



ISOC is happy to comment on the current draft program paper for the 2009 Internet Governance Forum.

First, we noted a range of suggestions throughout the program paper intended to help encourage participation and to help participants benefit more from the IGF. For example, we encourage efforts to make improvements both by reaching out and involving youth, women, people from developing countries from all parts of the world, and people with disabilities. ISOC is active in this area. We are proud to announce that we will expand the "ISOC IGF Ambassadors program" in 2009, as it has proven to be beneficial to make it possible for individuals from all regions to participate in the IGF.

We are also pleased to see the suggestion to open the IGF this year, with an orientation session to help overcome the sometimes steep learning curve that new participants face. We particularly encourage efforts to make it possible for people unable to physically travel to the IGF to participate remotely. Functioning remote participation is important both for the obvious reason of increasing engagement, but also as a demonstration of the power of the Internet and Internet-enabled technology to bring people together economically without negative impacts on the environment.

ISOC also agrees with the segmentation of IGF themes into three types, and with the proposition that each type would benefit from a different kind of approach to first foster the exchange of views; second to promote learning and understanding, and ultimately to look at best practices and solutions.

Turning to the topics that are proposed for the 2009 IGF, ISOC recommends that the focus be "the Internet for all," to focus participants' attention on the ultimate goal of governance, which should be to achieve the public good. The suggestion to divide the agenda among themes of "critical Internet resources," "security and openness," "access," and "taking stock" is appropriate. We agree with the intent to create a closer link between the different types of workshop and the plenary session. ISOC has been involved in a wide range of workshops in the IGF until now, and believe that good work is done in many workshops that should be

feeding into the broader pool of knowledge, and ultimately into the roundtables that are proposed as an innovation this year.

It is not surprising at this stage in program development to see that further work is required to focus the list of issues mentioned under each main topic. It is important for purposes of planning sessions that the May consultations zero in on a coherent group of issues under each. Turning to the topics suggested at this time, ISOC has the following specific recommendations to offer:

- **Critical Internet resources:** During the 2008 IGF, we were pleased that there were positive discussion on this topic: one that proved contentious during the WSIS discussions. We support continued exploration in 2009, and particularly support the report's two observations that no topic should be excluded from discussion, and that the selection of topics should be consistent with the WSIS language. To encourage the session to build on the positive exchanges of last year's IGF, it would be helpful for the MAG to further clarify the session description to assist participants' preparations for the discussions. For example, one of the possible topics requires further thought and a cautious approach: "the Joint Project Agreement." It would be helpful to classify the various issues to indicate whether they are global, regional or national. We recommend that discussion of issues pertaining to critical Internet resources that can be addressed at the national level be generic in nature.
- **Security and openness:** The issues being considered under this heading include several that have not yet received adequate attention at the IGF. ISOC recommends reducing the topics to get a clear focus on identity and openness. Identity is a concept that can focus discussions on the role of the user in managing their identities and the governance requirements to enable them to do so, including the possible requirement to develop new understandings of privacy in the context of the Internet. Similarly, the concept of openness spans a wide range of governance issues which have not yet been explored. We would urge the MAG to narrow the focus of this session, again to try to move from an area where there may be little convergence of views to one where understanding can be improved.
- **Access:** ISOC believes that the IGF has contributed significantly to the understanding of the need to improve access to the Internet through governance mechanisms. We encourage the IGF to provide opportunities to further the consensus that is emerging around access, while at the same time broadening the discussion. We believe a roundtable would be the appropriate format for at least part of this discussion. With time on the fourth day remaining unscheduled, the MAG could consider the possibility of using that time for a working session on access if required.
- **Taking stock and the way forward:** ISOC fully supports the dedication of this session to the collection of stakeholders' views on the desirability of the continuation of the Forum. Because it is not yet clear whether or how the UN

Secretary General intends to involve all stakeholders in his decision-making process, it is vital to ensure ample opportunity to participate during this session. ISOC has replied separately to the IGF questionnaire on the future of the Forum.

ISOC looks forward to continuing to collaborate with all stakeholders and with the IGF Secretariat and the hosts for 2009 to plan the IGF and to contribute to its success.

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About the Internet Society

Founded in 1992, the Internet Society (ISOC) is a professional membership society with more than 80 organizations and over 28,000 individual members in over 90 chapters around the world. It provides leadership in addressing issues that confront the future of the Internet, and is the organization home for the groups responsible for Internet infrastructure standards, including the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) and the Internet Architecture Board (IAB). In 2002, ISOC was given the privilege of operating the .ORG domain name as a result of a competitive open bid process conducted by ICANN; and a subsidiary organization, called Public Interest Registry (PIR), was established for this purpose.