

EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON THE INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

NEW YORK, 30 MARCH TO 1 APRIL 2022

REPORT OF THE MEETING

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) convened an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) from 30 March to 1 April 2022. The Meeting was hosted by the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations in New York.

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital interface between global policies in the economic, social, and environmental spheres and national action. The Department works in three main interlinked areas: (i) it compiles, generates and analyses a wide range of economic, social and environmental data and information on which States Members of the United Nations draw to review common problems and to take stock of policy options; (ii) it facilitates the negotiations of Member States in many intergovernmental bodies on joint course of action to address ongoing or emerging global challenges; and (iii) it advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in United Nations conferences and summits into programs at the country level and, through technical assistance, helps build national capacities.

Objectives of the meeting

The EGM was convened in the context of the Secretary-General's *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*¹ and report on *Our Common Agenda*,² to consider:

- how the IGF can contribute to advancing digital cooperation and implementing proposed initiatives related to it; and
- the ongoing process on strengthening and improving the IGF as a space for global multistakeholder discussion on Internet policy issues.

The meeting was attended by 35 invited experts from developing and developed countries and from diverse stakeholder groups concerned with Internet governance and the IGF including governments, international and intergovernmental organisations, the private sector, civil society and the technical community. Discussions were held under the Chatham House rule.³

¹ https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/assets/pdf/Roadmap_for_Digital_Cooperation_EN.pdf

² <https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/>

³ <https://www.chathamhouse.org/about-us/chatham-house-rule#:~:text=The%20Rule%20reads%20as%20follows,other%20participant%2C%20may%20be%20revealed.>

Introduction

Global trends in digital development

The Internet today is very different from that at the time the IGF was established in 2005/2006, in technology and services, pervasiveness and impact.

There has been rapid growth in the extent of Internet participation, rising from an estimated billion people online in 2005 to some five billion (over 60 *per cent* of world population) today – though substantial inequalities remain in connectivity and usage, including inequalities of geography and gender, which in turn lead to inequalities in impact.

There has been rapid growth also in the capabilities of technology and diversity of services available online. Important developments since the inauguration of the IGF have included exceptional growth in the capabilities and use of mobile devices, which have become the predominant mode of Internet access for many users; the transition from narrowband to broadband infrastructure, enabling a far wider range of services including audio- and video-streaming; the centrality of the World Wide Web and the emergence of social media as principal forms of access to the Internet for business and individual users; the increasing sophistication and capability of these and other services; and the emergence of cloud computing and the Internet of Things, leading to rapid growth in the volume of data traffic, the role of data centres and data management.

The Internet has, through this rapid growth in technology and services, become increasingly central to economy, society and culture in countries across the world. Crucial developments have included the growth of electronic commerce and electronic government, with increased delivery of public services and business activity online. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated growth in the Internet's role in these and other areas.

These enhancements in technology and services have been accompanied by developments in the management and governance of the Internet, and in the impact which it and other digital technologies (including artificial intelligence) now have in other public policy arenas. A relatively small number of digital corporations have become among the world's largest and most powerful businesses. National governments and other stakeholders have become increasingly concerned to leverage the Internet and other digital technologies to address challenges in economic and social development, and to counteract perceived risks. This has been particularly notable in connection with sustainable development, including implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); human rights, including issues concerned with freedom of expression, information and mis/disinformation, privacy and surveillance; equality of access and opportunity; security, including cybersecurity, cybercrime and cyberconflict; and environmental impacts including the Internet's relationship with climate change.

A large range of new Internet-related discussion and decision-making spaces – global, regional, sub-regional and national; multilateral and multistakeholder – has emerged since the foundation of the IGF in response to the growth of Internet technology, services and impact. This proliferation has changed the Internet governance landscape that surrounds the IGF.

The Digital Cooperation agenda

In 2018, the Secretary-General established a High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation whose report, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*,⁴ reflected on these developments and proposed new modalities for digital cooperation including a proposal to develop the IGF's role in this context (IGF+).

The Secretary-General's response to the Panel's report, following consultation, was set out in his *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*. This identified eight themes to accelerate digital cooperation and achieve the gains offered by digitalisation, including achieving universal connectivity by 2030, promoting digital public goods, ensuring digital inclusion for all, strengthening capacity-building, ensuring the protection of human rights, promoting trust and security, supporting cooperation on artificial intelligence and building a more effective architecture for digital cooperation. The Secretary-General announced in the *Roadmap* that he would appoint an Envoy on Technology to advise senior leadership and guide strategy within the UN system. The *Roadmap* also identified a number of measures that could make the IGF 'more responsive and relevant to current digital issues' (see below).

The Secretary-General's report on *Our Common Agenda*, published to mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations in 2021, sets out his 'vision on the future of global cooperation and reinvigorating inclusive, networked and effective multilateralism.' It looks toward a Summit of the Future, scheduled for 2023, which will seek to 'forge a global consensus on what our future should look like, and how we can secure it.' Ahead of that Summit, the report proposes that the UN, governments, the private sector and civil society should prepare a multistakeholder Global Digital Compact that would 'outline shared principles for an open, free and secure digital future for all.'

