Open Consultations and MAG Meeting
4-6 April 2016, Geneva, Switzerland
Synthesis Paper
Contributions Taking Stock of IGF 2015 and Looking Forward to IGF 2016

I. Introduction

1. This paper summarizes inputs received from the IGF community in response to an invitation[1] from the IGF Secretariat for stakeholders to submit written contributions taking stock of the IGF 2015 meeting (10th IGF[2]) and looking forward to the IGF 2016 meeting (11th IGF). In total, 28 contributions were received by the Secretariat and they can all be found in their entirety on the IGF website[3].

2. This synthesis paper is intended to form an input for the first Open Consultations and Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) Meeting (4-6 April 2016, Geneva, Switzerland) in the preparatory process for IGF 2016. This paper is a summary of the various contributions received by the IGF Secretariat. Some specific suggestions are included verbatim. A complete list of contributions received can be found here: https://www.intgovforum.org/cms/contributions-for-igf-2016

II. Taking Stock of the 10ᵗʰ IGF: General Comments on the IGF, the Tenth IGF Meeting and the 2015 intersessional work and preparatory processes

3. Many stakeholders expressed their deep appreciation to the Brazilian hosts for their hospitality during the 10th IGF, as well as for providing an excellent venue and support team on the ground in João Pessoa. It was said that the Brazilian hosts warmly welcomed IGF participants and that the event was impressively organized and executed by the host. The venue had very high-quality, dedicated facilities.

4. It was emphasized in a number of contributions that the conference center at IGF 2015 was easy to navigate and the simplified naming of rooms was appreciated. The facilities and organization of the rooms were practical and accessible and the lunches and refreshments provided were timely and offered a selection of food. The large dining spaces were comfortable and spacious for participants and large delegations. The printing services available at the IGF were extremely useful and this service was much appreciated. Staff in the conference center were outstanding and extremely helpful and efficient. Many said that the professionalism of the public safety professionals was to be commended.

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[1] https://www.intgovforum.org/cms/call-for-inputs-taking-stock-of-the-10th-igf-and-suggestions-for-the-11th-igf

[2] https://www.intgovforum.org/cms/2015-igf-joao-pessoa

5. Some contributions did identify some logistical issues that could be improved upon in the future, for instance, some said that the location selected for the IGF was not ideal as the geographical location of the meeting added travel time and costs for some participants. Some noted that a more efficient registration system is needed to avoid long queues at future meetings and that increased security screening capacity is needed at future venues. It was said that providing four lanes of security screening for 2,000+ attendees, nearly all of whom arrive in a compressed window of time, is not sufficient. Some noted that the conference venue itself was somewhat isolated from the hotels, and meeting room facilities at the venue were limited, making planning for meetings challenging.

6. Many contributions thanked UNDESA, the IGF Secretariat and the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) for their efforts in planning the IGF event and developing its programme, and MAG Chair Jānis Kārkliņš for his guidance and leadership throughout the preparatory process.

7. Participants expressed their appreciation for the significant improvements in smooth technical strategy and supervision of the online/remote/e-participation at the IGF 2015. Specifically, it was said that:
● Requests for assistance were attended in a timely manner.
● Assistance with remote presentations (audio and video) was smoothly facilitated.
● Downtime was minimal, and immediately addressed.
● IGF and Brazilian staff working on online/remote/e-participation were responsive, constant, and knowledgeable, and willing to assist and share this expertise.
● Provision of links and passwords to online sessions, upon request, to the DCAD and anyone who might need them to facilitate entering sessions, were implemented on-the-spot and much appreciated.

8. A number of inputs recognized that there were significant improvements and innovations at IGF 2015, including a greater willingness to innovate with session formats and that there were more in-depth and substantive discussions on a range of key issues, and, most importantly, intersessional work that culminated in substantive outputs. It was said that the IGF continues to demonstrate its added value to policy, development and human rights discussions, as well as cementing its important place in the Internet governance ecosystem.

