Written Input on WSIS+20 Zero Draft

Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
Submission

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ICANN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ICANN Written Inputs on the Zero Draft of the WSIS+20 Outcome Document

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) is pleased to provide written input on the Zero Draft of the WSIS+20 Outcome Document. We hope this contribution proves useful in informing subsequent iterations.

ICANN considers the Zero Draft a well-crafted text that provides a strong basis for further development. In particular, ICANN welcomes the inclusion of several positive elements that we hope will be retained in the final version.

Key Positive Elements

1. **Affirmation of Multistakeholder Cooperation**
   - ICANN strongly supports the affirmation of the value and principles of multistakeholder cooperation, as reflected in the Introduction, paragraph 3.

2. **Recognition of Linguistic Diversity**
   - We welcome the emphasis on linguistic diversity as a key factor in bridging the digital divide, as expressed in paragraphs 12, 16, and 30.

3. **Acknowledgement of the Risks of Fragmentation of the Internet architectures.**
   - ICANN appreciates the text in paragraph 104, which reaffirms the goals of effective Internet governance and rejects models that would fragment Internet architectures.

4. **Commitment to an Open and Interoperable Internet**
   - ICANN strongly supports paragraph 106, which underscores the need for an Internet that is "open, global, interoperable, stable and secure." We suggest strengthening the last sentence to read: "To fully benefit all, it must *continue to* be open, global, interoperable, stable, and secure."

5. **Recognition of the Evolution of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)**
   - ICANN notes with appreciation paragraph 113, where member states welcome the evolution of the IGF, particularly, the emergence of more than 170 National and Regional IGFs.

6. **Support for the Permanence and Strengthening of the IGF**
   - ICANN strongly supports the decision of the member states in paragraph 115 to make the IGF permanent, the approach in paragraph 116 to channel IGF outputs into relevant UN processes, and the invitation in paragraph 118 for the U.N. Secretary-General to make proposals concerning future IGF funding.

○ To provide further detail on how these proposals could be implemented, ICANN is pleased to share the annexed working paper, *"The IGF We Want"* available in Annex A on page 8.

7. **Recognition of Complementary United Nations and WSIS Fora**
   ○ ICANN values the recognition in paragraph 126 of the complementary roles of ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD, and the WSIS Forum as an important mechanism for achieving the WSIS objectives and tracking their progress.

ICANN's Proposed Text Contributions

Further details and explanation of ICANN's suggested textual proposals on the WSIS+20 Zero Draft are reflected below and arranged in chronological order:

Zero Draft Paragraph F.

Original text: F. Welcoming the many constructive inputs from Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organisations, the technical and academic communities, youth, and all other stakeholders made in response to the request for contributions on the themes set out in resolution 79/277, through both written and oral consultation processes.

Comments

We support the Zero Draft's recognition of the technical community as a distinct Internet stakeholder group. Using the distinct terms 'technical community' and 'academia' (or 'academic community') will promote a clearer understanding and ensure the unique contributions of each group are fully recognized. We would also suggest that the same terms are separated and used in all paragraphs **F, 3,104,105,** and **139** (please, note that the term "academia" is already used in paragraphs **120** and **138**):

> ***Proposed change:*** F. "Welcoming the many constructive inputs from Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organisations, ==the technical community, academia, youth,== and all other stakeholders made in response to the request for contributions on the themes set out in resolution 79/277, through both written and oral consultation processes."

Zero Draft Paragraph 3.

Original text: 3. We reaffirm the value and principles of multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement that have characterized the World Summit on the Information Society process since its inception, and recognise that effective participation, partnership and cooperation of Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organisations, the technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders, with balanced representation of all countries has been and continues to be vital in developing the Information Society, including the implementation of Summit outcomes.

Comments

As in Paragraph F, the "technical community" is a distinct stakeholder group from academia. ICANN commends the inclusion of this paragraph, and underscores the importance of

retaining the text of this paragraph in the final Outcome Document.

> ***Proposed change:*** 3. We reaffirm the value and principles of multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement that have characterized the World Summit on the Information Society process since its inception, and recognise that effective participation, partnership and cooperation of Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organisations, ==the technical community, academia,== and all other relevant stakeholders, with balanced representation of all countries has been and continues to be vital in developing the Information Society, including the implementation of Summit outcomes.

