain a top priority beyond 2025.

The role of stakeholders in all their diversity must be a key factor in this regard. This must include the cultural diversity of such stakeholders, as well as their linguistic diversity.

We believe that the diverse experience of internet governance is a success that we must build on to create the digital society of tomorrow.

The mention in the WSIS+20 Element Paper of the "open, interoperable nature of the Internet" and that it "has underpinned the development of an extraordinary variety of services and applications, reaching across the range of human society including governance, economy, development and rights." Is welcomed but should be further emphasized.

4. What **additional themes/issues**, if any, should be included in the Elements Paper? *

We are of the opinion that cultural diversity is lacking in the document. This cultural diversity must include linguistic diversity, which we believe is of paramount importance at a time when AI tools are being developed and deployed.

Internet users must have a choice and regain control over how they access information. Accessing the internet in one's native language and being able to express oneself in that same language is essential in order to combat the digital divide and foster an inclusive digital society.

The issue of human rights also needs to be explored further and must not overlook internet users in their different capacities.

5. Do you wish to comment on **particular themes/issues/paragraphs** in the Elements Paper? *

Here we focus on certain points that we believe are essential to highlight and that are the subject of our expertise.

On Internet Governance, paragraph 59 states that "The governance of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organisations." It is our firm belief, backed by practice, that Internet governance should be multi-stakeholder, not multilateral, in order to ensure the inclusion of non-governmental stakeholders, and to be able to hear the diversity of voices of stakeholders. The San Paolo declaration (NetMundial & NetMundial+10) is an important input to be taken into account.

We would like to reiterate two points. On the one hand, such diversity among stakeholders must be understood to include internet users. On the other hand, all the diversity, including cultural and linguistic, of these stakeholders and various representatives must be central. In this regard, it is essential to ensure at regular intervals that this diversity is maintained, as it is a prerequisite for a high-quality debate.

We also note with concern the absence in the text of explicit mention of certain stakeholders, foremost among which is the Technical Community and Academia. It is necessary to explicitly mention the technical community and academia as key stakeholders in the multi-stakeholder model.

The WSIS+20 Element Paper further states that "The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) has become an established forum for discussion and its importance as the primary multi-stakeholder platform for discussion of Internet governance issues has been recognized." Although we appreciate the Internet Governance Forum's recognition, we believe that the Forum needs to be significantly strengthened and should receive institutional recognition and solid funding to ensure the sustainability of its work. To this end, it must not be subject to competition and juxtaposition with other bodies. This only weakens the Forum's objective and the multi-stakeholder model.

We support the renewal and continuation of the Internet Governance Forum and call for the recognition of regional and national forums, which are independent but extremely effective in linking global issues to local challenges and enable genuine discussion at the local level.

On Artificial intelligence, ISOC France believes that the same approach should be pursued in the field of AI. For us, the multi-stakeholder model of Internet governance is of crucial importance and one of the key factors in the success of the Internet.

6. What suggestions do you have to support the development of the **WSIS framework** (WSIS Action Lines, IGF, WSIS Forum, UNGIS etc.)? *

The WSIS forum has played an important role in the implementation of the WSIS framework during the past 20 years. Over the past two years, the WSIS Forum has become a complementary forum for action oriented discussion, driven by the ITU and with the creation and linking of the AI for Good global summit. We believe that a roadmap of action lines with the global digital compact commitments, and a vision for these objectives beyond 2025 is necessary to clarify the way forward.

On human rights, we felt it was essential to refer directly to international legal instruments, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We are committed to these recognized frameworks, which enable a shared vision and common definitions. To name just a few: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child or the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity.

7. Do you have any **other** comments? *

To facilitate participation, a plan leading up to the high-level event in December is essential, by providing all relevant documents to stakeholders in advance so that they have time to analyze them and respond.

It is also essential for us to promote the possibility of speaking and responding in the official languages of the United Nations, in order to represent the diversity of viewpoints and facilitate everyone's participation.

8. Who is **submitting** this input? *

Kindly provide the name of the person submitting this input, as well as the associated country, organization, stakeholder type, and relevant contact information

Nicolas CHAGNY, Internet Society France, Chair of the board, France

9. Please provide your **e-mail** address: *

Please enter an email