

ISOC@WSIS+10

ISOC's participation to the First WSIS+10 Review meeting

25 – 27 February 2013, Paris

The first phase of the WSIS+10 Review was conducted by UNESCO in partnership with the ITU, UNCTAD and UNDP, from 25 to 27 February, back-to-back with the IGF Open Consultations and MAG meetings held from 28 February to 1 March, in Paris.

The Internet Society (Markus Kummer, Constance Bommelaer, Christine Runnegar, Konstantinos Komaitis, Dawit Bekele, Nicolas Seidler and Ilda Simao) was heavily engaged in the preparatory process of the WSIS+10 Review event: <http://www.internetsociety.org/wsisisoc-wsis10-knowledge-connects> ISOC provided advice to the UNESCO Secretariat on the organization of several sessions related to Human Rights and Freedom of Expression and encouraged UNESCO leadership to conduct an open and inclusive engagement strategy with the WSIS community¹.

ISOC chapters, organizational and individual members were also engaged in the event.

¹ In accordance with the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society (paragraph 108), the WSIS+10 Review should assess "the multi-stakeholder implementation at the international level (...) taking into account the themes and action lines in the Geneva Plan of Action". The review process should focus on the implementation of existing goals. WSIS+10 should also reaffirm the principles and commitments made in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005 and emphasize the importance of the multi-stakeholder approach at all levels.

The conference was based on a flexible and multi-stakeholder process, including an open-ended drafting group leading to the adoption of a **Final Statement**, which includes recommendations on the implementation of the WSIS outcomes, as well as post-2015 Internet Governance issues:

http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/wsis/WSIS_10_Event/wsis10_final_statement_en.pdf

The Final Statement includes key text recognizing the importance of an **open Internet** and open standards, the multi-stakeholder model (e.g. the IGF) and innovation, while respecting rights such as intellectual property and freedom of expression. With a special focus on UNESCO's mandate and areas of expertise, the statement emphasizes the importance of **free flow of information**. This text constitutes an important milestone in the perspective of the overall WSIS+10 Review process; the second phase of the Review will be conducted by the ITU, in April 2014.

ISOC also had a booth at the event, which generated great interest among participants, in particular with regards to the documents that were provided on key policy issues. Finally, the ISOC team was also engaged in various workshops held at this event:

- **"Enhanced Cooperation: from Deadlock to Dialogue. Reflections on What Needs to be Done"**: ISOC organized a workshop on the issue of enhanced cooperation. Speakers from all stakeholders groups recognized that a lot has changed since 2005; new bridges have been built and institutional processes have opened in many cases. There was general support for moving away from definitional discussions (what does "enhanced cooperation mean") to a more pragmatic and operational approach to this issue, i.e. by undertaking a mapping exercise and addressing gaps on this basis, if any. Governmental representatives stressed that they don't necessarily see the gaps in the existing structures, but rather expressed difficulty in following all existing processes (due to a lack of human resources, lack of knowledge on what is happening and where). The CSTD Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation will be an opportunity to gather input on how and where enhanced cooperation is happening, and where there may be room for improvement. The discussions on enhanced cooperation have been happening in many contexts, including the WSIS +10 review event in February, and should continue at the IGF and in other spaces.

- **"Internet Governance Principles: Towards a Multistakeholder and Universal Framework of Commitments"**: ISOC co-moderated a workshop discussing Internet Governance principles that have emerged in recent years from several actors within the Internet ecosystem. The objective was to assess whether a compendium of such principles could be produced, with a view to identifying commonalities that could contribute to possible universal and non-binding governance principles. There were diverging views as to whether or not achieving universal principles would be realistic or productive (given diversity of stakeholders and regions), but there was wide agreement that the process itself would be a valuable exercise (i.e. the power of principles is in their making), towards building a more shared understanding among stakeholders. There was support for starting, as a first step, an analytical and inclusive process to assess similarities and differences between existing sets of principles. The MAG was identified as a multistakeholder body that could possibly convene or shape the creation of such a compendium in view of the next IGF in Bali.

