

WebForce International Contribution
to the
ITU Council Working Group on WSIS

Twelfth Meeting
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Introduction : This short and exploratory contribution is made by Dr. Francis Muguet, under the aegis of [WebForce International](#), ITU sector member, that is kindly acknowledged.

There are currently some brainstorming activities being conducted in various UN agencies and programs about ways to bring more dynamics into the implementation and follow-up of the WSIS, and in particular into the annual [cluster of WSIS related events](#) held in May in Geneva. This brief note wishes to contribute to those brainstorming efforts.

Reflecting on the large attendance of yet another WSIS implementation process : the [Internet Governance Forum \(IGF\)](#), it is suggested to repackage the [cluster of WSIS related events](#) into an **Information Society Forum (ISF)** or a Forum with any other appropriate name (eg. WSIS Forum).

The ISF might not have the same legal status, mandate, organization as the IGF, but in terms of appeal and public relations, it would certainly empower the global dynamics of the WSIS implementation. The ISF should be light weight structure. A cost-saving ISF secretariat could be constituted, relying on existing personnel scattered among various agencies such as, inter alia : ITU, UNCTAD and UNESCO, that are already organizing the WSIS cluster. One or two interns could be added to provide a permanent support. The organization should be inclusive and transparent to all stakeholders.

In terms of practical organization, there would be little to be added to the existing logistics of the Cluster. There are already “plenary” events such as the WSIS Action Lines Facilitators Meeting and the Ceremony of the World Information Society Award. It is suggested just to add global opening and closing ceremonies, and a plenary wrap-up session regrouping all stakeholders.

It is kindly suggested that the [ITU Council Working Group on WSIS](#) gives mandate to the ITU Secretary-General to organize the ITU participation to the ISF, on the basis of more detailed proposals from all stakeholders.

In relationship to the creation within ITU of a dedicated group on Internet issues, as proposed by France (WG-WSIS- 12/9), for example as a subgroup of the WG-WSIS. or as a focus group or study group elsewhere, it is suggested that this new group should operate within a full and inclusive multi-stakeholder approach. In reference to the paragraph 61 of the Tunis Agenda, the creation of this group may be envisaged and indeed appears as a fully justified mechanism that should embody *a transparent, democratic, and multilateral process, with the participation of governments, private sector, civil society and international organizations, in their respective roles.*

Lastly, we wish to bring the attention of the [Council Working Group](#) on the [Digital World Forum on Accessible and Inclusive ICT](#) project (see also [PC4D](#)), which is a [FP7 project](#) in the field of [Information and Communication Technologies](#) (ICT-2007.9.1 International Cooperation: Development-related ICT research exploitation and cooperation roadmaps), that just started on January 2008. Collaboration with ITU efforts to bridge the [Digital Divide](#) (Connecting the unconnected by 2015) should be explored both in terms of process and events.