The Internet Governance Forum

The IGF was established by the Secretary-General in 2006 following recommendations in the concluding *Tunis Agenda* of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).⁵ WSIS envisaged a discussion forum that would be open to all stakeholders on equal terms but would have no oversight role or involvement in the day-to-day functions of the Internet. The mandate proposed in the *Tunis Agenda*, and subsequently adopted, envisages, *inter alia*, that the Forum will facilitate discussion of public policy issues concerned with the governance of the Internet itself and of its wider impacts, interface with appropriate international organisations, strengthen and enhance the engagement of stakeholders, contribute to capacity building in developing countries, and identify emerging issues, bring them to wider attention 'and, where appropriate, make recommendations.'⁶ The full mandate is set out in Annex 3.

WSIS proposed that the Forum should have 'a lightweight and decentralised structure.' It has been managed by DESA, through a small Secretariat based in Geneva, with the programme for the annual Forum meeting developed by a Multistakeholder Advisory Committee (MAG) appointed by the Secretary-General. The Forum operates outside the UN budget, financed through a Trust Fund that seeks voluntary contributions.

Annual three- or four-day meetings of the IGF have been held since 2006, with open and equal participation of up to several thousand individual stakeholders in plenary, workshop and other sessions. The 2020 Forum was held virtually and the 2021 Forum in a hybrid format as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. A range of intersessional fora and of national, regional, sub-regional and youth

⁴ <https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/DigitalCooperation-report-for%20web.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.itu.int/net/wsis/docs2/tunis/off/6rev1.html>

⁶ The mandate can be found in *ibid.*, para. 72

initiatives (NRIs) (of which there are now some 150) has developed around the annual meeting, creating a broader IGF ecosystem.

The IGF's initial mandate was for five years. It has been renewed in 2010 and 2015, in the latter case to 2025. The next review will be conducted by the General Assembly in 2025 as part of its twenty-year review of WSIS.

Discussions about improvements to the IGF have occurred at various times within and outside the United Nations system, including a Working Group of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) in 2012 and a retreat organised by DESA in 2016. These have focused in particular on inclusive participation, particularly from developing countries, and the desirability of achieving more result-oriented, 'actionable' outcomes. The Secretary-General has also encouraged the Forum to reach out beyond the Internet community, as the Internet has become more influential, to include a wider range of expertise in areas of public policy affected by the Internet.

In his *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, the Secretary-General expressed support for measures to make the IGF 'more responsive and relevant to current digital issues,' including a more focused agenda, with high-level and/or parliamentary tracks, greater integration between the annual meeting and intersessional activity, stronger links between the annual meeting and the NRIs, the development of 'recommendations from the Forum to ... appropriate normative and decision-making forums,' a stronger corporate identity and more visible relations with other UN entities, and a more sustainable financial basis. As part of this approach, he announced the establishment of a Leadership Panel for the IGF, with a strategic focus, to work alongside the MAG's operational responsibilities. Membership of the Panel is shortly to be announced.

Our Common Agenda also calls for the IGF to 'adapt, innovate and reform to support effective governance of the digital commons and keep pace with rapid, real-world developments.'

Report of the EGM

Overview

The EGM was held over three days of plenary and occasional break-out sessions. A list of participants can be found in Annex 1.

The meeting began with a welcome by the Ms. Miia Rainne, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations; an introduction by Juwang Zhu, Director of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government in DESA; a keynote address by Nitin Desia, former Special Advisor for Internet governance to the Secretary-General and former Under-Secretary-General of UN DESA; an introductory statement by Liu Zhenmin, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs; and the presentation by Dr David Souter of a background paper prepared by him in cooperation with DESA and the IGF Secretariat.⁷

The rest of the agenda (Annex 2) was structured through a series of sessions exploring different aspects of its theme. These began on Day 1 with discussion of the role of the IGF in relation to the Digital Cooperation agenda and the development of 'actionable' outputs; continued on Day 2 with discussions, in the light of those held on Day 1, of the IGF's plenary and intersessional activities and

⁷ https://www.intgovforum.org/en/filedepot_download/252/21220

the future roles of its Leadership Panel and Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG); and concluded on Day 3 with discussion of fundraising, outreach and capacity development. Some external contributions were made by senior representatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Internet Society (ISOC) and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). Sessions were chaired in turn by former and current chairs of the MAG.

This report summarises discussions at the meeting in line with the agenda. The report of each session/theme includes a brief note on context, a note on broad themes of significance arising in discussion, and a summary of observations and suggestions made during each session on which there was significant consensus.

The EGM held detailed and active discussions on each item on its agenda, beginning with the framework for digital cooperation identified by the Secretary-General and, in that light, considering how the IGF can most effectively contribute to digital cooperation, improve and develop its own work, and establish partnerships and directions for the future.