- **"Beyond the Code: Are Human Rights Part of the Internet's DNA?"**: ISOC led a workshop discussing the impact of the open Internet architecture and new network

technologies on users' ability to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and freedom of association. Discussions recognized that by empowering users at the edges rather than at the center of the network, the Internet embodies democratic values and fosters a wide range of Human Rights. There was strong support for the open and transparent processes upon which Internet standards are developed, as they ultimately allow the users to define what the Internet is and what the future knowledge society will become. The key role of digital literacy was also recognized as a way to empower Internet users with a greater understanding of the applicability of existing human rights to the uses and practices emerging online.

- ISOC participated in a UNESCO Special Internet Event panel on **"Promoting Freedom of Expression and Privacy on the Internet"** and emphasized that an important aspect of freedom of expression is the right to express one's views to whom one chooses and the context in which that occurs. In other words, that privacy is both an enabler and a protector of freedom of expression. In the discussion on the public interest, the Internet Society noted two particular challenges: that the broader public may not have a homogeneous interest; and, that the broader public may not be as well organized to explain or defend its interests as are private entities or individuals.

- Under the "cybersecurity" theme, ISOC started the discussion by leading the first session on the theme: **"Cybersecurity: searching for a common understanding"**. The panel (comprised of representatives from the African Union, WEF, OECD, US Government, CDT, Google, EuroISPA and Microsoft) thoughtfully tackled some difficult issues including: what is cybersecurity; what are the dynamics of cyber-threats and cyber-risks; in addressing cybersecurity, what are we doing well and what needs improvement; what are some solutions or ways forward. The workshop also proposed the following principle for inclusion in the WSIS+10 Review outcomes - "We invite all stakeholders to work together to better understand cyber threats and risks, and through cooperation and mutual assistance to develop policies and strategies that enable innovation, economic growth, and preserve the fundamental principles of the open Internet."

- ISOC also led a workshop entitled **"The New PII: Privacy-Impacting Information"** under the Ethics theme, which explored whether the concept of "personal data" has evolved in light of societal, commercial and technological developments and the realities of "anonymised" data. Additionally, ISOC gave an informal preview of the results of a micro survey it conducted in the lead-up to the session, which invited respondents to "write their own definition of personal data".

- ISOC organized a workshop on the issue of **"Public and private regulatory initiatives in the intellect property enforcement space"**. Notwithstanding the divergent views and vibrant discussions, there were three issues that emerged and on which the participants agreed: intellectual property enforcement efforts would benefit from multistakeholder, inclusive processes; intellectual property enforcement initiatives should follow the rule of law; and, last but not least, intellectual property mechanisms should respect the open nature and architecture of the Internet.

- **"Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: Exploring Economic and Educational Aspects of Local Content"**. ISOC organized and participated in this workshop organized by UNESCO that presented the results of the study conducted by ISOC, UNESCO and OECD on "The relationship between local content, Internet development and access prices". The panelists indicated that the study findings show that there is a correlation between the development of Internet infrastructure and the growth of local content; between the development of Internet infrastructure and the

lowering of Internet access prices; and between the growth of local content and the lowering of prices. These findings call for policy makers to put their efforts on both local content and Internet infrastructure development to provide affordable Internet for their citizens.

As preparations for the next steps of the WSIS+10 Review are conducted, the Internet Society will continue engaging with its members to provide them with information and exchange views on the issues discussed.

Useful links

ISOC @WSIS+10: <http://www.internetsociety.org/wsis/isoc-wsis10-knowledge-connects>

UNESCO WSIS+10 Review: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/wsis-10-review-event-25-27-february-2013/homepage/>

Final Statement of the WSIS+10 Review:
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/wsis/WSIS_10_Event/wsis10_final_statement_en.pdf