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INTERNET SOCIETY -ISOC

COMMENTS ON THE REPORT OF THE WGIG

REALIZING THE GOALS OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY: THE COMMENTS OF THE INTERNET SOCIETY ON THE REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON INTERNET GOVERNANCE

August 15, 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Internet Society (ISOC) has more than 20,000 members who care deeply about how the Internet develops. They joined the Internet Society because they want to help ensure that the Internet continues to grow, that more and more people in every corner of the world can enjoy its benefits, and that innovation is fostered. Hence, we were excited to see that the final Declaration of the first World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) stated that its goal was to build an "Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life." We hope that in the coming months, the WSIS process will devote maximum attention to the issues that will have the most impact on the lives of Internet users around the world and we look forward to participating in this process.

The World Summit on the Information Society process can help in this regard by: (1) Demonstrating that the Internet IS for everyone and that Internet technologies, essential tools for economic and social development, can benefit every country of the world, (2) Helping convince Economic Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Finance Ministers, and even Prime Ministers and Presidents that they need to learn more about how the Internet works and how they can help foster its growth in their country, and (3) Making clear to political leaders across the world that there are dozens, if not hundreds of different groups who play a role in shaping the development of the Internet—intergovernmental organizations, Internet standards bodies, ICANN and Internet registries, the Internet Society, researchers, service providers, businesses and business groups, ad hoc consortia, and groups of users who influence the products vendors produce—and encouraging governments to develop closer links to these different groups.

The Internet Society feels that the WGIG report—and the process that generated it—have helped inform the debate over the development and management of the Internet and hence has been particularly useful in furthering the third objective listed above. The Internet Society is also glad to see the report re-affirm the conclusion of the first World Summit on the Information Society that the

international management of the Internet should provide for the full participation of all stakeholders.

The report makes clear the wide diversity of opinion among those involved in Internet policy and Internet governance and thus provides a useful commentary on the on-going debates in this area. The fact that much of the report is a compilation of different viewpoints considered by the Working Group has led to some confusion because selected parts of the report are being misinterpreted as representing a consensus position of the group (rather than simply one particular perspective).

The Internet Society is particularly concerned that many readers may conclude the report: (1) calls for a new oversight body to coordinate a wide range of Internet policy issues and (2) proposes a new forum linked to the United Nations to facilitate discussion of those issues. The report does neither. A careful analysis of the report reveals that it actually calls for a "forum function," which we believe could best be provided by creating a number of fora and outreach programs within existing global organizations that are making the policy decisions, choosing the technologies, and agreeing upon the business practices that define how the Internet is currently used and how it will evolve in the future.

We also note that the report is very heavily focused on policy issues and often leaves the impression that regulation and international treaties are the best solutions to many or most Internet-related issues, even for those issues where most experts agree that far more effective (and global) solutions could be provided by new technologies and standards or new Internet services--or some combination of both. We hope that the World Summit on the Information Society will examine the full range of solutions. In addition, we hope that the Summit will put more focus on the issues that will have the most impact on the majority of Internet users (and the people who hope to become Internet users)—such as Internet access, consumer choice, and the need for competitive markets for telecommunications services; cyber-security and online privacy; and training and education. We hope that the need for capacity building and particularly better coordination of training andaid programs to help educate and train Internet users, technicians, and policy makers, particularly in Less Developed Countries, will receive more attention at the second World Summit. This is an area where the Internet Society has focused since its inception more than thirteen years ago. While the WGIG devoted a good deal of time to discussing the Domain Name System, root servers, and IP addresses (and these are important topics, which this paper addresses) they are very clearly not the most pressing issues for the vast majority of Internet users.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Internet Society's views on the recently-published final report of the United Nations Working Group on Internet Governance and to discuss how progress can be made within WSIS on the issues addressed in the report. The Internet Society is a professional membership society with more than 100 organizational members and over 20,000 individual members in over 180 countries. It is the organizational home for the groups responsible for the bulk ofInternet standards, including the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), the Internet Architecture Board (IAB) and the Internet Research Task Force (IRTF). From its inception the purpose of the Internet Society has been to promote the open development, evolution, and use of the Internet for the benefit of all people throughout the world. See http://www.isoc.org/isoc/ for the Society's Strategic Operating Plan,

The Internet Society wishes to commend the members and staff of the Working Group on Internet Governance for their many hours of hard work. We particularly want to applaud their very successful and extensive effort to reach out to people involved or interested in the management and development of the Internet.

