

**IGF Community Public Consultation: Taking stock of the 2017 IGF and suggestions for the 2018 IGF - Oral statement from the Association for Progressive Communications, 20 March 2018**

My name is Julian Casasbuenas and I am making this input on behalf of the Association for Progressive Communications in my capacity as a member of the APC board of directors.

APC is an international civil society network with more than 90 members around the world. APC has been an active supporter of the IGF since its inception.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this input.

- We thank Switzerland, Geneva, the Secretariat, the MAG and all who contributed to a successful 2017 IGF.
- The presence of a diverse group of people – including many newcomers - created a valuable opportunity for learning and dialogue and raising concerns.

Looking forward we want to highlight a few points from our written submission:

- **Intersessional work is important and must be well-resourced.** We echo the remarks in Markus Kummer's submission that appointing consultants to work with BPFs must happen early-on in the process. We agree with him that more interaction between BPFs, DCs, and NRIs is needed.
- **Put audience participation first.** Fewer panellists and moderation enables participation will help.
- **Always consider gender** in the composition of panels, the treatment of topics and facilitation of sessions

- **Simplify the structure of the IGF.** Consider having two days of workshops followed by two days of main sessions and round tables to enable deeper discussion on fewer topics.
- **Encourage government participation.** Consult them proactively on content and themes. Designate a member of the secretariat to play a liaison role to make sure governments participate more in intersessional work.
- **Appoint the MAG before the end of the calendar year.** Make the selection process more **transparent**.
- **Introduce support for the MAG chair:** We congratulate the chair on her reappointment and thank her for her fantastic work. We propose she creates a "friends of the chair" group to assist with workload and help ensure that voices from all regions and stakeholder groups are reflected in MAG coordination.
- **Appoint an IGF Special Advisor and Executive Secretary.** Their absence still leaves a gap.
- **Strengthen outreach and outputs:** The Geneva messages are a positive innovation. But more can be done to package IGF outputs for use by policy-making processes. Some of the BPFs have done this very effectively.
- **Increase the media's presence at the IGF:** The MAG and the secretariat should develop and implement a media outreach strategy.

### **In closing:**

- We believe the IGF is being taken for granted and under-valued, including by some of its traditional supporters.
- The IGF can and should evolve its methods.
- The **IGF is essential to the goal of inclusive, democratic, multistakeholder policy making and implementation.**
- National and Regional IGFs support this goal, but cannot achieve it on their own.

- As challenges related to the use and abuse of the internet increase, we need the IGF more than ever.
- The failure of the WGEC to agree on recommendations reinforces how critical the IGF is as a platform for collaborative internet-related public policy problem solving.
- We urge the MAG, the secretariat, host countries, the broader IGF community and those who provide financial support to continue their invaluable work.

**Quoting Raul Echeberria of ISOC in his recent blog: “*The world is much better with the IGF than without it!*”**

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**APC’s proposal for content and themes for the 2018 IGF**

**APC suggestions for the 2018 IGF**

Preamble: We would like to see the IGF focus on the internet in relation to poverty and discrimination. The internet has the potential to reduce poverty and discrimination, but it can also increase them. Emerging technologies, the increased and not always transparent use of algorithms can facilitate more effective management of data, but it can also consolidate discrimination. Access is growing, but to ensure that it is inclusive we need to focus on those people who are still left behind.

Therefore we propose as a theme, and drawing on one of the core principles of the Sustainable Development Goals:

**"Leave no one behind: Internet governance for access, inclusion, diversity and equality"**

We see this theme as including the following topical challenges:

- Addressing exclusion in access, and in policy-making processes. As a community we need to address discrimination based on gender, class, race, ability, age, and where one lives.
- Multistakeholder partnership in increasing access
- Network shutdowns
- Linguistic diversity

- Inclusive and participative decision-making
- Equal access - as in not having different internets for different people
- Locally owned and controlled access, including community network infrastructure
- Discrimination - risks in impacts of new technologies such as AI, algorithms, Internet of Things