Zero Draft Paragraph 7.
Original text: 7. We note that the widespread availability of the Internet has transformed traditional structures of public discourse. This has had significant impacts on societal behaviour, policy-making processes and the dynamics of information reliability and public trust.

Comments
We suggest replacing "availability" with "use." It is not the technical availability of the Internet that has the impact, but its actual usage. The Internet, as a technical infrastructure, is designed to facilitate communications, and this distinction is important to avoid misunderstanding the source of these issues.

> ***Proposed change:*** 7. We note that the ==widespread use== of the Internet has transformed traditional structures of public discourse. This has had significant impacts on societal behaviour, policy-making processes and the dynamics of information reliability and public trust.

Zero Draft Paragraph 30.
Original text: We reiterate the need for the development of local content and services in a variety of languages and formats that are accessible to all people and recognise the vital importance of multilingualism to ensure the linguistic, cultural and historical diversity of all nations. We commend the work that has been done since the World Summit to extend the multilingual nature of the Internet, including the introduction of Internationalised Domain Names, and urge all stakeholders to ensure that the Internet and digital services become fully accessible to all, including Indigenous Peoples and speakers of minority languages.

Comments
We commend the Zero Draft for acknowledging the role of relevant content and services in local languages in bridging the digital divide. While there has been progress in making Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) available to make it easier for everyone to access the online content in local languages, as acknowledged in paragraph 30, more work is needed for Universal Acceptance (UA) of all valid domain names and email addresses, including those in local languages, by all Internet-enabled applications, and systems With domain names and email addresses now available in local languages, it is important that organizations and businesses update their applications, systems and services so they work

with these domain names and email addresses in every language, i.e., to achieve Universal Acceptance.

> ***Proposed Change:*** We reiterate the need for the development of local content and services in a variety of languages and formats that are accessible to all people and recognise the vital importance of multilingualism to ensure the linguistic, cultural and historical diversity of all nations. We commend the work that has been done since the World Summit to extend the multilingual nature of the Internet, including the introduction of Internationalised Domain Names, and urge all stakeholders ==to promote adoption of domain names and email addresses in local languages and== to ensure that the Internet and digital services become fully accessible to all, including Indigenous Peoples and speakers of minority languages.

Zero Draft Paragraph 107.

Original text: 107. "We recognise that the open, interoperable nature of the Internet has underpinned the development of an extraordinary range of services and applications, reaching across the range of human society including governance, economy, development and rights. We reaffirm the need to promote international cooperation among all stakeholders to prevent, identify and address risks of fragmentation of the Internet."

Comments

To improve coherence, we recommend moving "identify" before "prevent". We also suggest using the same language that is already used in paragraph 104 regarding "fragmented Internet architectures" instead of the more general "fragmentation of the Internet".

> ***Proposed change:*** 107. We recognise that the open, interoperable nature of the Internet has underpinned the development of an extraordinary range of services and applications, reaching across the range of human society including governance, economy, development and rights. We reaffirm the need to promote international cooperation among all stakeholders ==to identify, prevent, and address risks of fragmented Internet architectures.==

Zero Draft Paragraph 120.

Original text: 120. We recognise that multistakeholder participation has been crucial to the success of the World Summit's implementation framework, drawing expertise and experience from governments, international organisations, the private sector, civil society, the technical community and academia. We reaffirm the values and principles of multistakeholder cooperation and engagement that were established at the Summit, reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 70/125, and reinforced in the Global Digital Compact.

Comments

We welcome the creation of the Information Multistakeholder Sounding Board (IMSB) by the WSIS+20 co-facilitators. While informal and experimental, this mechanism has proven highly

effective in channeling diverse multistakeholder perspectives and has made a significant contribution to the work.

> ***Proposed change:*** 120. "We recognise that multistakeholder participation has been crucial to the success of the World Summit's implementation framework, drawing expertise and experience from governments, international organisations, the private sector, civil society, the technical community and academia. We welcome the additional contribution and support by the Informal Multistakeholder Sounding Board in gathering these insights. We reaffirm the values and principles of multistakeholder cooperation and engagement that were established at the Summit, reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 70/125, and reinforced in the Global Digital Compact.

Annex A

<u>The IGF We Want</u>

<u>Working DRAFT</u>

This document is a working draft and contribution to the discussions on the future of the IGF. It seeks to reflect ideas and thoughts discussed overall, and not to be exclusive. This working draft was compiled by colleagues at ICANN and we look forward to working with the broader community discussing the future of the IGF.