The Working Group's report should help government officials and others in countries around the world to better understand how the Internet functions and how it is managed, what key policy issues need to be addressed in order to make the Internet more accessible and useful to more people, and what different policy solutions have been proposed by different experts and interest groups. The WGIG report will no doubt lead to more informed and more productive debate in the months leading up to the World Summit on the Information Society in Tunis.

But as important as the report itself is, we believe that the process that produced it may, in the long term, have more impact. By reaching out to so many different groups—in the technical community, in business, in civil society, in government—the working group set a new standard for outreach and stakeholder participation for United Nations' activities. Ambassador Kummer alone must have met with more than 200 groups in dozens of countries in order to discuss WGIG and its work. One result was that government officials around the world were exposed to the views from a broad cross-section of the Internet community. Another result is that different parts of the Internet community got to know each other better and to understand where their perspective and goals differed—and where they had common cause. The increased collaboration and information sharing that resulted from these discussions may be the most important and lasting impact of the WGIG process.

DEFINITION OF INTERNET GOVERNANCE[1]

One of the tasks the WGIG working group was assigned was to define "Internet governance." Definitions are important. While the Internet Society has proposed other definitions of "Internet governance" in the past, the definition adopted by the WGIG Working Group is workable. In particular, the WGIG definition covers all the different mechanisms that shape the function and use of the Internet on a global scale. So the definition includes the technical standards processes used by organizations such as the IETF, IEEE, the ITU, and the World Wide Web Consortium, as well as dozens of other groups. It includes the work of ICANN and the Regional Internet Registries. It includes the spectrum allocation decisions regarding WiFi and WiMax. It includes trade rules regarding e-commerce set by the World Trade Organization. It includes procedures for fighting cyber-crime by international groups of law enforcement agencies. It includes international interconnection costs and agreements among ISPs regarding peering. It includes efforts by multilateral organizations such as the World Bank to support the development of the Internet in less developed countries—and much, much more.

It is particularly important that the WGIG definition does not confuse governance with government or in any way imply that governments have or should have the lead role in shaping the development of the Internet. The Internet Society believes that the goal of Internet governance should be to ensure that the Internet continues to provide individual users with as many choices and as much flexibility as possible while preserving the end-to-end nature of the network. Since the start of the Internet, the amount of choice and flexibility has continued to increase. Because there are competing groups with competing solutions to users' problems, users, vendors and providers get to determine how the Internet evolves. The genius of the Internet is that open standards and open processes enable anyone with a good idea to develop, propose, and promote new standards and applications. (cf. http://www.isoc.org/news/4.shtml and http://www.isoc.org/news/7.shtml)

READING THE WGIG REPORT

When the membership of the Working Group on Internet Governance was announced, many observers (including many members of the Internet Society) could not imagine how such a diverse group could reach consensus on any of the important issues that affect the development and use of the Internet. It is indeed

[1] cf. Section II

a credit to all the members of the Working Group that they were able to agree upon a single document. However, while they reached agreement on a single document, it is important to remember that large portions of the document were designed to summarize the differing views of different parties and do not reflect a consensus of the group. Most obviously, the section that outlines four options for oversight of Internet policy (paragraphs 52-71) reflects the very different perspectives of the members of the Working Group. Despite this, a number of commentators have mistakenly concluded that the WGIG members unanimously supported creation of a new United Nations body for managing the Internet. This is clearly not the case.

A careful analysis reveals that different paragraphs of the report reflect very different and contradictory world views. For instance, there are those who believe that: (1) the Internet is similar to other telecommunications infrastructures (such as telephony and radio), (2) that governments should exert a great deal of control over how it develops and how it is used, (3) that there are many problems that need to be solved and that for each problem there is one, single global solution that governments (working with the private sector and civil society) should choose, (4) that treaties and national regulations are the best mechanisms to defining and enforcing such solutions, and (5) that it doesn't matter too much if it takes years to agree upon those treaties and regulations. Opposed to this school of thought are those who view the Internet as the digital equivalent of the printed page—a flexible, universal, almost unlimited medium that needs little or no government oversight. Advocates of this world view (1) emphasize the opportunities provided by the Internet, (2) believe that legislation and regulations can rarely keep up with the pace of innovation and thus tend to limit or retard development and deployment of new technologies, (3) acknowledge the needs to address problems such as cyber-security, spam, and the lack of access, but believes it is best to develop and test many solutions and let the competitive market (and individual users) decide which solutions work best, (4) believe that new technologies and technical standards, private sector leadership, and competitive markets will spur the development of the Internet far faster than government regulations or new UN bodies, and (5) hope that the governments would focus on fostering open, competitive markets, supporting research and education, and using the Internet to expand e-government services.