Participants recognised that the Internet has changed markedly in the seventeen years since the mandate for the IGF was established at WSIS, and that the Forum needs to adapt, innovate and reform in response to this. Critical changes since that time relate not just to the technology and services that constitute the Internet, but to its increasingly pervasive reach; its impact on economy, society and culture; its effects on relations between government, business and the citizen; and its relationship with further innovations in digital technology, such as artificial intelligence. International discourse on these issues is increasingly concerned with the interface between the Internet and other areas of public policy, and with risks as well as opportunities. It now takes place within a much larger range of institutions and decision-making fora than was the case when the IGF was founded.

It was generally recognised in the Meeting that the modalities established at the Forum's outset have served it well, and that its model of multistakeholder dialogue has been both successful and influential. It was also recognised that these modalities need to evolve. The Forum itself has changed over the years, transitioning from an annual conference to an ecosystem that includes intersessional activities and regional and national fora alongside its global meeting. There have been a number of discussions over the past decade concerning possible improvements to the IGF, especially concerned with the call for it to develop more substantive outcomes. There has been increased focus recently on finding ways for the Forum to become more coherent and cohesive, taking a more holistic view of its various components and leveraging these for greater impact. The emergence of the Digital Cooperation agenda and the introduction of the Leadership Panel reflect heightened awareness of digital issues across the UN system and provide an opportunity for the IGF community and stakeholders to reflect on how it should develop and revitalise, and implement improvements, ahead of the scheduled mandate review in 2025.

An evaluation of participant perceptions of the meeting was undertaken through a webform and the results are annexed to this report (Annex 6).

Session/theme 1

The role of the IGF in relation to the *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and Our Common Agenda*

The IGF mandate calls on the Forum to 'discuss public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance in order to foster the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet.' The *Roadmap* calls for the IGF to play a substantial role in facilitating digital cooperation, which now includes the development of the Global Digital Compact (GDC) proposed in the *Common*

Agenda as a contribution to the planned Summit for the Future. There is only one annual meeting of the IGF before the Summit. The MAG has agreed to align the agenda for the 2022 Forum with the focus areas of the GDC, but has not yet decided how this will frame its final shape.

The importance attached to the IGF in relation to the *Roadmap* and GDC was welcomed in discussion and seen as an opportunity to extend the Forum's reach and influence. The IGF's multistakeholder character was felt to have considerable value in this context, though it was also thought important to recognise the limits to the Forum's expertise and to build partnerships with communities of expertise in policy fields that are impacted by the Internet. The IGF was felt to have capacity to act as a platform for other organisations, within and beyond the Internet community, to contribute to the Compact.

The short time available for developing the GDC, including only one annual meeting of the Forum, means that work on this needs to be developed quickly and authoritatively. The IGF's success in contributing towards the Compact could significantly affect perceptions of it in the run up to discussion of mandate renewal.

It was generally felt that all parts of the IGF ecosystem should be engaged in the development of its contribution to the GDC. Work on the Compact could be an early test of the strategic role envisaged for the Leadership Panel and of collaboration between the Forum and the Office of the Envoy on Technology.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The IGF is an ecosystem and should act as a platform for stakeholder engagement on implementation of the *Roadmap* and development of the Global Digital Compact (GDC) which is to be prepared ahead of the Summit of the Future. Steps towards this would include consultation within and beyond the IGF community and could include aggregation by the Forum of inputs from diverse organisations.
2. National, regional, sub-regional and youth initiatives (NRIs) should be invited to support this process, in order to enable comprehensive local input, by conducting their own consultations and discussions on their own agendas.
3. The Secretariat should consider what existing outputs from the IGF ecosystem could contribute towards the GDC, and how this contribution might be realised.
4. The annual meeting in 2022 should focus on the GDC, building on the MAG's decision to align the agenda with its overarching theme and five focus areas. The MAG should consider how to facilitate this, in order to encourage more focused discussions, leading to more substantive messages of particular relevance to the GDC.

Session/theme 2

The relationship of the IGF to intergovernmental, international and other decision-making bodies, including those within the Internet governance ecosystem and those in wider global governance

The IGF's mandate requires it to contribute to and facilitate discourse with decision-making bodies concerned with the Internet and with its impact. While having no decision-making powers itself, it was envisaged that IGF participants would benefit from multistakeholder discussions in the Forum and thereby contribute more effectively to decision-making work elsewhere, at national, regional and international levels.

The range and number of decision-making fora concerned with different aspects of the Internet has expanded greatly since the IGF was first established. Several international organisations concerned with technical aspects of the Internet have participated extensively in the Forum's work and contribute financially to its Trust Fund.

Participants were keen during discussion to emphasise the value of intangible aspects of the IGF's relationship with decision-making bodies, in particular the ways in which participation in multistakeholder discussion in the IGF contributes to individuals' and organisations' participation elsewhere in the Internet governance ecosystem. It was felt that these intangible outcomes are often underestimated and undervalued when assessing the impact of the Forum.

