OPINION 5: Supporting multi-stakeholderism in Internet Governance

The fifth World Telecommunication/ICT Policy Forum (Geneva, 2013),

recalling

Paragraph 34 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society (Tunis Agenda) which provides a working definition of Internet Governance as the development and application by Governments, the Private Sector and Civil Society, in their respective roles, of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programmes that shape the evolution and use of the Internet,

recognizing

a)   that, paragraph 37 of the Tunis Agenda seeks to improve the coordination of the activities of international and intergovernmental organizations and other institutions concerned with Internet governance and the exchange of information among themselves. It states that a multi-stakeholder approach should be adopted, as far as possible, at all levels.

b)   that, as per paragraph article 35 of the Tunis Agenda, that the management of the Internet encompasses both technical and public policy issues and should involve all stakeholders and relevant intergovernmental and international organizations. In this respect, it is recognized that:

   i)   Policy authority for Internet-related public policy issues is the sovereign right of States. They have rights and responsibilities for international Internet- related public policy issues;

   ii)   The Private Sector has had, and should continue to have, an important role in the development of the Internet, both in the technical and economic fields;

   iii)   Civil Society has also played an important role on Internet matters, especially at community level, and should continue to play such a role;

   iv)   Intergovernmental organizations have had, and should continue to have, a facilitating role in the coordination of Internet-related public policy issues; and

   v)   International organizations have also had, and should continue to have, an important role in the development of Internet-related technical standards and relevant policies.

c)   that, as per paragraph 55 of the Tunis Agenda, existing arrangements for Internet Governance have worked effectively to make the Internet the highly robust, dynamic and geographically diverse medium that it is today, with the Private Sector taking the lead in day-to-day operations, and with innovation and value creation at the edges;

d)   that, as per paragraph 69 of the Tunis Agenda, there is a need for enhanced cooperation to enable Governments, on an equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities in international public policy issues related to the Internet, but not in the day-to-day technical and operational matters that do not impact on international public policy issues,

considering

Resolution 101 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010), Resolution 102 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010) and Resolution 133 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010) each of which resolves to explore ways and means for greater collaboration and coordination between ITU and relevant organizations (including, but not limited, to ICANN, IETF, RIRs, ISOC, W3C) on the basis of reciprocity,

is of the view

that it is important to further implement multi-stakeholder practices as outlined in the relevant paragraphs of the Tunis agenda,

invites Member States and other stakeholders

a)   to explore ways and means for greater collaboration and coordination between governments; the private sector, international and intergovernmental organizations, and civil society, as well as greater participation in multistakeholder processes, with a view to ensure that the governance of the Internet is a multi-stakeholder process that enables all parties to continue to benefit from the Internet;

b)   to contribute based on their roles and responsibilities as stated in paragraph 35 of the Tunis Agenda;

c)   to focus in particular on how to improve the participation of developing country stakeholders in the initiatives, entities, organizations and institutions involved in various aspects of Internet Governance.

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