Most of Section III of the report seems to reflect the first world view since it focuses almost entirely on the need for government regulation and new intergovernmental bodies, while devoting little attention to technological answers and none at all to the need for innovation, investment, and competitive markets. However, it is critically important to note that paragraphs 15-28 in Section III do not reflect a consensus of the WGIG members. Instead, as is stated

clearly in paragraph 14, the descriptions of the issues highlighted in Section III are based on the WGIG Background Report, which was not a consensus document. These perspectives were included in the final report as a way of showcasing for the WSIS some of the issues and some of the viewpoints that some of the WGIG members felt needed to be examined. Unfortunately, many commentators, both supporters and critics, have been quoting paragraphs in Section III and saying "WGIG concluded that . . ." or "The United Nations believes that . . ." This is clearly an inaccurate interpretation of the report and has resulted in confusion.

The Internet Society is of the view that readers should focus on the actual WGIG consensus recommendations at the end of the report, which address many of the issues mentioned in Section III. For instance, Paragraph 18 on Spam states that there is "No unified, coordinated approach," and implies that it is possible to gain a global consensus on a definition of spam and to come to global agreement on anti-spam laws. This clearly reflects the top-down, government world view—and not the consensus view of the entire Working Group. In contrast, Paragraph 80 on Spam reflects both of the world views described above. That paragraph makes clear that "policies and technical instruments to combat spam," "industry self-regulation," and "awareness-raising and user education" are all needed. Clearly, Paragraph 80 does not leave the impression that there is one global, legal or regulatory solution to the problem of spam. It does call for the final document(s) of the World Summit to include an annex on how best to address spam. We trust that such an annex would reflect the world view of Paragraph 80 rather than focus entirely on government regulation and the role of intergovernmental organizations.

THE NEED FOR BROADER PARTICIPATION IN INTERNET GOVERNANCE[2]

One of the most important contributions of the Working Group on Internet Governance was to highlight the importance of broader participation in the decisions that shape the development and use of the Internet. Most of the focus of the report is on government policy—which is not surprising given that a majority of participants were either government representatives or experts on public policy (while there were only a handful of technology experts or business people among the 40 WGIG members.) In setting government policy, it is clear that greater citizen participation in the development of national policies and in the deliberations of intergovernmental bodies dealing with policy, law, and regulations would no doubt lead to more informed debate and lead, in the end to

[2] cf. paragraphs 19, 48, and 82

better policies for ensuring a more stable, secure, and useful Internet. But the report also dealt with the technological and business decisions that affect the evolution of the Internet. There, too, through ICANN, the RIRs, Internet standards bodies such as the IETF, and dozens of other critical organizations, the Internet Society feels that broader participation—by government officials, citizens of Less Developed Countries, and NGO representatives—leads to better decision making. ICANN, the RIRs, and the IETF are all far more open and transparent that equivalent organizations in other sectors of the economy. Key documents are available free of charge on the Web, meetings are open, membership is unrestricted, and fees, if any, are kept purposely low. Furthermore, all of these organizations are actively working to increase participation and are exploring e-participation mechanisms to make it easier to participate, as well as making it easier to track decision-making processes and to provide input to those processes.

The WGIG report reaffirms the conclusion of the first World Summit on Information Society that "the international management of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of Governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations." The Internet Society hopes that this goal will be reflected in the actions of the World Summit in Tunis and that reform of intergovernmental organizations (such as the International Telecommunication Union) will lead to easier access to the documentation and meetings of such organizations and new, more democratic mechanisms to ensure that interested parties from different countries and sectors, including Civil Society, can have their say.

All organizations within the so-called Internet Community (in other words those organizations involved with standards or developing and operating various administrative aspects of the Internet, such at the Internet Engineering Task Force and ICANN) honor and embrace the values of participation, transparency, democratic decision making, due process, consensus, and often vigorous passionate debate. These are all fundamental values ofthe communityand they also include:

- Ensuring a single, end-to-end interoperable Internet;
- Bottom-up technical policy making and decision making;
- Participation open to all who wish to do so;

- Significant outreach to include greater participation of Lesser Developed Countries – efforts such as LACNIC and AfriNIC or the workshops ISOC has been holding for the last 13+ years are all good examples;

- Legitimacy determined by open participation, transparent processes and the value of the contribution to the joint effort, rather than more traditional power based mechanisms or structures;

- Cooperation, Coordination, Collaboration and Consultation among participants and groups advocating initiatives/change;

- Local decision making wherever possible;

- Supporting and encouraging spirited and public debate.