The importance of building strong relationships with other Internet governance entities and with decision-making bodies concerned with the impact of the Internet was recognised throughout discussions. Examples of their value were given by external speakers from ICANN, ISOC and UNESCO and by EGM participants. It was recognised in discussion that these relationships should be bi-directional, requiring dialogue and partnership on equal terms to ensure that both parties benefit from the exchange. Arrangements for liaison between the IGF and other entities will be important in strengthening them, including work by the Leadership Panel at a strategic level and the Secretariat at operational level.

The Meeting reflected on the different dimensions of the IGF's potential impact in this context. Some of the issues which the IGF explores are concerned primarily with technical governance of the Internet; others with governance of the relationship between the Internet and other areas of public policy. In some areas, the Forum has the potential to facilitate discussion and improve understanding, while in others it may be able to help formulate new norms and principles that influence decision-making. The Leadership Panel and MAG should remember this diversity when considering the development of new modalities.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The MAG should consider the needs of other organisations and decision-making bodies, concerning the Internet itself and issues impacted by the Internet, when deciding its agenda. To achieve this, it should identify/map organisations and decision-making spaces that are particularly relevant to its work and prioritise the development of relationships with them.
2. Stronger interactions should be built with other UN and international entities, including the General Assembly, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Office of the Envoy on Technology, lead agencies within the UN Group on the Information Society (UNGIS) that facilitate the implementation of WSIS outcomes, and the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development. IGF outputs should be communicated to UN entities and consideration given to how these can disseminate them and raise the visibility of the Forum with Member States.
3. The Leadership Panel should play a leading role in promoting IGF outputs and building relationships with senior staff including those in government and business communities, not least by encouraging participation by senior personnel in the annual meeting's high-level and parliamentary tracks.
4. The work of the Leadership Panel should, as resources permit, be supported by a dedicated member of the Secretariat staff with responsibility for liaising with decision-making bodies and enhancing the Forum's visibility.

5. The annual IGF meeting could consider including an additional special track for judges, lawyers and law enforcement specialists, in addition to the existing high level and parliamentary tracks.

Session/theme 3

Development of outputs and expected outcomes that will facilitate the extended role of IGF in the international decision-making ecosystem

The IGF's mandate requires it to publish its proceedings and encourages it to 'Identify emerging issues, bring them to the attention of the relevant bodies and the general public, and, where appropriate, make recommendations.' Discussions concerning improvements to the Forum have consistently included calls for it to produce more 'result-oriented', 'actionable' outputs.

The IGF has developed a range of output documents over the years since its foundation. These include the chair's summaries of discussions, published at the end of each annual meeting, which has since 2017 included a compilation of 'IGF messages'; a guide to issues and themes published before the meeting in each of the last two years; reports from intersessional activities and NRIs; reports of MAG working groups and other work commissioned by the MAG; and background material on the Forum's website.

The Forum has a number of intangible outcomes that participants felt should be recognised alongside documentary outputs. These include the Forum's influence in establishing multistakeholder cooperation as a norm in international discourse on digital development, as well as the contribution that participation in the IGF makes to participation in other fora (see session/theme 2). The potential for non-documentary outputs such as workshops and seminars was also raised.

The desirability of enabling more substantive outputs, which would add value to international decision-making, was generally recognised. While there are now more outputs than at earlier stages in the Forum's history, these were not always ideally suited for dissemination and had received less attention than might have been realised. There was criticism that the 'IGF messages' issued at the end of meetings were too numerous, unfocused and unsupported by argument, and that outputs in general were insufficiently publicised, reducing their potential impact.

There was no desire in the EGM to move towards negotiated texts of the kind that arise from formal UN processes; rather a sense that the Forum could build on the experience of identifying 'rough consensus' in other Internet fora, perhaps concentrating on topics that already have high levels of consensus or that cross the boundaries between responsibilities of different decision-making bodies. Outputs could be of diverse kinds – including the identification of problems or potentialities, analysis of options, descriptions of good practice and sharing of experience, policy briefings, 'white papers' outlining possible policy approaches, and suggested norms and principles. It was felt that more attention should be paid to ensuring consistent quality, focus on target audiences, presentation and dissemination. The introduction of more iterative deliberative processes, involving all parts of the IGF ecosystem could enhance the quality and visibility of outputs. These might last more than one annual cycle, particularly in the case of intersessional activities.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The MAG, supported by the Secretariat, should plan strategically to develop actionable outputs that address issues which matter to decision-making bodies, on which it can make a substantial contribution (building on its unique multistakeholder character and ecosystem), and consider how to build consensus towards such actionable outputs. This goal relates to consideration of issue focus and multi-annual programming (see session/theme 7).