9. Many inputs said that the 10th IGF demonstrated the forum's capacity to be a unique host to address key current and future issues related to the Internet's impact in our societies and economies. For example, the 2015 IGF offered an invaluable exchange platform around the role of ICTs and the Internet to feed Sustainable Development, one of the key UN political agendas in 2015 and beyond. The IGF also offered an open space for all stakeholders to engage in the WSIS+10 review process as perspectives were gathered through a consultation led by the WSIS+10 review Co-facilitators, who injected input from the IGF community in the process leading to the WSIS High-level meeting in New York in December 2015.

10. Many lauded the enhanced participation from youth which was said to be very strong during the 2015 IGF. The Youth Coalition on Internet Governance developed an 'IGF for Newbies' resource to help assimilate young people with the IGF and Internet governance issues. A number of contributions spoke of the significant efforts that went into bringing a large contingent of young people to the IGF, from the region and otherwise, and that energy was palpable in the proceedings. Going forward, stakeholders welcomed young people being even more integrated into the preparation of and participation in the sessions overall, in order to bring that same energy and innovative spirit, as well as their important perspectives, to the dialogue.

11. Some contributions emphasized that the 10th IGF took place during a particularly intense year for Internet governance, with intensification of discussions in various organizations and fora pointing at the importance of ICTs and the Internet in reaching the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, the IGF meeting ran smoothly with a positive and constructive mood.

12. A number of inputs noted appreciation to the efforts to continually improve the workshops at the IGF. Some particularly noted the 2015 work to help the community submit workshop proposals by clarifying proposal criteria and developing guidelines, which were translated into several different languages by community volunteers. This simple step was thought to have had a positive impact on the number of workshop proposals from developing countries. Many also recalled and appreciated the MAG's encouragement of new workshop session formats to promote inclusiveness. It was said that the richness of the workshop sessions at IGF Brazil demonstrated that such improvements yield a broader array of workshop format options for the community to adopt for their specific session. Some stakeholders also recognized the strides made towards developing a more efficient and transparent MAG workshop evaluation and selection process. Other contributions however noted that there were too many workshops at IGF and that some workshops were duplicative in content and had limited speakers. Some said that it would have been better to combine them, have fewer workshops, and clearer criteria for accepting workshop proposals. Other inputs stated that with regard to workshop preparations, although the selection criteria were set, they were sometimes not enforced, which resulted in wasted time and needless delay in finalizing workshops. Some stated that waiting until September to finalize the workshops was too late.

13. Many contributions appreciated the IGF's 2015 intersessional work programme which resulted in the community-driven production of helpful resources on Internet policy issues, for the benefit of any stakeholder interested in the various topics that were addressed. It was said that during the relevant Main Session at the IGF, readouts of the substantive work of the Best Practice Forums, as well as that of the Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion compilation document, reflected the breadth of multistakeholder expertise and effort that went into the comprehensive intersessional work programme. The written outputs of the programme serve as information-rich resources, informed by the collective expertise of different stakeholders, for governments and all others working on pertinent Internet policy issues.

14. Representatives from many of the IGF Dynamic Coalitions expressed their appreciation for the establishment of a main session for the Dynamic Coalitions at the 2015 IGF in João Pessoa, which was said to be a significant and timely step towards creating a more formal link between these self-organizing thematic groups, and the IGF as a larger process or institution. The new main session provided a good opportunity for the Dynamic Coalitions to present and raise awareness about the importance of their work to the larger body of IGF participants, thereby creating the opportunity for broader feedback on the Dynamic Coalitions' efforts, and for its potential transmission into IGF output documents.

15. While some contributions noted the solid logistical organization and high level of dialogue and participation in the main sessions, others said that although the U-shape organization of panelists provided an open set-up, the main sessions would have benefitted from more interactive communication from moderators as sessions often devolved into a roundtable of speeches. Moderated Q/A within panels (in addition to the audience Q/A) should be encouraged. Compared to the main sessions in 2014, some thought that 2015 saw fewer

participants in the main sessions. It was suggested that perhaps a discussion regarding the timing of workshops and other sessions, vis-á-vis the main sessions, needs to be discussed to examine how inputs from the workshops can contribute to the deliberations of the main sessions.