We understand there is a need for this "Internet Community" to continue to reach out to and help organizations, policy makers and individuals understand technological developments, their potential impacts, and most importantly how we can all help the Internet deliver to its whole potential, and we are all increasing our long-standing efforts in these areas. We welcome and look forward to participating in the World Summit on the Information Society and other activities to help advance these goals.

Section V.A of the WGIG report provides strong support for multi-stakeholder involvement in Internet governance, and the Internet Society strongly endorses that view. It is worth restating that the processes that support the development and operation of the Internet today are truly open to all and are already multi-stakeholder. They have supported the development of the Internet for many years and we welcome increased participation by all in these processes. We do not see the benefit of creating new organization(s), but welcome initiatives that foster continued dialogue and recommend these be built on existing institutions while fully utilizing the Internet and the new technologies and communications options that the Internet affords. It will truly allow us to maximize participation while supporting the most effective and timely progress on many fronts.

Accordingly, we disagree with those parts of Section V.A which imply that there is a need for a single forum where Internet policy issues can be discussed and debated. Instead, we would emphasize the language in the first sentence of Paragraph 43, which defines a “forum” as a “space or forum for dialogue” but does not imply that this “space” would be provided by a single organization or single event(s).

We believe strongly that the goals laid out in Section V.A—multi-stakeholder participation, more involvement by governments, and a greater voice for Less Developed Countries--would not be best accomplished by creating a new forum linked to the United Nations. Instead, these goals could be quickly and effectively achieved by creating or expanding dozens of different fora under each of the different intergovernmental and non-governmental international organizations and consortia that are dealing with different aspects of Internet policy and Internet technology.

Creating a new all-purpose forum on Internet governance could take years. Worse, it would be unlikely to attract all of the different parties involved in all of the different issues to be discussed. And worse yet, it would distract and impose a substantial additional burden on many of the people already involved in very successful and effective global efforts to address key Internet policy issues (whether by writing regulations, enforcing laws, developing standards, or promoting new technological solutions). In considering whether to create such an all-purpose forum, it is useful to review previous attempts to establish such an organization. The best analogues that we know of are the United Nations ICT Task Force, the Global Business Dialogue on E-business, and the Global Information Infrastructure Commission. All three of these groups brought together key individuals shaping the development of the Internet. All three decided to examine the broad range of issues affecting the development, deployment and use of the Internet, and all three sought to influence the key decisions that are shaping the development of the Internet. However, in each case, while these groups had very senior and very talented people participating, and while they produced very informative reports and helped inform the debate over Internet and e-commerce issues in countries around the world, in the end they had little direct or indirect impact on the decisions that governments, companies, and technical organizations are making on the future of the Internet.

The Internet Society believes is it far better to work with the existing organizations that are already active in addressing key Internet-related issues. These groups have the expertise, the experience, the clout, the legitimacy, and the broad support of those building and running the Internet. Immediately after the WGIG report was released, we launched a lengthy survey of Internet Society members around the world to ascertain whether our members agreed with the conclusions of the WGIG report. More than 350 people responded. While this is clearly a self-selected group, it includes many of the ISOC members who have followed WSIS and WGIG most closely. Less than 40 percent of respondents thought there was a need for a new forum. Instead, more than 70 percent supported strengthening the outreach efforts of the existing bodies shaping Internet policy and technology. As one respondent pointed out: "Internet users are already pretty strongly represented and are the true governing authority for

the Internet. The WGIG's focus on government-driven governance is dead wrong. ("Government of the Internet community, by the Internet community, for the Internet community.")" The full results of the survey can be found at http://geneva.isoc.org/surveys/results/18.

