

# Consultations on the convening of the IGF

17 February 2006

## Selected EXCERPTS from the [Afternoon Session](#)

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*F.Muguet V0.1 15 March 2007*

*Corrected for typos and minor errors.*

10 *Important statements in **bold**.*

*Explanatory notes in italic.*

*Most upper case letters are removed.*

Note: The following is the output of the real-time captioning taken during the  
15 Consultations on the Convening of the Internet Governance Forum, in  
Geneva on 16-17 February in Geneva, Switzerland. Although it is largely  
accurate, in some cases it may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible  
passages or transcription errors. It is posted as an aid to understanding the  
proceedings at the session, but should not be treated as an authoritative  
20 record.

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NORBERT BOLLOW: I would just like to give a short follow-on to my  
statement this morning, where I spoke about giving leading technologists  
25 reason to come to the IGF. And during discussions over lunchtime, I found  
that **there seems to be considerable interest and reason for having a  
small workshop either before or after the IGF, focused on the question  
which technologies can build a bridge over the digital divide.**

30 So I would very much like to invite everybody who thinks this is a great  
idea to get in touch with me, and we will get something organized.

>>JOHN MATHIASON ( from Syracuse University.) : Thank you, Mr.  
Chairman. Just a short intervention on a subject that was provoked by one of  
your comments that one of the problems that the forum has is that funding is  
35 always going to be an issue. And one of the issues is secretariat funding.

And I would just like to bring to everyone's attention that there are two secretariat functions.

One is the technical secretariat that organizes things, which Markus Kummer and his colleagues have done with exceptional competence, integrity, and efficiency.

And the **second is substantive servicing, where the secretariat tries to provide information, ideas, and whatnot, that can provide the starting point for debate**, move it along, and that sort of thing.

And that's the kind of thing which usually costs the most in resource terms.

Since the forum is a -- an innovative approach to issues of governance, we might want to think about an innovative approach to secretariats. And using a computer analogy, perhaps **one might consider in terms of the substantive secretariat a kind of distributed secretariat**, where organizations that are willing to provide the secretariat-like function, meeting the criteria that secretariats usually have of independence, neutrality, and technical competence, to provide a kind of analysis that would be considered a useful starting point for discussions in whatever issue is chosen for the IGF.

The Internet Governance Project with which I work has tried to do some of the papers that we've prepared for the WSIS process and for this meeting with that philosophy in mind, in other words, that you have to have a set of documents that put the facts on the table, bring the precedents up forward.

And in some respects, outline the different perspectives that could be taken on a given issue. This is something which you might consider as one of the innovations of the IGF process.

And **this could be something that the program committee could work on as a means of engaging more of the -- at least the academic community in this process.**

And it could be one in which you could achieve genuine partnership between institutions and scholars in developing countries as well as the usual developed-country people.

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>>AYESHA HASSAN: On behalf of CCBI and ICC, I'd like to provide a few comments in response to the questions that you posed before the lunch

break. **On the program committee, we view it as an integrated program committee, with equal, multistakeholder representation from governments, business, civil society, and the technical community.**

We believe that these representatives should be selected in close consultation with stakeholders and would be looking to ensure diversity of geographic representation as well as experience in the representatives put forward.

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On the idea of **multiple bureaus or program committees representing each stakeholder group**, any one of the interested groups could always meet to discuss areas of mutual interest related to the **integrated, multistakeholder program committee.**

85 ../..

>>FRANCIS MUGUET: I believe that there are two fundamental aspects that must be dealt with if we want to move ahead in our discussion.

The first one is **to know whether or not IGF, as part of a U.N. summit, has to obey the rules of procedure of the United Nations.** That's the first point.

And secondly, **to know whether or not the terms, terms such as "bureau," must be taken within the U.N. sense or on the basis of perhaps a broader, more commonplace type of use or practice.**

Now, having said that, if there is a bureau in the United Nations sense of the term, well, this bureau must deal with matters of procedure, and, furthermore, the bureau must be a multistakeholder one.

Now, when it comes to matters of content, and not talking about procedure, but content, we could envisage a program committee that would deal with matters of content. And this program committee also should be multiactor and multistakeholder in nature.

And we should also make a distinction between the organizing committee for the first event looking at this forum on Internet governance. Then this committee, this same committee, could benefit, as I said earlier, from a scientific committee. **This scientific committee would prepare the proposals for different themes and also keep the public abreast of different themes that are emerging.**

And when I say the public, I mean all the actors, it be the government, governmental sector, civil society, but also the private sector as well. And so I think that these are matters that should be set forth very clearly, on a very

clear basis.

And then I would like to make another suggestion. This suggestion is linked to the issues that I just raised, but which is different, nonetheless. And this is that following the first event of Internet governance, well, some players think that we're only looking at Internet governance, but it would be possible to look at also a **world forum of digital solidarity**. And **this could be an event that would occur just after the first forum**.