As the Internet Governance Forum enters its 20th year, it has consistently demonstrated its value as the global venue for multistakeholder Internet governance discussions envisioned in the Tunis Agenda.

This draft has been developed with the overarching goal of maintaining and developing this value. Under the umbrella categories of "continuity and stability" and "scope and focus", it considers characteristics that are crucial to an IGF that is sustainable over the long-term. The draft outlines suggestions or mechanisms that may contribute to achieving this sustainability, while not precluding other suggestions or proposals.

<u>Continuity and Stability</u>:

An IGF that is anchored in the global Internet ecosystem as a venue for important discussions involving all interested participants (rather than having its mandate revisited every 5 or 10 years) can usefully complement existing governance organizations and entities. Rather than inventing something new, the IGF can support evolution of the existing model, serving as a venue for initial, cross-sectoral discussions that can then be taken up in other forums for finalization.

Over the years, the IGF has been complemented by a broad and growing ecosystem of national and regional Internet governance initiatives (NRIs). These are critical for engaging on national and regional themes and can inform and enrich discussions at the global IGF, facilitating the coordination necessary to identify opportunities and solutions at the global level.

Aspects relevant to continuity and stability include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Logistical Stability:**
  - Venue locations that are accessible and predictable would aid long-term planning. Consistency in venue locations would enable more consistent planning and preparations, creating greater ease for participants and minimizing distractions associated with substantive planning for the annual

meeting. Key elements of venue locations include ease
of accessibility for travel (including visas); facilities and infrastructure to
accommodate multiple workshops for large number of attendees; ease in
logistics, such as
accommodations and transport, for all participants; and arrangements for
effective remote participation. More consistent venue selection could also afford
cost savings. o *Possible proposal*:

- Host meetings at UN locations on a rotational basis.
- Leverage regional and national IGFs.
- Seek long-term hosting commitments from UN Member States to
   develop a multi year plan.

- **Administrative Stability:**
  o The IGF requires a stable, well-resourced staff to support the logistical,
     administrative, and substantive preparations of the IGF annual meeting.
     This includes the support provided to the Multistakeholder Advisory
     Group (MAG) and other mechanisms for preparing the agenda and
     program for the annual meeting. This requires adequate and sustainable
     funding.
  o *Possible proposal*:
    - Staff stability and continuity for corporate memory and knowledge of
       UN operations and policy, and familiarity with the IGF and regional
       and national IGFs.
    - Possible internship or secondments paid by sponsoring entity.
    - Further encourage governments to financially support internships with
       the IGF Secretariat for NRI participants (not necessarily government
       employees).

- **Financial Stability**
  o The IGF Secretariat requires adequate funding to engage staff to support the
     work. This should enable strong staff support, opportunities for possible
     interns or fellows (perhaps from national or regional IGFs), and support for
     the meetings to ensure outcomes, themes, materials are captured in
     searchable and useful forms for all.
  o Financial stability should be diverse, and contributions should be provided
     with no conditions beyond supporting the IGF and its stability.
  o *Possible proposal*:
    - Develop a clear budget proposal for funding that is adequate to ensure
       the stability and continuity of the IGF. Seek diverse funding from
       businesses, civil society, governments, and technical community, with
       a targeted annual budget.
    - Encourage long-term (e.g. five year) contributing commitments for

long-term planning to pilot areas of need, and afford the
opportunity to assess longer-term budgetary and strategic needs.

<u>Scope and Focus:</u>

- Themes and scope should be relevant to the Internet and the Internet ecosystem:
  - Evolving and staying current on topics of relevance to stakeholders, decision makers, and participants.
  - Focus of themes, and topics, that help inform decisions on policy, regulatory, or operational areas of the Internet.
  - The IGF should continue to be a forum that provides value and benefit to participants.
- *Possible approaches*:
  - Further evolve subject matter linkage with national and regional IGFs
  - Establish a searchable, archivable, resource of sessions, materials, discussions, accessible to all with ease.
  - Track issues – where could be, are being or have been addressed and resolved.
  - In coordination with the leadership panel, explore possibilities.
  - Potentially explore evolving the MAG to streamline input, and or evolve to more of an advisory role to support the IGF secretariat.
  - Link and partner to other resources, dialogues, forums with roles or responsibilities on specific topic areas, as one of many available resources to users.