Towards this end, the Internet Society encourages both intergovernmental and international NGOs and consortia working on Internet issues to find more ways to lower the barriers to participation—including financial and cultural barriers. The Internet Society has already launched several initiatives in this area. We have sponsored and organized workshops on issues related to domain names and IP addresses in dozens of countries in order to help ISPs and governments in Less Developed Countries make the best and most informed decisions possible as well as to better understand and better participate in the key decision-making processes that affect the Internet. This is in addition to our International Networking conferences (INET's),our developing-country training workshops (NTW's), our tutorials and publications, etc. The Internet Society is also working with the Internet Engineering Task Force to provide a newsletter to make it far easier for non-technical people across the world and across industries to understand the IETF and the critically important decisions being made there; and we are increasing our long-standing efforts to make the Internet and related developments more understandable through Member Briefings and other publications.

GLOBAL PUBLIC POLICY AND OVERSIGHT[3]

This section has been the most controversial and most misunderstood section of the WGIG report. One problem mentioned previously is that some readers did not understand that there was no consensus on the four options outlined, let alone which of them may actually be preferred. Further, there was not even consensus on the need to select one of the four options. There is further confusion because the Working Group's call for a "forum function" or "space" to discuss global public policy issue related to the Internet has been misinterpreted as an endorsement of a much more extensive role for governments and the United Nations (as described in Model I, Model III, and Model IV).

Our survey of Internet Society members around the world revealed strong opposition to all four of the options for increased government oversight of the evolution of the Internet. Even Option II, which stated that "There is no need for a specific oversight organization," was supported by less than 40 percent of respondents. In comments submitted with the survey, many members stressed

[3] cf. paragraphs 48-71

that the UN and ISOC should be working to reduce government influence over the Internet, particularly in those countries where governments are attempting to suppress the freedom of expression or where government officials are trying to use government policy and power to reward specific companies.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON INTERNET-RELATED ISSUES[4]

We believe that one of the most important paragraphs of the report is Paragraph 74, which states that it is critically important to have "the effective and meaningful participation of all stakeholders, especially from developing countries," and "the building of sufficient capacity in developing countries, in terms of knowledge and of human, financial, and technical resources." The Internet Society strongly shares this view and since its inception has – as a priority - been working towards these goals.

However, we find two major concerns about the recommendations in Section V.B. First, there is an over-emphasis on policy and regulatory solutions (and little discussion of the important roles that technologies and competitive markets play).[5] Second, the first three recommendations (and the ones that received the most attention within the WGIG process)—regarding the Domain Name System, IP addressing, and interconnection costs—received far more attention than seems warranted if the goal of WSIS is to bring the benefits of IT to all people of the world.

The Internet Society is working with governments and others on a range of policy issues that will affect how Internet users around the world access and use the Internet. We are working on behalf of all Internet users to promote, support, and defend six "abilities": The Ability to Connect, the Ability to Speak, the Ability to Innovate, the Ability to Share, the Ability to Choose, and the Ability to Trust. These are the issues typical Internet users care about.

It's very unlikely that a farmer in central Africa, a teacher in the Andes, or a small merchant in Central Asia cares about where ICANN is incorporated or how the GAC is structured. But they do care about the cost of access and whether they can get technical advice on how to connect to and use the Internet. They care about whether the Internet is secure and reliable. They care about whether there is useful Internet content and services in their native language.

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[4] cf. Section V.B (paragraphs 74-85)

[5] Indeed, the word "market" appears only twice in the document (with negative connotations in both cases) and the words "competition" and "competitive" do not appear at all.

And they probably care about whether they'll be thrown in jail for something they write in a chat room.

Therefore, we are very glad to see the report's strong support for Freedom of Expression, one of the six focus areas of the Internet Society's policy efforts. Likewise, we strongly endorse Paragraph 79 on Internet stability, security, and cybercrime, which is consistent with ISOC's sixth policy priority. In the survey of ISOC members on their reaction to the WGIG report, the three top priority areas were Freedom of Expression, Security, and Privacy. More than 55 percent of respondents indicated that these were "very high priorities." In contrast, less than 45 percent of respondents felt that domain names and IP addressing were "very high priorities."

We also wish that more attention and more specific recommendations would have been given to policies for promoting more competitive markets and consumer choice. Over the last ten years, dozens of governments around the world have taken steps to open their telecommunications sector and the ISP industry to competition, which has resulted in increased investment in infrastructure and new and better services for their citizens. We hope that WSIS will help sustain progress in this regard.

