

Internet Governance Caucus Charter

[Reference: <http://igcaucus.org/charter> as on Jan-2015]

The Internet Governance Caucus (IGC) was originally created by individual and organizational civil society actors who came together in the context of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to promote global public interest objectives in Internet governance policy making.

Vision

The policies that shape the Internet impact not only the development of the technologies themselves, but also the realization of internationally agreed human rights, social equity and interdependence, cultural concerns, and both social and economic development. Our vision is that Internet governance should be inclusive, people centered and development oriented. Our contributions to the various forums relevant to Internet governance, will strive to ensure an information society which better enables equal opportunity and freedom for all.

Mission

The mission of the Internet Governance Caucus (IGC) is to provide a forum for discussion, advocacy, action, and for representation of civil society contributions in Internet governance processes. The caucus intends to provide an open and effective forum for civil society to share opinion, policy options and expertise on Internet governance issues, and to provide a mechanism for coordination of advocacy to enhance the utilization and influence of Civil Society (CS) and the IGC in relevant policy processes.

Objectives and Tasks

The objectives and tasks of the IGC are to:

- * Inform civil society and other progressive groups/actors on significant developments impacting on Internet governance policies.
- * Provide a context for open on line and, wherever and whenever possible, face-to-face debate on the range of issues related to Internet governance policies from a civil society perspective.
- * Develop an on-going and outcome oriented structure. Create informal relationships with various CS groups and individuals with a direct interest in Internet governance policies, including those involved in human rights, ICT4D, intellectual

property, international trade and global electronic commerce, access to knowledge, and security.

* Provide outreach to other CS groups who have an interest or a stake in some aspect of Internet governance policies.

Act as the representative of itself, and other CS constituencies with similar interests, generally or on specific issues, at various forums involved with Internet governance policies.

* For the sake of the above, as well as for more general purposes, develop common positions on issues relating to Internet governance policies, and make outreach efforts both for informing and for creating broad-based support among other CS groups and individuals for such positions.

* Anticipate, identify and address emerging issues in the areas of Internet governance and help shape issues and perspectives in a manner that is informed by the stated vision of the IGC.

* Collaborate with other stakeholders in the implementation of agreed projects and policies towards better Internet governance.

Membership

The members of the IGC are individuals, acting in personal capacity, who subscribe to the charter of the caucus. All members are equal and have the same rights and duties.

Organizational Roles

The IGC will have two coordinators, and an appeals team. Each of these is discussed separately.

- Any member of the caucus can be nominated or self-nominate for participation in any of the defined organizational roles.

- While there are no defined term limits, it is recommended that those taking organizational roles absent themselves for at least one year from any organizational role after serving in that role for one, or at most two, terms.

Coordinators

The IGC will select two (2) coordinators, each for a two (2) year term. One coordinator will be elected in the even years, (e.g. 2006, 2008) and one will be elected in the odd years (e.g., 2007, 2009).

Duties of Coordinators

The first and most important duty of the coordinator(s) is to facilitate the discussions and enable the members of the caucus to reach consensus whenever possible.

In cases where the IGC cannot reach full consensus, the two coordinators together can make a decision on rough consensus subject to an appeal as described below.

The coordinators are also responsible for defining and assigning any other tasks that need to be carried out in support of the caucus such as list management, web site management or support of other tools. These decisions will require the advice of the membership and can be appealed to the appeals team.

Selection of Coordinators

The selection will be done by on-line voting using the voting process according to the following formula:

* election of the coordinator will be held, whenever possible by midsummer (the summer solstice). If events prevent an election by midsummer, it will be held as soon after midsummer as possible.

* the coordinator(s) who are not up for election or not standing for election will be responsible for running the election, subject to appeal by the appeal team.

(Note: as a boot strap procedure for 2006, the interim coordinator will serve until the end of the first election period, during which two coordinators will be selected - one for one (1) year and one for two (2) years).

Recall of coordinators

In response to an appeal, as described in the appeals section, the appeals team can decide to hold a recall vote for a coordinator. In order to cause the recall vote, there needs to be full consensus among the appeal team members.

The recall vote itself requires a 2/3 majority of voters to succeed.

Replacement of a coordinator.

If a coordinator leaves the role due to personal reasons or recall, the role will be refilled as quickly as possible. The role will be refilled for the balance of the term unless the refill occurs during the year in which the role was to be vacated. In this case the coordinator position will be for the balance of the replacement terms plus a two (2) year regular term.