2. Outputs should be focused on the needs of target audiences. A limited number of concise messages, focused on programme themes, should be prepared at or following the end of annual meetings. These should be forwarded to the Secretary-General for the attention of the General Assembly, and separately addressed to Internet governance entities and senior decision-makers. The Leadership Panel could play an important role in ensuring that IGF messages reach these intended targets. More substantial, evidence-based supporting outputs are appropriate for policy advisers and for subject experts.
3. The development of outputs should involve all parts of the IGF ecosystem, including discussions and participants in NRIs as well as the main meeting and intersessional activities, in order to maximise the value of experience within the IGF community.
4. The Secretariat should map outputs that have already been prepared, identifying those that could be used now to contribute to decision-making processes and to the GDC.
5. The MAG should consider what outputs might result from IGF discussions when structuring the annual agenda. It should encourage session organisers to have the scope for potential recommendations and outputs in mind when planning sessions. The meeting programme should be structured in ways that build momentum towards outputs (see session/theme 7).
6. A new communications strategy should be developed to enhance the visibility of the Forum, including the promotion of outputs/messages. This could include new dissemination mechanisms such as senior-level and “ambassadorial” endorsements, policy briefings, seminars and improved website content. Modalities should be included to enable impact assessment.

Session/theme 4

The IGF ecosystem

The IGF has evolved since 2006 from a one-off annual conference into a complex ecosystem that includes a variety of intersessional activities, some autonomous, others sponsored by the MAG, and some 150 national, regional, sub-regional and youth initiatives (NRIs). These were not envisaged in the Forum’s founding instruments and so have developed in a largely *ad hoc* fashion. They do not feature in the responsibilities of the MAG beyond a generalised requirement to support intersessional work. For many people, however, they have become a major feature of their interaction with the IGF, and for some they are their primary or only interaction. There has been increasing discussion in recent years about the desirability of fostering greater integration within this wider Forum ecosystem, using that to build stronger continuity and focus and, thereby, stronger outputs.

Discussion on the IGF ecosystem focused on the relationship between the annual meeting and other IGF activity. Participants felt it important to recognise that the IGF is no longer an annual conference but has become an ecosystem with diverse components, from which stakeholders have diverse expectations. This ecosystem’s development has been unplanned. It was not explicitly included in the Forum’s mandate or the terms of reference for the MAG. As a result, it was felt, insufficient attention has been paid to the integration of intersessional and annual activities. More advantage could be taken of the work of intersessional activities and the diversity of experiences revealed through NRIs to improve the quality of discussion at the annual meeting and the quality and range of evidence in outputs.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The IGF should describe itself as an ecosystem rather than an annual conference that has accrued associated activities. This will recognise the importance of intersessional activities and NRIs.
2. MAG and Leadership Panel terms of reference should pay more attention to the wider ecosystem. Named members of the MAG should take responsibility for liaison with intersessional activities and NRIs. Members of the Panel could also engage with these initiatives.
3. Intersessional activities should be integrated in the work of the annual meeting. They should be offered enhanced opportunities to contribute to main sessions and other programme components, rather than being directed into siloed sessions that focus on their own activities. Intersessional activities should also consider how they can contribute most effectively to the programme of the annual meeting.
4. Intersessional bodies and NRIs should be invited by the MAG to play a more substantial role in developing the annual programme.

Session/theme 5

The role and work of intersessional bodies, including dynamic coalitions, best practice forums and policy networks

Three models of intersessional activity now take place within the IGF.

- Dynamic Coalitions (DCs), initiated in 2006, are self-generated, autonomous multistakeholder groups that explore specific topics with or without producing formal outputs. Just over twenty are currently active. They operate on principles of open participation but receive very limited Secretariat support. Some have been operational for several, even many, years.
- Best Practice Forums (BPFs), reintroduced in 2014, aim ‘to collect existing good practices, share positive and negative experiences, and flag challenges that require additional multistakeholder dialogue and/or require the attention of policymakers, including in specified decision-making bodies.’⁸ Topics are selected by the MAG. Two BPFs are currently operational and receive Secretariat support. They are required to produce reports.
- Policy Networks (PNs) were initiated in the 2021 cycle following experience with work on ‘Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion’ and in response to the High-Level Panel for Digital Cooperation’s proposal that the IGF should include a ‘policy incubator’ by looking in depth at specific issues. Two are currently operational. As with BPFs, topics are selected by the MAG. They receive Secretariat support and are required to produce reports.

Discussion of intersessional activities focused on their relationship with the annual meeting. Participants were keen to see more interaction between these elements of the IGF ecosystem, including iterative development of IGF messages and outputs.

There were concerns about confusion arising between the different models of intersessional activity, including loss of the distinctive roles of BPFs and PNs, and potential overlap. BPF and PN work is commissioned by the MAG and supported by the Secretariat, and outputs can therefore be considered outputs from the IGF. Dynamic Coalitions, by contrast, are self-generated, and their outputs do not carry the same IGF imprimatur.

⁸ https://www.intgovforum.org/en/filedepot_download/3405/2270

Participants felt that the subjects of BPFs and PNs should be aligned with priority themes selected for the annual meeting. This would enable the MAG to commission work contributing to those themes from these groups, whose reports could feed back into the annual meeting and provide the basis for IGF outputs. DCs could also be invited to contribute to work around policy themes within their areas of interest.