The price of Internet access in many Less Developed Countries is far higher than in Japan, China, Europe, and the United States. There are many reasons for this, including lack of competition in the national telecommunications market, lack of more than one connection to the global Internet backbone, and lack of demand and economies of scale. Over the last ten years, there have been several studies of international interconnection costs. Over that time, the transit market in most regions of the world has becoming increasingly competitive and prices have dropped (according to the OECD, the ITU, and several consultancies). We welcome the WGIG report's recommendation (in Paragraph 78) that more funding be provided for "initiatives that advance connectivity, Internet exchange points (IXPs) and local content for developing countries" since such steps would have a major and near-term impact on the cost of connecting national networks to the global backbone and provide Internet users (and prospective Internet users) more choice and better access to Internet services and content.

We also hope that the need for capacity building and particularly the training of Internet users, technicians, and policy makers, especially in Less Developed Countries, will receive more attention at the second World Summit. This is an area where the Internet Society has focused since its inception more than thirteen years ago. In the recent ISOC survey, several respondents echoed the comments of one respondent: "Provision of Internet service in less developed countries . . . should be made a top priority in the (WSIS) conference." There are many areas

which the WSIS might explore. Specifically, the WSIS could examine ways that existing government, intergovernmental, and corporate aid programs might work together more closely to maximize the benefits of their investments in capacity building. In particular, they should look for ways to ensure that their projects are sustainable and have long-term impacts.

The final Declaration of the first World Summit on the Information Society stated that its goal was to build an "Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life." In order to further that goal, we hope that in the coming months, the World Summit on Information Society process will devote the most attention to the issues that will have the most impact on the lives of Internet users around the world. Furthermore, we hope that attention will be paid to business practices and technological solutions, as well as government policy.

In commenting on the specific recommendations in Section V.B of the report, we have chosen to focus on three areas that the Internet Society knows best: Meaningful Participation (Paragraph 82), IP numbers (Paragraph 77), and the Domain Name System (Paragraph 76). While, as indicated above, we do not believe that the latter two are the most critical issues for WGIG and WSIS to address, they are topics the Internet Society has a long history with and a great deal of expertise.

INTERNET DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATION – AN EXAMPLE OF SUCCESSFUL MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION[6]

One of the benefits of the debate around the issue of Internet governance has been the increased visibility of the role of the technical groups and other Internet organizations as the entities that have supported the development and operation of the Internet for many years. Historically, there have been some misunderstandings about the responsibilities of these groups, about the fairness and openness of their processes, and about technical issues related to their operation. We believe that much of this misperception has now been laid to rest and are happy to note that there is now much wider recognition of how these groups have worked to make the Internet function smoothly and why these Internet models have been so successful. We strongly urge the WSIS to build upon these models and work with these organizations rather than creating a new body.

[6] cf. paragraphs 19, 48, and 82

Traditionally, the technical groups have carried out their work with little fanfare and only a desire to serve their communities in an open, transparent, and inclusive manner. Their focus has always been on meeting the needs of their communities in a manner that encourages participation and builds consensus. These are groups that are not dominated or managed by any single interested party, but which are multi-stakeholder and are open to all - including private sector, civil society and governments. Cooperation between all these organizations has always been extremely strong, and the community has shown time and again that it works together in a very open manner to evolve organically in response to community or technical needs.

During the WGIG discussions there have been many calls for effective multi-stakeholder processes. An excellent example of such cooperation in the way groups such as the IETF, the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) and ICANN, etc. work together. Their operations are built on sharing, openness, inclusiveness, and principles such as: "Give one idea and get two back". The success of the Internet has depended to a large extent on this approach and it can be seen in many areas of operation, including IP address allocation and management of the domain name root servers.

INTERNET NUMBER RESOURCES[7]

One important area that is coordinated under consensus agreements is Internet number resource distribution. The five RIRs (AfriNIC serving Africa, APNIC, serving the Asia-Pacific region; ARIN, serving Northern America; LACNIC, serving Latin America and the Caribbean; and RIPE NCC, serving Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia) develop allocation principles and procedures in regional fora which are open not only to RIR members, but to all interested parties including Governments, private sector and civil society. They are specifically and formally accountable to their regional communities though defined open policy processes, and also to ICANN through the global policy processes of the Address Supporting Organization.

A recent proposal from the ITU called for a new IPv6 address space distribution process, based solely on national authorities. It seems to some that behind the proposal is an assertion of primacy of public sector and national interest in the administrative task of assigning address space for the Internet. The RIRs recognize not only the legitimacy of the public sector interest but also that of the private sector and have worked diligently to involve all parties equally and fairly. Perhaps more to the point, the proposal disregards the fact that IP addresses are

[7] cf. paragraphs 22 and 77

endpoint network identifiers that intrinsically have no national attributes, and that allocation principles regarding their distribution must be guided primarily by technical considerations relating to the viability of the operation of the Internet. A 'national allocation scheme' would not only be impractical, but it could also lead to fragmentation and de-stabilization of the Internet.

