# The Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

Octopus Interface Conference
## Cooperation against cybercrime

## Strasbourg, 11-12 June 2007

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# Convening a new Forum

- WSIS invited the UN Secretary-General to "convene a new forum for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue" – the IGF.
- A space for a dialogue – to bring all interested parties together:
  - Governments and Intergovernmental Organizations;
  - Internet institutions;
  - Private Sector;
  - Civil Society;
  - Academic and Technical Communities.

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## One cross-cutting priority : development

- Internet governance to be placed in WSIS and MDG context ('digital divide').
- Two aspects:
  - Effective and meaningful participation in Internet governance arrangements;
  - Building of capacity to address Internet governance issues.

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## What matters to developing countries:

- Access to the Internet
- Costs related to access (Interconnection fees);
- Local languages and content;
- Problems related to its use: e.g. spam, child pornography (awareness raising).

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# The IGF is an experiment in international cooperation

Broader context:

- Adapting global governance to the needs of the 21st Century;
- Search for new forms of international cooperation;
- Recognition of non-State actors in international cooperation;
- The Secretary-General in his message to the first meeting called the IGF "a move into uncharted territory".

# The essence of the IGF

No power of (re)distribution, but:

Power of recognition:
- The IGF can
  - identify issues of concern;
  - draw attention to an issue;
  - put an issue on the agenda of international cooperation.

# The Agenda of the first IGF Meeting

Overall theme:

"Internet Governance for Development"

Four broad themes:

- Openness – free flow of information;
- Security – creating trust and confidence;
- Diversity – multilingualism / local content;
- Access – interconnection costs;
- Capacity building as crosscutting priority.

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# The Athens Meeting

The meeting exceeded expectations:
   – 1350 registered participants
   – 97 member States with 397 delegates.

- Good cross section of speakers
- Interactive nature of panels
- 36 Workshops
- No negotiated outcome document
- Participants were generally happy with the event.
- A  solid basis to build on for future IGF meetings.

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# Main discussion threads

- The relationship between national regulations and the borderless Internet
- Balances between…
  - privacy rights and security
  - between citizens' right to information and the rights of copyright and IPR holders.
- The role of governments in ensuring
  - an enabling environment
  - Regulatory frameworks tailored to local conditions;

# Dynamic Coalitions

Dynamic Coalitions emerging from the workshops:
- Stop Spam Alliance (ITU, OECD,APEC…);
- Open Standards (Brazil, W3C, Sun..);
- Privacy (France, World Bank, AI…);
- Internet Bill of Rights (Brazil, ISOC Italy, IP Justice…);
- A2K@IGF  (Google, CoE, FSFE, EFF).
- FOEonline (Freedom of Expression and the Media)
- Access and Connectivity for Remote, Rural and Dispersed Communities

## Strengths and weaknesses

Different views on strengths and weaknesses:
- Some see lack of decision-making power as a weakness
- …others see it as a strength:
  - The lack of decision-making power creates a space for open dialogue:
  - Nobody needs to be afraid of the wrong decision being taken.
  - Participants can speak openly – they have no consequences to fear.

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## Where are we heading:

New focus on:
- Sharing of best practices;Internet governance at national level.
- IGF as a platform for interested institutions (ICANN, ITU, UNESCO, OECD) to present their activities.
- IGF as annual meeting to discuss Internet related public policy issues.

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# Rio de Janeiro – Nov. 2007

- Fifth broad theme added:
  - Critical Internet Resources.
- Cross-cutting Priorities
  - Development Agenda through Capacity-Building.
  - Sharing of Best Practices to set the stage for International Standards & Regulations.

# Benefits of the  IGF

The IGF can:
- shape public opinion and decision-making processes in other institutions;
- prepare the ground for negotiations;
- plant the seeds for decisions to be taken by other institutions;
- provide a platform for reaching out to all stakeholders;
- bring in different stakeholder perspectives into public policy debate (user perspective).

# IGF and Cybercrime

- IGF Secretariat encourages interested organizations to send in comments, use our discussion space to inform other stakeholders on initiatives to establish international standards for dealing with cybercrime and encourage debate on these issues.

- Invites for workshop proposals and best practice requests combating cybercrime and other interlinked public policy issues.

# Challenges ahead

- Reconcile the different expectations.
- Develop a meaningful process.
- Reach out to developing countries.
- Make sure that all stakeholders buy into the process.