16. Other contributions suggested that better criteria should be set for main sessions and there should be fewer speakers to promote a more interactive discussion. Some said that the IGF should push for more fact-based sessions and promote non-ideological discussion on the different issues. In the case of, for example, zero rating and net neutrality, where it has been agreed that more research needs to be done, the sessions should focus more on the research and tangible results rather than ideologies and perceived results.

III. Suggestions and Recommendations Looking Forward to the 11th IGF

17. While it was said that many aspects of the organizational process for workshop submission and evaluation have improved greatly, some contributions thought that there was room for continued improvement. Stakeholders suggested that in addition to reviewing the improvements made to date, the MAG should address the process of Main Session organization and the processes by which Main Session topics are determined and the session programme developed. Additionally, the MAG should review the proceedings of the 2015 in-person workshop evaluation and selection session, and work to develop a process for 2016 that provides greater clarity for all involved in this challenging exercise.

18. It was emphasized that improving the visibility of IGF discussions should remain an area of focus for the MAG and the broader IGF community, given the ever-increasing importance of Internet governance and policy issues to the public at large. One suggestion said that this could be done by focusing on communications and outreach through National and Regional Initiative channels, continuing general IGF outreach efforts, and working to build greater online resources in collaboration with the community.

19. One comment on the intersessional work was that if such work is to be included in the annual IGF meeting going forward, it should be consistent with IGF principles. This means providing enhanced guidelines on the intersessional work and also monitoring from the IGF to take place throughout the year. Certain rules and policies/procedures about such work should be universally known and a prerequisite. Some inputs said that it would be useful to have balanced management of the intersessional work groups to avoid capture by individuals. This could be reflected in the guidelines in the form of recommendations asking intersessional work groups to be facilitated so that all stakeholder groups are evenly represented. Keeping track of participation of different stakeholder groups throughout all phases of intersessional work could be a good practice to observe.

20. Many inputs noted the growing interest and activity in National and Regional IGF Initiatives, and recognized the efforts that have been made to bring the ideas from these initiatives into the global IGF. It was stressed that connecting conversations at different levels of the IGF ecosystem should continue, in order to enrich the global dialogue and contribute to ongoing Internet governance discussions at the domestic and regional levels.

21. It was noted that because the Dynamic Coalition main session was organized for the first time in 2015, some improvements can be foreseen moving forward. In particular, it was felt by some that little of the expected substantive feedback on Dynamic Coalition work was actually

received from floor participants at the second half of the split main session, and that indeed a lot of the feedback that was received related to the process itself. This indicates that some improvements to the methodology may be helpful for 2016 and beyond, that would encourage more visibility of Dynamic Coalition outputs as well as more feedback from other participants.

22. Some contributions stated that the reporting guidelines and deadlines for workshop reports could be clearer and communicated in advance of the IGF. It is important that workshops are reported in the most productive and useful way possible and changes of deadlines and submission forms caused challenges for some workshop rapporteurs and organizers. Some suggested that scheduling workshops before a main session dealing with related topics would help to foster higher participation at the workshops given the opportunity it represents to provide input into the main session.

23. Some contributions suggested that the workshop/main session proposal and report forms should be re-assessed. It was stated that the workshops and main sessions should do three things: 1) enlighten the audience through informed discussion; 2) address related challenges and/or identify opportunities; and 3) bring the discussion to a point where ways forward might be agreed. One suggestion said that these three criteria should guide workshop and main session proposals as they would allow for more focused and purposeful discussion and more useful take-aways. It was said that the workshop/main session proposal and report forms can help in this regard by encouraging a more policy-relevant approach. Workshop organizers could be asked to identify key questions that the workshop will seek to answer; the ensuing debate would hopefully result in suggestions as to ways forward in addressing those questions (including possibly policy options). The workshop report should similarly encourage the workshop rapporteur to reflect on the answers to the questions posed in the workshop, to synthesize the responses and to note where there may have been agreement and/or dissension on ways forward. This type of approach could encourage workshop "recommendations" on a range of policy matters (noting that these would be workshop recommendations and not IGF recommendations).