ROOT SERVERS – STABILITY THOURGH DIVERSITY[8]

A clear benefit of the WGIG process has been the opportunity to share how things such as the root name server system operates. For instance, it now seems to be widely understood that the root name server operators do not determine the content of the root zone file, that no Internet traffic passes through the root name servers at all, and that these servers do not route Internet traffic. Furthermore, many root server operators now provide service from multiple locations using a method called "anycast" which increases the availability and resilience of the DNS system while providing increased benefits "in-region". In fact, as of December 2004, there were root name servers being operated at more than 80 locations in 34 countries, most of them outside the United States of America. And, this number has grown considerably over the last 6 months and will continue to do so.

This diversity and the distributed authority has been a critical element of the reliability of the root name service. We are happy to see that a consensus seems to be emerging that today's arrangements have significant value to the Internet, as it is far from clear what value would be added by creating a new authority to oversee the root name server system. In fact, there is a real risk that this could weaken the robustness of the current operations by creating a single point of failure, or a potential target for capture and abuse. The costs of such an exercise, both in direct terms and in terms of the time and energies of those who would need to participate, do not appear to be sufficiently justified.

CONCLUSION

More than a year ago, at a meeting of the UN ICT Task Force in New York City, Vint Cerf, one of the founders of the Internet Society and one of the Fathers of the Internet, said "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Some people have misinterpreted his words to mean that nothing is wrong and nothing needs to be fixed. No one believes that. We have stated from the very beginning that there aremany issues to address. We need to reduce the cost of Internet access and "connect the

[8] cf. paragraphs 15 and 76.

unconnected;" we need to improve the security of cyberspace and fight spam; we need to make it easier to support non-Latin alphabets; we need to promote the adoption of new standards such as IPv6, which will enable new, innovative uses of the Internet; we need better ways of fighting and stopping cyber-criminals.

The good news is that we have many different institutions competing and collaborating to find ways to address these problems. And many of those institutions - from the IETF to ICANN to the ITU - are adapting and reaching out to constituencies that were not part of the process in the past. They are becoming more open, transparent and responsive. That is helpful and healthy. We hope the World Summit will recommend effective ways that this can be done even better. We think it would be particularly useful if the Summit could identify sources of funding or advocate for National programsso that engineers from the Less Developed Countries could take more of a role in the IETF, the ITU-T, and other Internet standards bodies.

We hope that in considering the WGIG report, the World Summit on the Information Society will keep one thing in mind: Focus on the individual - the individual Internet user and the individual who has not yet been able to connect. Focus your attention on issues that will affect their lives and the way they use the Internet. And most of all focus on giving them more choice and more control over this incredibly powerful, enabling technology, thereby enabling the vision of the first World Summit on Information Society whose stated goal was to build an "Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life.".

THE INTERNET SOCIETY

The Internet SOCiety (ISOC) is a professional membership society with more than 100 organizational members and over 20,000 individual members in over 180 countries. It provides leadership in addressing issues that confront the future of the Internet, and is the organizational home for the groups responsible for Internet infrastructure standards, including the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) and the Internet Architecture Board (IAB).

Since 1992, the Internet Society has served as the international organization for global coordination and cooperation on the Internet, promoting and maintaining a broad spectrum of activities focused on the Internet's development, availability, and associated technologies.

The Internet Society acts not only as a global clearinghouse for Internet information and education but also as a facilitator and coordinator of Internet-related initiatives around the world. Through its International Networking (INET) conferences and other sponsored events, developing-country training workshops (NTW's), tutorials, publications, public policy activities, regional and local chapters, standardization activities, committees and an international secretariat, the Internet Society serves the needs of the growing global Internet community. From commerce to education to social issues, our goal is to enhance the availability and utility of the Internet on the widest possible scale.

The Society's individual and organizational members have a common stake in maintaining the viability and global scaling of the Internet. They comprise the companies, government agencies, and foundations that have created the Internet and its technologies as well as innovative new entrepreneurial organizations contributing to maintain that dynamic. The Society is governed by its Board of Trustees elected by its members.

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