

Thank You Chairman

During the Rio Meeting, we have noticed that the Workshops attracted more participation than the plenary sessions with the exception of the Internet Critical Resources session. Although the number of workshops and the variety of their topics were good indicators of the success and the importance of the IGF, the plenary sessions are the policy dialogue floor which is the original purpose of the IGF. Participation in the plenary sessions is important and we should look on means of how we can increase the number of participants in it.

One aspect is to introduce new topics for the plenary sessions that can make it more attractive rather than repetitive. One of the topics we would like to suggest is the safety of the global internet infrastructure. As many would know by now, our part of the world (Middle East) recently experienced an interruption of the Internet service. Users were offline for more than 36 hours and some of them for more than 48 hours. The Internet access took 12 days to be restored to its original level. It is estimated that Internet Interruption cost the Gulf countries alone a billion dollar loss. Therefore we find it important to discuss the safety of the Internet global infrastructure and how can we make the international consortiums running this infrastructure more accountable to the Internet users and more transparent in stating the cause of interruption.

Another topic we would like to be discussed is the family and child online safety. We have noticed that some means of exchange of information on the Internet, have triggered violent behavior that represented a threat to the young population and societies as a whole. Therefore we need to develop an acceptable implementable framework for the family and child online safety. We find the IGF a suitable place for this.

A third issue which was mentioned earlier by several participants is linking the IGF with sustainable development. We find it important to discuss issues related to topics like entrepreneurship, Small to Medium enterprises and e-commerce during the IGF meeting. These issues represent career and job opportunities to many in the developing world.

We are glad to see that the topic of national and regional IG is gaining support by several of the attendees today. We have mentioned the importance of national IG in previous open consultations and we support discussing the mechanism of holding regional and national forums.

On the issue of the best practices forums, we would like it to be reconsidered. They were limited to countries experiences, their timing attracted smaller audience, and the audience itself was not the target group we wanted to be there.

We support the idea that the workshops should not only be capacity building or advocacy sessions. We support that the workshops should be also a place for debate and exchange of views. We also believe that workshop organizers should commit to report on their workshops. We cannot attend all workshops, therefore the workshop report will be our only mean to know what issues were discussed in them.

I would like to conclude my remarks with joining the others in supporting the continued chairmanship of Mr. Nitin Desai for the MAG whose skills, experience and balanced approach played a major role in the success of the MAG work. We wish the Indian Government all the best and success in organizing the third IGF meeting.