24. Some inputs recommended to reduce the number of main sessions to four or five maximum, and suggested to avoid holding them in conjunction with the workshop sessions.

25. It was recommended to hold the High-Level meeting at the end of the IGF to ensure that the heads of delegations have a chance to acknowledge the work of the IGF. It was mentioned by some that holding the High-Level Meeting prior to the IGF itself means there is some redundancy with the Opening Ceremony.

26. Leaders of the Best Practice Forums and other stakeholders involved in the day-to-day BPF work recommended that each BPF have the ability to decide on its own methods and approach as this was deemed to be very valuable and contributed to the success of the BPFs. Should the BPF work continued, it was suggested that ideally, the choice of topics, coordinators and consultants should be made as early as possible. This longer period would make it easier to reach out to more stakeholders and parties that are usually not involved in IGF processes. It was also suggested that at the start of the BPF's term, an agreement be reached on the terminology used for key actors, timelines and procedures, use of BPF space on the IGF website and that all BPFs be advised to adhere thereto for the sake of consistency.

27. It was suggested that coordinators and/or consultants involved in IGF BPFs invest more in outreach and engage with broader communities, including at conferences and meetings

relevant to the BPF topic, in order to present on the BPF process and its desired outcomes, as well as to learn from community members, have one-on-one meetings with them, ask for help, involvement, input, etc. It was also suggested that the BPFs discuss and prepare a strategy to promote and disseminate the outputs of the BPFs post-publication. Various channels could be used for such promotion, including the IGF mailing lists, cooperation with N/RIs and using the IGF's social media accounts.

28. Regarding the thematic elements of the IGF programme, some inputs noted that the MAG process has matured to allow for more progressive and deeper conversations about any particular topic, as well as to accommodate timely, "hot button" topics. Both types of conversations are valuable attributes of the IGF. It was said that in this regard, one thing for the MAG to consider as it begins the process toward IGF Mexico is how to better reflect bottom-up community input into the sub-theme development process. Innovative ways to explore thematic development for the IGF event could include new uses of technology to collect greater input from the global community.

29. One suggestion was that the sub-themes of the IGF 2016 could be determined based upon the subject areas of workshop proposals as submitted by the community, rather than designated in advance by the MAG (with the understanding that such a step would have to be communicated – and accommodated – appropriately during the workshop development process). Other inputs suggested that the MAG may be able to embrace prospective opportunities to clarify the relationship between the sub-themes (and corresponding main sessions) and the workshop proceedings of the IGF.

30. Many recommended that in 2016, the IGF should maintain flexibility in terms of selecting new and timely themes and that the MAG should continue to lead in setting the agenda.

31. It was said in some contributions that the IGF must focus more on hot and upcoming policy issues in the future to ensure that it remains relevant and spends less time rehashing familiar issues. Where there are important governance issues that have been addressed extensively, the focus of future sessions should be on new challenges, new approaches, new research and other dimensions that would not have been previously covered. The IGF should ensure that there is a good balance between new and existing issues, as well as fully account for the increasingly broad set of issues that involve or touch upon Internet governance.

32. It was said that the emphasis on the sub-theme of cybersecurity and trust in 2015 was an important one. It was noted that over the last few years, there has been a proliferation of fora in which cybersecurity issues are discussed, such as the UN Group of Governmental Experts (UN GGE), the London process and the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise, to name just a few, but that these spaces have relatively limited multistakeholder participation. The IGF is unique in that cybersecurity issues can be discussed in a multistakeholder fashion. Nevertheless, efforts need to be made to bridge the gap between the security community, especially those discussing peace and security issues, and the IGF community. It was recommended that the MAG consider strategies to pursue this goal at the next IGF.