For example, if the 'even year' coordinator for 2006, leaves the role during an odd year, 2007, the rest of the term will be filled with a replacement, and a new selection will be made on schedule in 2008. If on the other hand the coordinator leaves the role early in 2008, then the replacement would complete the original term and serve the 2008-2010 term.

Appeals team

An appeals team of five (5) IGC members will be formed. The appeals board will be selected yearly by a randomly selected nominating committee as defined [here](#). Coordinators are not qualified to be members of the appeals team.

Duties of the appeals team.

Any time 4 individual members of the IGC co-sign a statement on the main IGC mailing list they can appeal any decision of the coordinators. When a decision is appealed, the appeals team will review any discussions that occurred and will request comments from the IGC membership. Based on the information they collect and discussion, they will decide on the merit of the appeal.

Decisions by the appeals team are based on a majority vote of the appeal team, i.e., three (3) or more votes, except in the case of coordinator recall which requires full consensus.

The decision of the appeals team will be final on every decision reviewed.

Working methods

The IGC will use its mailing list - governance@lists.cpsr.org [note: now governance@lists.igcaucus.org, but charter not yet amended to reflect this], as the priority working space.

Work shall also be done with the website : www.igcaucus.org

The caucus shall have face to face or online virtual meetings when possible

Any such meetings will be announced in GMT/UTC time with reference to one of the online tools for time translation (e.g. <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock>)

IGC members may also hold such meetings on the site of other events.

Meetings will be chaired by the IGC coordinators or delegated substitutes

Mailing lists and other communication methods will be archived.

Mailing list(s) will be run according to guidelines set below in the section titled: Posting Rules for the IGC

Posting Rules for the IGC

Messages to any IGC list must be in line with the mission of the IGC, particularly its purpose to provide an open and effective forum for civil society to share opinion, policy options and expertise on Internet governance issues, and to provide a mechanism for coordination of advocacy for agreed upon policies and to enhance the utilization and influence of Civil Society (CS) and the IGC in relevant policy processes of organizations or fora dealing with Internet Governance issues.

Appropriate messages to an IGC list contribute to the objectives and tasks of the IGC, particularly:

- * To inform civil society and other progressive groups or actors on significant developments impacting on Internet governance policies.
- * To anticipate, identify and address emerging issues in the areas of Internet governance and help shape issues and perspectives in a manner that is informed by the stated vision of the IGC
- * To develop common positions on issues relating to Internet governance policies, and make outreach efforts both for informing and for creating broad-based support among other CS groups and individuals for such positions.

The messages must observe a minimum of decorum, including:

- refrain from personal attacks, insults or slander
- refrain from offensive or discriminating language
- refrain from threats , including threats of legal action, on list or off list
- refrain from excessive and repetitive posting

Inappropriate postings to the IGC list include

- Unsolicited bulk e-mail
- Discussion of subjects unrelated to the IGC mission and objectives
- Unprofessional or discourteous commentary, regardless of the general subject
- Sequences of messages by one or more participants that cause an IGC list to become a hostile environment

Suspension of posting rights

Failure to abide by posting rules may result in suspension or removal from the IGC list according to the following process:

- The coordinators will first warn a subscriber privately of the problem
- If the problem persists the coordinators will notify the subscriber publicly on the list of impending suspension from the list. Suspension will include only posting rights.
- If the problem persists the subscriber's posting rights will be suspended for one (1) month.
- Once the subscriber's posting rights are restored, any further problem will result in another public warning.
- If the problem continues to persist after suspension and a second public warning, the coordinators will be permitted to either suspend the posting rights for three (3) months or to remove the subscriber from the list.
- Any decision for suspension can be appealed. Any decision to remove someone from the list will call for an automatic appeal by the appeals team.

Recommendations and requests for suspending posting rights

The coordinators may, at their discretion, appoint an advisory team of at least three individuals to assist them in making the determination of when someone has breached the posting rules defined in this charter. While all decisions remain the coordinators' responsibility, any such recommendation from an advisory team will be made public at the time of either suspension or removal from the list.

Additionally, any public request for suspension or expulsion from the list signed by twenty (20) or more members of the IGC will be sufficient to request that the coordinators' review a list subscriber for suspension or removal action. Any such request will require a public response from the coordinators' within a week indicating the action taken and with an explanation of the reasons for the action.

All nominations to external bodies, e.g., the IGF multistakholder advisory group, will be made using a randomly selected nomcom process as defined [here](#).

Decisions

The IGC will work on the basis of consensus as much as is possible. When complete consensus cannot be reached the coordinators will be jointly empowered to call rough consensus. Rough consensus, for the purposes of the IGC, is defined as the point at which an overwhelming majority of the IGC appears to agree with a position with any dissenting minority view having been well discussed and respected. Rough consensus can only be called after a serious attempt has been made to accommodate minority points of view.