The value of autonomous Dynamic Coalitions was generally recognised, but concerns were expressed about inconsistencies and weaknesses in structure, modalities and performance. While some DCs have diverse membership, a record of substantive work and published reports, some depend on a small group of participants, meet infrequently and have produced no outputs. This raises questions concerning the quality, representativeness and, thereby, legitimacy of their work.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The MAG should commission BPFs and PNs and encourage DCs to focus on issues related to the main themes of the annual meeting. With multi-year programming, this could enable iterative dialogue between the annual meeting and intersessional activity which would enhance the quality of outputs.
2. Intersessional activities should establish focal points responsible for reaching out to potential participants within and beyond the IGF community, including UN bodies, in order to engage them with their work.
3. Modalities should be identified to strengthen the work of Dynamic Coalitions, including procedures and responsibilities to IGF stakeholders; guidelines for participation and deliberation; and quality standards for the work they produce. This would help to validate the work presented by DCs and facilitate their contribution to IGF outputs. Appropriate models may be available from other Internet governance bodies such as ICANN.
4. The Secretariat should seek to raise awareness of intersessional outputs through the website, social media and other communications.

Session/theme 6

The role and work of national, regional, sub-regional and youth initiatives (NRIs)

The first national and regional IGFs emerged shortly after the IGF was convened, reproducing the concept of the global forum in local contexts. There are now 150 NRIs, including 96 national, 20 regional and 34 youth NRIs. They are autonomous and vary in organisation and modalities, but are expected to adhere to the principles that govern the open multistakeholder character of the global Forum. In addition to their annual meetings, some NRIs have intersessional activity. Some sessions at the main Forum are devoted to their work, and there has been increasing discussion of the value of integrating them more effectively with the main Forum and other intersessional activities.

Discussion of NRIs focused on their relationship with the annual meeting. Participants felt that it was important for them to be autonomous and to structure their work according to local priorities and preferences, but also felt that there should be more interaction between them and the annual meeting and intersessional activities. NRIs could, for example, help to explore diverse experiences in different Internet environments and to identify best practices related to themes discussed at annual meetings. This could add granularity to discussion of the topics selected for the annual meeting.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The MAG should consider ways of enhancing the participation of NRIs at the annual meeting. It was suggested, for example, that they might be invited to contribute more substantially to the development and/or delivery of main sessions rather than focusing primarily on a collaborative session.
2. MAG and Leadership Panel members should be encouraged to play an active part in their communities' and regions' NRIs. At least one member of the MAG should take responsibility for liaison with NRIs.
3. NRIs should be encouraged to discuss some or all of the forthcoming annual meeting's selected themes/topics in the year before each annual meeting, and to submit observations concerned with national experience to that meeting.
4. More attention should be paid to networking between NRIs to share experience. A common platform, for instance, could be developed for coordination of youth NRIs.

Session/theme 7

The annual meeting of the IGF, including multi-year programming, hybrid format and issue focus in programme development

The annual meeting has been held in different locations around the world since 2006, with the exception of 2020 when it was held online because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The costs of annual meetings are largely borne by the host country.

The format, of a four-day meeting including plenary sessions and a variety of workshops, has remained broadly consistent, though the variety of session types has increased. The programme for the meeting is developed by the MAG, which chooses an overarching theme and sub-themes and then selects sessions for inclusion from proposals made by the community. Sessions are expected to be multistakeholder in character and to promote diversity. Recent innovations have included the adoption of high-level and parliamentary tracks designed to attract decision-makers.

Remote participation has been made possible since the Forum's early years, supported more recently by virtual hubs in some countries. Until recently this was supplementary to face-to-face participation. The virtual event in 2020 was succeeded by a hybrid event in 2021, from which experience has been gained of how to undertake hybrid events. Many NRIs have also gained experience of this during the pandemic. Most members of the IGF community expect that future annual meetings will also be hybrid.

Much of the discussion about improvements to the IGF that has taken place since early days has concerned the annual meeting. While this is generally considered a success story within the IGF community, there have long been concerns about a number of issues, particularly diversity of participation, programme development and cohesion, integration with intersessional activities and the development of outputs. In recent years, there has been a good deal of discussion of the desirability, or otherwise, of narrowing the focus of the annual meeting and programming activities over several years.

EGM discussion focused on these issues. It was recognised that the place of the Forum in the expanding Internet governance ecosystem has changed since it began in 2006, but that the structure of the annual meeting has remained largely unchanged since that foundation. It was felt that new modalities would help to revitalise the Forum and give it greater significance and impact in this new environment.

There was general support for the aim of moving towards multi-year programming and to bringing a more holistic approach to the IGF's work, integrating the annual meeting with intersessional activities and NRIs, building more cohesion into the annual meeting programme, and focusing discussions on a narrower range of issues leading towards more substantive, actionable outcomes.

Participants felt that the annual meeting had become unfocused with, some suggested, too many topics, too many sessions and too many session types. It was suggested that, in identifying themes and sessions, the MAG should not rely solely on proposals from the IGF community but should also consider priorities of Internet and international decision-making processes, such as the digital cooperation agenda, and the views of other stakeholders. Better integration between main and workshop sessions and the high-level and parliamentary tracks was also recommended.

