

## **Follow-up WSIS+20 Informal Stakeholder Consultation Session on 29 July 2025**

New York, United Nations

29 July 2025

Good afternoon, Ambassador Janina, Ambassador Lokaale, excellencies and esteemed colleagues.

ICANN appreciates the opportunity to share our contribution to the Elements Paper and insights that could hopefully inform the Zero Draft of the WSIS+20 Outcome Document.

On Internet governance: ICANN encourages the Zero Draft to reflect the evolution of the Internet and the multistakeholder model of governance since the WSIS Summits in Geneva and in Tunisia, and to recognize the achievements of the multistakeholder approach. This model has played a central role in ensuring the stable and secure functioning of the Internet's technical infrastructure.

Rather than reverting to legacy language, the Zero Draft should reflect the Internet's continued success — enabled by 20 years of multistakeholder cooperation and contributions from all communities — and the need to sustain and strengthen that foundation. The Elements Paper already recognized that all stakeholders, including the technical community, “have an indispensable role in achieving WSIS outcomes.”

We hope that the Zero Draft will use language that builds on and is consistent with the WSIS+10 Outcome Document and the Global Digital Compact (GDC). The GDC has recognized that “Internet governance must continue to be global and multi-stakeholder in nature” with full involvement of all stakeholders. The GDC also states that the Internet “must be open, global, interoperable, stable and secure.”

The GDC acknowledged the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) as the primary multistakeholder platform for discussion of Internet governance issues. The IGF's mandate enables it to evolve with the Internet and the technologies that are facilitated by and built on top of the Internet. As such, the WSIS implementation beyond 2025 should leverage this existing and mature assembly. To remain fit for purpose, the IGF requires sustainable resources, a strengthened mandate, and the ability to produce actionable outcomes. Therefore, in addition to extending the mandate of the IGF, ICANN hopes that the Zero Draft examines practical approaches to strengthen the IGF for the future.

Thank you.

Thank you Co-facilitators, for giving us the floor a second time.

ICANN contributes directly to the WSIS action lines that promote local content, cultural identity, and linguistic diversity. We are honored that the Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) were cited in the Elements paper as helping to make the Internet more multilingual. Together with the Universal Acceptance (UA) program, these efforts advance a multilingual Internet by ensuring that valid domain names and email addresses work across all Internet-enabled applications, devices, and systems. Widespread adoption of IDNs and UA is essential to bridging the digital divide, but also to opening the gateway to the next billion Internet users; sustaining language diversity; building trust in the Internet's infrastructure; and reducing barriers to access for all communities.

The roles of UN agencies who have contributed to the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines should be recognized and further supported. For instance, ITU has done a commendable job in tracking the achievements of and encouraging further WSIS Implementation, including WSIS stocktaking through its annual ITU WSIS Forum. In addition, UNESCO recently signed an agreement with ICANN to enhance the linguistic diversity in the digital world to make the Internet more accessible to hundreds of millions of users.

These examples underscore the value of each component of the multistakeholders – governments, the private sector, civil society, the technical and academic communities, and international organizations. Their distinct roles and ongoing collaboration are essential to sustaining the WSIS+20 Framework and meeting future challenges.

Thank you.