33. Other contributions related to the selection of themes noted that in terms of topics and issues, important discussions revolving around Internet governance issues are ongoing or have yet to take place in the course of 2016. On the global front, a number of hot issues are will be addressed in several venues and processes, including the ongoing reform in the way some of the Internet's core technical functions are managed by ICANN. In the EU, landmark

developments are taking place with EU data protection reform, the first net neutrality rules included in EU law and the introduction of EU legislation on cybersecurity for all Member States. It was suggested that the IGF could focus more on these sorts of issues.

34. One input suggested consideration of the theme "Fostering knowledge, forging connections", for 2016. The same input stated that connectivity and the importance of access to information has always been a priority topic of discussion at the IGF; after all, the Internet can only be a tool for economic and social development where it is available. Although connectivity and access to information would certainly be one important aspect that would fall under this theme, the contributor believes there would also be value in focusing acutely on the Internet's role not just in improving access to information, but in empowering people to be creators, producers, and consumers of that information.

35. Other topics and work tracks that were suggested by contributors to the taking stock process include: Continuing the BPF on IXPs; a new BPF on the 'Internet of Things'; having the IGF organize a generic model for handling abuse, focused at (public-private) cooperation; an internet taxonomy initiative with regard to roles and a BPF on Internet of Things & Ethics.

36. Some themes that were suggested for 2016 IGF were: Employability; Education; Political Leadership; Profiling Algorithms; The 'Internet of Things' & Ethics; A Fragmented Europe: Data Localization, the Digital Single Market and Internet Fragmentation; Youth Involvement; Safer Internet Environment; The Impact of the Internet, AI and Robotisation; Responsible Disclosure; Privacy and the App Store and Secure Websites.

37. Some contributions said that delays in visa processing varied from country to country but reinforced the importance of location and dates of IGF being communicated sufficiently in advance of the conference. It was also suggested that the posting of practical information should be done earlier on the IGF and host country websites to allow people to plan ahead. For example, it was said that the dates and location for the 2016 IGF should be published as soon as possible.

38. One contribution said that the IGF must improve in requiring the IGF host countries to provide enough specific visa, hotel and transportation information far enough in advance of the global IGF. The same input suggested that organizing hosts should be required by MOU or contract to assure that visa information is made clear on the event site and that the government visa-information website they provide a link to is up to date.

39. Some of the specific suggestions that were made by the MAG Working Group on Remote Participation were that: remote moderators must not be placed at the rear of the room behind a divider. The panel organiser must have a clear strategy for communication with the remote moderator, and must have this clearly agreed with the remote moderator before the session. The instructions for remote participation should be improved in the workshop proposal information. The remote moderator must be in contact with the session chair before the session begins and coordinate inclusion of the remote participants. The chair must have in mind the remote participants and check often with the remote moderator to see if a remote participant is waiting in the queue. The session chair should provide the remote moderator with all presentations, photographs, charts and other materials that will be shown in the room, so the remote moderator can show them to the remote participants in the remote participation platform.

40. Some inputs noted that annual IGF meetings sometimes lack a proper, spacious space for networking at the conference venue. Networking/coffee spaces where stakeholders can quickly catch up should be central to the IGF's value proposition, as a distinct offer from the more formal, to be booked, bilateral rooms.

41. Many contributions stressed that efforts to improve the working methods of the MAG should continue into 2016, in line with the recommendations made by the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum, and in light of the United Nations General Assembly's recent call for the "accelerated implementation" of these recommendations. It was also said that the CSTD recommendations and WSIS resolution "asks" must be addressed, i.e. the WSIS UNGA Resolution from December 2015 identifies the following priorities for the IGF: accelerated implementation of the recommendations of the CSTD WG on improvements to the IGF, progress on working modalities, and (progress on) participation of relevant stakeholders from developing countries. It was suggested that MAG working groups could be formed to take responsibility for and report regularly on progress in fulfilling these important "asks".