Multi-year programming, it was felt, would allow more focus on a narrower range of specific, high-value, topics within each meeting, while still allowing space for emerging and urgent issues to be added to the agenda. It could enable topics to be addressed through iterative dialogue between annual meetings and intersessional fora, building substance and consensus over two or even more years. The opportunity could be taken to invite expertise from other fields into IGF discussions, broadening understanding and adding substance and credibility to outputs.

There were some suggestions that the IGF should also hold an annual intersessional meeting, perhaps virtual, on more specific topics such as those under consideration by PNs and BPFs.

Development of the Forum on these lines would have financial implications, would require more effective use of MAG time and Secretariat resources (see also session/theme 8).

It was generally assumed that future annual meetings should and would be hybrid, following experience in 2021. The 2021 meeting was felt to have been generally successful, but it had identified a number of weaknesses that require attention, including session dynamics (some sessions had almost no face-to-face participants), connectivity problems, weaknesses in registration arrangements, website challenges, and the difficulty of enabling effective networking between online and offline participants.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. Future annual meetings should be hybrid, with attention paid to enabling equal participation by online and face-to-face participants. This will require further improvements in the Forum's online facilities and innovative approaches to facilitating networking. Adjustments to cater for time zones will need to be considered. The technical community may be able to assist in developing appropriate modalities.
2. The MAG, supported by the Secretariat, should develop a multi-year programme, integrating the annual meeting with intersessional activity and, where appropriate and desired, with NRIs. This could include iterative dialogue between successive annual sessions and intersessional activities, allowing the latter and NRIs to participate more effectively in output generation. The Leadership Panel should work with the MAG in developing this programme.
3. Within this context, the MAG should focus each annual meeting on a smaller range of more specific topics, concerned with issues of importance in international decision-making on the Internet and impact of the Internet. These should be selected following consultation with IGF stakeholders, discussion with other stakeholders including UN agencies, and input from the Leadership Panel. There should be opportunities for emerging and urgent issues to be added to the programme if required.

4. The MAG should invite proposals for workshop and other sessions to be submitted on these selected topics, thereby enabling greater focus to be achieved across the programme. Session types should be reviewed and consolidated, and opportunities taken to experiment with modalities like 'open space'. There should be dialogue between the MAG and session organisers throughout the period between session approval and the annual meeting, to ensure quality of delivery and maximise the contribution that all sessions make to the Forum as a whole.
5. More attention should be paid to integrating the high-level and parliamentary tracks with main and other sessions. In particular, the high-level track could be moved from the beginning of the meeting to the end, when it would be informed by discussions in main and other sessions that had already occurred and contribute to the finalisation of messages and other outputs. The Leadership Panel should actively encourage participation in these tracks.
6. The MAG should focus on broad programming issues and revert much of the responsibility for workshop evaluation to the Secretariat.
7. Expertise from the technical community could assist in supporting technical implementation of the meeting, including improvements to the website display of the programme, search functions, and adjustments to the modalities of online participation.

Session/theme 8

The Leadership Panel, the MAG and the place of the IGF within the United Nations system

Since the inception of the IGF, the Secretary-General has appointed a MAG annually to advise him on the programme and schedule of the IGF. Its terms of reference, which include a commitment to community consultation, can be found in Annex 4. These do not include responsibilities relating to intersessional activities or NRIs, though the MAG does select topics for BPFs and PNs. MAG members are appointed by the Secretary-General following a nomination process undertaken through the IGF community, and generally serve three years in the Group.

The desirability of establishing a further body to support the IGF's strategic goals emerged in the report of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation in 2019. The Secretary-General's *Roadmap* developed this into a Leadership Panel which should be 'a strategic, empowered, and multistakeholder body, to address strategic and urgent issues, and to highlight Forum discussions and possible follow-up actions, in order to promote greater impact and dissemination of IGF discussions.'⁹ The terms of reference for the Panel can be found in Annex 5. It will have ten members, who are expected to have ministerial, chief executive or similar seniority in order to promote the IGF at senior levels in government and business. They will serve two-year terms. Initial membership had not been announced at the time of the EGM.

The IGF Secretariat is part of the UN Secretariat, administrated by DESA and financed by voluntary donations through the Trust Fund. There have been consistent concerns that it is under-resourced and over-stretched (see session/theme 9).

Discussion in this session reflected the evolution of the IGF from its experimental origins in 2006 to an established role within the international Internet governance ecosystem. The need to strengthen the

⁹ <https://www.intgovforum.org/en/content/terms-of-reference-for-the-igf-leadership-panel>

Forum, extend its influence in international decision-making fora and promote more substantive outcomes had already been acknowledged in the Meeting. The value of stronger leadership to enable this was also recognised. At the same time, participants expressed concern that the Forum should retain its unique, multistakeholder character and ethos, in particular that it should not become a top-down organisation but build on the strengths of its community. The need for the IGF to develop stronger relations with the Office of the Envoy on Technology was also discussed.

