

**A chronicle of events leading to Just Net Coalition's refusal to agree on a consensus
on the outcome report of the UNESCO's 'Connecting the Dots' meeting
on 3th and 4th March, 2015**

As narrated by Richard Hill, who led Just Net Coalition's participation at the meeting.

Here is the chronological account of what I experienced happened at the UNESCO Connecting the Dots Conference. I have the various E-Mails referred to below, in case anybody wants to see them. I also have a record of the amendments that I proposed verbally.

I only kept careful track of my interventions and comments regarding my interventions, so I focus on that here. But other JNC members made interventions. So they may wish to add to this record of what happened.

3 March, 18h30: during the drafting group session, I proposed text changes to ensure that the references to human rights referred to all human rights, not just some, and to include the word democracy. There was no opposition to my proposals regarding human rights. Jeremy Malcolm objected to the inclusion of democracy on the grounds that it brought in baggage. The US supported Jeremy's objection.

I had informal conversations with Jeremy and the US after the session. Jeremy listened but didn't say much. The US said that they could not accept inclusion of democracy because it could refer to multi-lateral. I asked them to provide alternate language. They said they were not prepared to do that.

3 March, 19h15: E-mail from R. Hill suggesting that the preamble of the outcome statement refer to all human rights, not just some. Exact text was proposed.

3 March, 20h15: E-mail from R. Hill stating that democracy is a fundamental right and so should be reflected in the outcome statement. I suggested two possible formulations.

4 March, 08h05: E-Mail from R. Hill again stating that democracy is fundamental and proposing an alternative way of incorporating the concept.

4 March, 08h10: E-Mail from R. Hill confirming the previous proposal to reword to reflect that all human rights must be respected, not just some.

4 March, 11h15: during breakout session 16, Options for Future Action-2, I brought up the democracy issue, stating that it is a fundamental right and that it should be included in the outcome statement. There were no objections and the chairman agreed to present this to the last plenary session.

4 March, 13h00: during the drafting group session, I presented the proposals regarding human rights and democracy. There were no objections to my proposals regarding human rights. There was one statement of support for my proposal regarding democracy, and only one objection. Sweden objected to its inclusion stating that the term "is ill-defined and adds a lot of baggage". Much later, towards the end of the session, the US stated that it supported Sweden regarding not including democracy.

At this session, there were numerous interventions from civil society to improve the language regarding privacy, intermediary liability, and other topics; and to add network neutrality. I supported the suggestions to strengthen the language regarding privacy. New Zealand and the US objected

to making changes regarding privacy. There were objections regarding network neutrality. I don't recall that any opposition was expressed regarding the other changes. I was operating under the assumption that silence implied consent so, given the short amount of time allocated to the session, I didn't make interventions to support proposals for which there were no objections.

After the session, I informed Anriette that including democracy was a red-line issue for JNC. She said that not including it was a red-line issue for many member states. They had sent their comments by E-Mail to the secretariat, so they were not public.

(Anita from IT for Change, a member organization of Just Net Coalition that in the final Coordination Group Session at 13h00, where the draft outcome document was continued to be discussed, I spoke up when section 5 came up. Here i sought a change in 5.1, from

"Promote human rights-based ethical reflection and research on the implications of new and emerging technologies and their potential societal impacts"

to

"Promote human rights-based ethical reflection, research and *democratic dialogue* on the implications of new and emerging technologies and their potential societal impacts, *especially for social and economic rights.*"

There was no opposition to this in the room. But the final text had a new phrase - that replaced "democratic" with "public", and the phrase "especially, social and economic rights" had disappeared.)

4 March, 14h00: at the plenary session, the chairman of breakout session 16 did not mention the democracy issue in his summary of the session. I took the floor to state that the topic had been discussed and that the session had agreed to present it to plenary, with a recommendation that "democracy" be included in the outcome statement. The chairman confirmed that this was correct. There were no objections or comments from the floor. In my view, consequently, the plenary had accepted inclusion of democracy in the outcome statement.

After the session, I informed the secretariat that inclusion of democracy was a red-line issue for JNC and suggested that we try to find compromise language. The secretariat said that they would see what they could do, but never got back to me.

4 March 15h40: the final draft became available. Democracy was not included, nor were any of the other changes requested by me and JNC, nor were many of the changes proposed by civil society. The proposed changes to avoid "cherry picking" of human rights were not included, even though no opposition to those changes had been expressed in the drafting sessions.

I again informed the secretariat that the non-inclusion of democracy was not acceptable for JNC, so that we would be forced to make a statement of formal opposition. The secretariat attempted to convince me not do to that. I said that I had no choice.

4 March 16h00: at the final plenary, the chairman introduced the outcome statement. I raised my hand. The chairman and secretariat must have seen it, but the chairman proposed to proceed directly to approval. I was forced to speak up to ask for the floor. The chairman gave me the floor and I made my statement of opposition. After that, the chairman declared that the outcome statement had been approved by consensus.