>>ADAM PEAKE: ../.. The first question, I think, was the membership of the program committee. And we did agree on the concept of a program committee. Quite simply, all stakeholders should be represented, we think equally, and as equals. All regions should be represented. **We think we can learn much from the WGIG process in terms of selection and composition.**

There are certainly lessons there to be learned. But, essentially, more balanced in terms of representation than we saw the eventual WGIG, although that was very favorable. ../..

We do believe that the program committee should not be an advocacy space. It's not something that people should lobby to get their pet issue taken up.

**A trusted group that works to consider suggestions from all stakeholders is what we were really thinking about.**

And we suggest that it should be a working-level group. ../..

>>RAUL ECHEBERRIA: ../..It's our hope and it's the hope of the NRO, that we can have as much participation as possible by the technical committee within the program committee. ../.. Furthermore, I'd like to say that the size of the program committee should not -- well, should not exceed 20 people.

And we consider that the secretary general of the U.N. will find the best format, along with you and Mr. Kummer as well, and so in this way, there should be a good balanced makeup of the program committee and it should be

multistakeholder committee ../..

Another point that was -- was that divisive issues should not be quarantined, and conversely, there is little value in discussing issues on which there is agreement. The reference in particular was to **the development of public policy principles for Internet Governance and the process for enhanced cooperation. Our view is that parallel but separate process has been established to progress these matters, and that is the best process to use.**

**To duplicate that debate in the IGF will give stakeholders an excuse not to constructively engage in the other process.**

../.. On the composition of any advisory group, we consider that if there is such a group, there should be only one and that it should be multistakeholder.

That is, there should not be separate groups for separate constituencies.

There is a tension between having a small manageable

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We are unaware of any officially declared parallel process. And if  
185 there is such a process, we'd like for it to be identified and for the rest of us  
to be told how we could participate in this process and provide input into it.

Otherwise, one gets into a somewhat strange situation in which the  
forum's legitimacy and its capacity are undermined by decisions to take what  
190 certain governments consider to be the really important issues out of the  
forum and exempt them from discussion in a fully multistakeholder  
environment.

I'm sure the Australian government can understand the concern that  
civil society would have about this, that **we are told that we cannot discuss  
something in the forum because it's already being discussed possibly in  
195 an invisible process (enhanced cooperation) we don't know about that we  
cannot participate in.** That doesn't sound like a viable response to our  
concern. ../..

>>SWITZERLAND: ../.. On the Program Committee, I think we want to keep it  
simple and practical. And one single committee, with all the various  
200 participants involved, government, private sector, civil society and  
international organizations, would be enough.

../.. We would be doing a disservice to the forum if it were to deal with topic  
which were already dealt with in depth elsewhere. I think people might get  
tired of that sort of thing. So we need some sort of balance.

205 **On the rules to be applied, the IGF is a rather special sort of  
entity. It's an ELIOD (phonetic ? ) as you would put it, as legal experts  
would put it in Latin. It's not what you can classify on what already  
exists. It's not the U.N., as most speakers have said, but some U.N. rules  
could apply.** For example, languages, a matter raised several times. It's  
210 very important for us to be able to use the six U.N. languages. **Whereas, it's  
also been frequently said that we don't want the overly rigid U.N. rules  
involving participation, in particular because of the inclusive nature of  
the IGF.**

**So I think we have to be creative, take some of the U.N. rules but  
215 not forget that the IGF was something -- was intended to be something  
autonomous.**

>>WILLIAM DRAKE: ../.. I also wanted to speak to the question of working  
groups very briefly in response to a couple of the comments that were  
220 made. ../.. In the U.N. setting, perhaps a working group sounds like an

invitation to a large, compulsory type of event in which all stakeholders would feel that they must be represented and must weigh in and must issue a lot of inputs and so forth.

225 We certainly in civil society were not thinking of it in that way. **We were thinking of it much more in the manner of the Internet engineering task force, a fairly decentralized process, a light one.** It doesn't have to have a heavy administrative I don't know head at all

230 >> I'll be speaking on behalf of African civil society. ./.. And as long as the structure is centralized here in Geneva and everything passes through Geneva, obviously, developing country participation will be low, because people just can't afford to go to Geneva every time to take part.

235 So the idea of decentralizing structures, in particular, working through the United Nations economic commissions ( <http://www.uneca.org/> ) seem to me a basic idea.

In any case, African experience has shown the extremely important role in terms of logistics and preparation of content and substance on the themes dealt with by the summit.