42. Some stakeholders said that the mix of IGF sessions and their structuring still needs work. The main sessions need further enhancement through improved audience interaction and a wider diversity of speakers. It was said that if the thematic track approach (workshops leading into a main session which worked particularly well for Zero-rating) continues, the workshops need to be better represented and integrated into main sessions (rather than just reporting in). It was suggested that the session formats and speaker choices need to be more audacious, focused on expertise and with the express aim of bringing new, diverse and relevant voices to the discussion.

43. One input noted that as 'Day 0' seems to now be an integral part of the IGF, there needs to be discussion on the MAG role in 'Day 0' event selection, and also transparency on the events, at least to all MAG members, as part of the IGF programme discussion. Consideration should perhaps be given to the prospect of evaluating the impact of a full 'Day 0' agenda on attendance for Day 4 of IGF.

44. In an input submitted on behalf of coordinators and stakeholders of some National and Regional IGF initiatives, the following improvements were suggested: 1. IGF National and Regional Initiatives should be offered more direct involvement in the process of selection of the themes and topics that are reflected by the global IGF intersessional and annual activities; 2. A formal Observatory Advisory Group and corresponding Online Platform could be created for the N/R Initiatives; 3. The N/R IGF initiatives could create an 'Outreach Communication Plan' and 'info-manual' for stakeholders to learn more about the initiatives and their work; 4. There should be space given for a global IGF session for N/R IGF initiatives; 5. Sponsorship could be offered for representatives of National and Regional IGFs from developing countries to attend the global IGF; 6. The practice of designating Secretariat Fellow/Staff to the Initiatives on behalf of the IGF Secretariat and MAG should be enhanced and continued; 7. The IGF community could establish a goal of increasing/doubling the number of IGF National and Regional Initiatives for the period 2016-2018.

45. Representatives from many of the IGF Dynamic Coalitions proposed an idea for a DC Coordination Group, the members of which would be selected by individual coalitions. This group could communicate and coordinate between the DCs and the IGF Secretariat, and between DCs and the MAG, as well as undertake, as a priority function, the drafting of a

common framework for DCs. The drafting of Terms of Reference for this group is currently underway and many DC representatives support the idea of a DC Coordination Group made up of DC representatives to act as facilitators in the planning and execution of any coordinated DC contribution to the main IGF meeting agendas. It was also noted that DCs would like to continue their roles individually and in other combinations for workshops and other IGF activities.

46. Many inputs stressed that the value of a multistakeholder discussion increases with greater and more diverse participation saying that the more diverse viewpoints and perspectives considered during discussion on an issue, the more informed and thoughtful the end result will be. It is vital to continuously work for diversity of people and ideas in ways that facilitate participation by individuals and organizations that are not among those who tend to be the constantly-heard voices in the Internet policy arena.

47. Many recognized the community-driven translation of workshop proposal guidelines into several different languages in 2015, which is thought to have increased the number of workshop proposals from developing countries, and recommended that this practice continue.

48. Many inputs acknowledged the number of organizations that have sponsored participation in the IGF for those who may not have been able to participate otherwise and supported the IGF Secretariat's fellowship programme. Many stakeholders welcomed similar sponsorships to bring more participants to the IGF moving forward, particularly from the developing world.

49. One input invited the MAG to consider if and how the Global Internet Policy Observatory (GIPO) and other observatories and mapping initiatives could be of help in the MAG work and in further supporting the IGF.

50. It was suggested that the main outcome documents produced at the IGF should be translated into all UN official languages, to ensure a broader outreach.

51. Many stakeholders asserted that the UNGA's decision to continue the IGF's mandate for another ten years, coupled with the success of the 10th IGF in Brazil, reflects the international community's faith in the multistakeholder approach to Internet governance, and the IGF as an innovative, inclusive, and vibrant platform for Internet public policy discussions.

52. It was said that with the renewed mandate, the IGF community can now focus on how to make the IGF even better and more impactful for all participants. There is a wealth of experience from past IGFs, and recommendations for improvement, which should continue to be considered and implemented by the MAG and IGF Secretariat.