When both coordinators agree that it is necessary to make a rough consensus call, the coordinator will announce the text of the consensus decision on the mailing list and allow for at least forty eight (48) hours of final discussion. As discussed under the role of the appeals team, a rough consensus call can be appealed to the appeals team.

Statements and representation at meetings

Normally, whenever there is sufficient time for a statement to be discussed and approved by the caucus as a whole, the decision procedure outlined above will be required. However, there will be occasions when members of the caucus will be attending meetings and will be presented with the opportunity to make statements that require a very quick response. In these cases, while it is still required that the caucus be informed of an upcoming statement and its contents as soon as possible the following rule may be applied when necessary:

The coordinators will act as the official representatives of the caucus and will be responsible for approving any statement that cannot be discussed by the caucus within the time available.

In the case of face-to-face meetings, they will also coordinate with the members of the IGC who are present. Any statement should reflect the assumed general thinking of the

caucus, rather than just that of those members who are physically present at the meeting.

If neither of the IGC coordinators can be physically present in face-to-face meetings, they will delegate coordination to another participant of such events. This delegation should, if possible, be made before the meeting and with the advice of the caucus.

Statements and positions on behalf of the caucus will be prepared and coordinated by the coordinators, or their delegate as appropriate.

Such statements will reflect the vision, objectives and basic principles of Civil Society in general, and the IGC in particular. Such statements will try to interpret, in good faith, the assumed general thinking of the caucus, based on past discussions and documents, and should not contradict the positions taken by the caucus in the past.

Such statements will be sent to the IGC as soon as possible, preferably before being presented, but if that is impossible, then as soon after their presentation as possible.

Ad hoc sub-groups

It may, from time to time, be useful to create specific groups for the exploration of specific issues, as for example:

interest groups: in conjunction with or in preparation for IGF thematic sessions

editing groups: to prepare draft statements or recommendations to be reviewed by the IGC as a whole

coordination groups: to coordinate various issues or activities requiring such coordinated efforts.

These groups would, for the most part, be spontaneously self formed in response to a perceived need and be disband as the need was satisfied. In general these would be informal and would make recommendations to the caucus as a whole.

The rationale for the sub-groups is to allow IGC members with particular interests and expertise to collaborate and add depth to the IGC's interventions. While the formation of sub-groups is possible, they should not become bureaucratic entities in or of themselves and should be disbanded when they have served their purpose or if they are resulting in inefficient or exclusionary practice.

Voting Process

Each person who is subscribed to the list at least two (2) months before the election will be given a voter account.

As part of the voting process the voter must personally ascertain that they are a member of the IGC based on membership criteria described elsewhere in this charter

and posted as part of the voting information (i.e. a voter must affirm membership on the voter form in order to vote). The decision to self-identify as a member of the IGC is a personal decision based on the criteria defined. A list of the self-defined member-voters will be published after the election with the results of the election.

Elections will be run by the coordinators and will be subject to the appeals process.

All voting will be open, though at the discretion of the coordinators, with or without a specific request from member(s), any vote can be made into a secret vote. The reasons for making it a secret vote will be stated, and are subject to appeal.

Amendments to the Charter

This charter can be amended at any time as proposed by no fewer than ten (10) members and as approved by no less than two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the IGC. The membership requirements for amending the charter are based on the most currently available voters list. In amending the charter, everyone who voted in the previous election will be deemed a member for amending the charter.

Acceptance of the Charter

After discussion and editing, the charter will be presented for a vote. All individuals subscribed to the IGC mail list will be given voter accounts. In order to qualify to vote on the charter, the prospective voter will first need to affirm that they qualify as a member of the group as described elsewhere in the charter. A list of those who self-affirm membership, but not their votes, will be published after the vote.

Once a voter has self-affirmed membership, they will be qualified to vote for or against the Charter. In order to become the effective working Charter of the IGC, a total of fifty (50) votes must be received with no fewer than two-thirds (2/3) of members favoring the Charter.

Any options that may remain in the draft charter after thirty (30) days, will also be voted on as part of the charter acceptance process. In the case that there are options, the vote will be organized to first ask for acceptance, as described above, of the basic charter with options left unresolved. The same ballot will also include a vote on the options. For each case where there are options, the option that receives the most votes will be selected.



This charter was approved in a two (2) week vote ending on 2 October 2006. Sixty-seven (67) voters participated in the vote, giving the charter a 95% approval.