240 **It's an almost irreplaceable role played by ECA ( [UN Economic Commission for Africa \(UNECA\)](#) ), in particular, by regional meetings and other ensuing meetings.**

245 So I think there's a real concern for decentralization which must be shared by people in charge of the IGF. Even if you have to set aside room for expert committees which might be freer to work and which could add expert input to the subjects to be dealt with, that's something we think is important to support for African civil society, which, as you know, doesn't always have the money to come to Geneva or Europe.

250 Secondly, on Athens, the site for the time being is only in English, and it seems very important for the future for things to be posted up at least in French as well, given the importance and the numbers of French-speaking participants.

255 >>WOLFGANG KLEINWAECHTER: You can keep a lot of trouble out if you give **the Program Committee only a limited mandate.**

The real work which has to be done by the Program Committee is to draft an

agenda and to guarantee that the invited speakers are really representatives for the global Internet community, that means come from several countries, from all around the globe, gender-balanced and things like that.

260 **That means to have a very limited mandate for the Program Committee would make it much more easier and help to avoid conflicts.** And it would make the life easier for the Program Committee if you would start soon. And virtual discussion process on the Web site of the forum so that the Program Committee can look into the discussion and can then get a feeling  
265 or a clue, you know, what -- in which direction the discussion goes so that it's not that the discussion will predetermine what the Program Committee will have to decide, but the Program Committee would be in a better position than to come to the final decision with regard to the agenda.

270 >>BERTRAND DE LA CHAPELLE: ../.. The last point is to support what Milton Mueller was saying earlier about the **enhanced cooperation**.

I want just to remind everybody in this room that paragraph 71 of the Tunis Agenda says that the process towards enhanced cooperation to be started by the U.N. secretary general involving all relevant organizations will  
275 involve all stakeholders and should be -- and launched before the end of the first quarter of 2006. So **we're a bit late. and, obviously, the process should be multistakeholder.** And we're all looking forward to more information on how the two processes will be articulated one with the other.

280 >> Peter Hellmonds: I work for Siemens in communications, but here I speak on behalf of CCBI and ICC members, to provide a few concluding remarks from the business community. ../.. we prefer an integrated and not a separate program committee, and as such, it should be composed of a relatively small number of qualified individuals.

285 >>GREECE ( Papadatos ): ../..In our view, the forum's character is unique. It should be multilateral, multistakeholder, democratic and transparent, as it emerged from delicate consultations involving all stakeholders. ../.. The minister of transport and communications, Mr. Mihalis Liapis, has set up a  
290 steering committee to tackle the various tasks required for the organization of the IGF's inaugural meeting.

>>CHAIRMAN DESAI: I think we would, of course, have a -- have to have a



**host country agreement with -- between the United Nations and Greece.**

295 **The summit is a product of a United Nations process.** The secretariat support is being provided by the United Nations. **And for legal reasons, we will have to have a host country agreement with Greece.**

I incidentally here mention that the very normal practice in the United Nations **when you have a host country which is taking on the**  
300 **responsibility of organizing a meeting which the United Nations has been asked to convene, it's fairly normal practice to request the host country to provide the chair for the process.**

That has been the case with all the summits that we have run. And that also is a simple solution of the issue of who is the chair of the process. And  
305 it's a very common practice.

It's then entirely up to the host country to decide whether it will be somebody from the private sector, somebody from the civil society sector, somebody from the government sector. It's their responsibility. But we don't -- as the United Nations, we don't get into that issue.

310 **I think we have not had an agreement, or I don't sense a consensus on the issue of the management structure for the forum.**

There have been various ideas which have been thrown out. I think terms like "Program Committee," "steering committee," et cetera have been used. Sometimes the terminology has caused confusion. Let's for the moment  
315 simply say a multistakeholder group. What that will be called we can leave open. And a multistakeholder group, what people have different ideas, A, on whether such a group is -- people want some time to think whether such a group is necessary. I think my sense is that a very large number of people here do believe it is. But, in fairness, we have to give people time to react to  
320 that idea.

And second, how it will be constituted, whether it will be constituted as a single group, if so, how large, or whether it is constituted as multiple groups. So what I am proposing is that this is one of the issues on which we need a response relatively quickly, which is, let us say, ten -- about ten days from  
325 now. I don't think it's going to be possible within this time frame to organize another consultation like this.

...So my own feeling is that listening to people here, it will not be a bad idea if one were to suggest -- in fact, I would suggest, to the U.N. that they may wish to get in touch with the regional commissions to see how, within the  
330 resources that the regional commissions have, they could start thinking about

what sort of regional contribution they could make to this process.

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>>BRAZIL: Mr. Chairman, allow me to congratulate you and Mr. Kummer for the excellence of coordinating this wonderful meeting, which was a very productive one. I would like to take this opportunity to offer the candidacy of Brazil for the next meeting after Greece, next year, 2007, to be placed in Brazil in Rio de Janeiro.

As I said, I will await the comments on **two key issues, the constitution**

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