

## **Anriette Esterhuysen, Association for Progressive Communications**

Why are we here and why is this event so well attended?

We are here because the internet matters to us. It matters more than in 2005 because more people and countries are connected to the internet. More poor people are connected as access expands.

Therefore it follows that decisions made about internet policy and development matters. Global decisions, but also national decisions that influences how we use the internet.

Sometimes national decisions influences how people everywhere use the internet, for example copyright enforcement by one country can limit access to knowledge and information for internet users everywhere. But even national decisions that are directed at people inside a particular country, such as censorship of filtering, or blocking affects people outside of that country as because the internet connects us all.

We are also here because IG decision-making is complex and dispersed. The internet is not a publicly owned entity. Ownership and responsibility for managing and developing the internet is mixed. Users develop applications and content. Companies build platforms and provide services. Much of the infrastructure we use to access the internet was built by the public sector. Protocols and standards are developed by engineers, inventors and technicians. The internet is existentially and integrally multi-stakeholder. This is why governance of the internet cannot but be fully multi-stakeholder.

We are also here because people are not happy with the current status quo in IG. Some stakeholders say that EC is already happening, others say it is not. Some countries have more power and influence than others, Some make more effort than others. Some feel that decisions are made that are not consistent with existing global agreements, e.g. in the case of human rights. Not only governments have concerns. There are also dissonances in the participation of business and civil society and the technical community. Small businesses and many in civil society have no real voice in IG. There are different interpretations of EC. Does it refer only to more cooperation with/among governments?

And amidst all this it is often not clear where the public interest lies in IG, and who its defenders are.

We are also here, perhaps primarily, because we have not done what the Tunis Agenda mandated: using the IGF to take forward the discussion on EC.

Where to from here? My proposal is a working group on enhanced cooperation be established, in a similar way to how the WGIG (Working Group on Internet Governance) was formed (for example, 50% of the seats in this WGIG was reserved for States to ensure they were given adequate representation). It should work within the framework of the IGF. This is essential to respect the original purpose for the establishment of the IGF, and because the IGF brings together so many stakeholders already engaged in IG. It could also work in collaboration with the CSTD. It is critical that this WGEC is fully multi-stakeholder, and that all stakeholders should feel comfortable with how it was constituted and how it functions.

Scope of the WGEC:

Definitions: It can address some of the definitions around which there is so much disagreement, e.g. 'enhanced cooperation', 'in their respective roles', 'equal footing', and what it means to be 'multilateral and multi-stakeholder'.

Issues: It can identify what the issues are that most require better cooperation among stakeholders, and that governments feel most strongly they need more involvement in.

Mapping: It should undertake mapping of existing IG institutions and processes, and assess progress in EC in each of there.

Output of the WGEC: Aside from a report on its work, issues, definitions, etc. I think it would be most useful if this group can produce a “Multi-stakeholder Declaration on Enhanced Cooperation in Internet Governance” - a statement of common principles and commitments needed to ensure public-interest oriented IG based on cooperation among all stakeholders. It could also produce a report with recommendations regarding institutional arrangements for IG, where they are working well, where there are gaps, how these can be addressed, and so on.

Success criteria for the WGEC would include the legitimacy of group and how it was constituted, its leadership, the extent of interaction and feedback with other bodies that are discussing these issues and with all who feel they are stakeholders in IG.

I look forward to more discussion today, and, to us working together to find a fresh approach towards more inclusive spaces and processes in IG.

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