The balance of responsibilities between the Leadership Panel and the MAG was considered crucial to its development in the coming year(s). The introduction of the Panel is a significant change to the structure of the Forum and it was felt important that the IGF community in general should feel confident and comfortable with the process of its introduction and the manner of its work. The rapid development of a constructive relationship between the Panel and the MAG would be decisive here.

Concern was expressed at perceived lack of clarity and some overlap in the terms of reference for the Panel and the MAG, which could cause confusion and, it was felt, required remedial attention. Participants were keen to avoid the impression that the Leadership Panel could direct the MAG or oversee its work. They were also concerned that additional responsibilities to support it would divert Secretariat resources away from other work.

There was also considerable discussion of the MAG's role. The IGF has evolved substantially since 2006, particularly through the development of intersessional activity and NRIs, but there has been no equivalent change in the terms of reference for the MAG. It was generally felt that it would be beneficial to revisit the MAG's terms of reference, and the introduction of the Leadership Panel alongside it was felt to provide a good opportunity to consider both terms of reference together.

Concerns were expressed about the nomination process for the MAG, including the view that insufficient value was placed on IGF experience in selecting new MAG members, making it difficult for inexperienced members to engage effectively. Concerns were also expressed about the balance of work within the MAG, including the amount of time devoted to workshop evaluation, and about the balance of participation in the MAG, including dominance by a small number of members and relative inactivity on the part of others.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The development of a constructive, cooperative and complementary relationship between the Leadership Panel and the MAG should be a priority. This will require clarification of the responsibilities of each, and of the Secretariat in relation to them, defining what each body does and does not do, and establishing modalities for collaboration. The chairs of the Panel and MAG will need to establish effective liaison arrangements.
2. The Leadership Panel should focus on its strategic roles in relation to strategic and urgent issues, the engagement of high-level personnel including those from government and business, the promotion of IGF outputs, and fundraising. Members of the Panel could act as 'ambassadors' for the IGF. They should engage with the whole IGF ecosystem, including NRIs, and could be invited to participate in MAG meetings when appropriate.
3. The Leadership Panel should, in future years, comment on strategic priorities for the Forum's annual meeting before the MAG begins to work on programme design. Collaboration on strategic and programme aspects of the 2022 meeting, with its focus on the digital cooperation agenda, could be crucial in determining the effectiveness of the IGF's contribution to the GDC and should be prioritised once the Panel is established.

4. The MAG's terms of reference should be reviewed, on their own terms and in relation to those of the Panel, perhaps with the assistance of a MAG working group. More clarity should be introduced concerning MAG members' responsibilities, including the MAG's engagement with intersessional work. MAG working groups could assume responsibility for activity in areas such as capacity development.
5. The Secretariat should resume responsibility for some aspects of programme development currently undertaken by the MAG, particularly workshop evaluation, in order to free MAG time for more proactive developmental work, such as that concerned with issue focus, multi-year programming, the integration of the main Forum and intersessional work, and preparation of outputs. Forward planning and additional resourcing for the Secretariat will be required for this.
6. The MAG should consider ways of engaging all MAG members more effectively in its discussions. More should be done to assist new MAG members to participate in meetings, particularly where they are not experienced Forum participants. The expertise of former MAG members could help in this regard. Experienced current MAG members should avoid acting in ways that dominate discussion, and should actively encourage engagement by new members.
7. Past experience of the IGF – and/or NRIs – could be made a requirement for selection as MAG members. Eligibility for annual renewal could be associated with demonstrated active participation in MAG work.

Session/theme 9

Funding of IGF activities including the IGF Secretariat

The IGF is funded from voluntary contributions through a Trust Fund, not as part of the UN budget. This Trust Fund finances the Secretariat, some intersessional activity, and the travel costs of some MAG members from developing countries. (It may also cover travel costs of Leadership Panel members from such countries.) A separate voluntary Global South Fund supports the travel and accommodation costs of some participants from developing countries in the annual meeting, while some others are supported through fellowships and bursaries financed by other donors. The majority of costs associated with annual meetings are borne by their host governments.

Participants in discussion praised the work of the IGF and Secretariat, which have achieved impressive results with very limited resources. It was strongly felt, however, that financial limitations impose severe constraints on the Forum's capacity to fulfil its mandate effectively, implement improvements that have been advocated in the past and/or have been discussed within the Meeting, and fulfil requirements of the new Leadership Panel.

The Secretariat is generally recognised to be under-resourced and over-stretched. Concern was expressed that new responsibilities associated with the Leadership Panel and in support of its work on the Forum's strategic development would further stretch Secretariat resources and could undermine existing work if new funds do not become available.

The need to build financial security and sustainability was emphasised in this context, and concern was expressed about the absence of an agreed fundraising strategy. While the non-budgetary status of the Forum in the UN system was understood, it was felt that reliance on voluntary funding from a relatively small group of donors leaves it vulnerable to fluctuations in annual resources which inhibit planning. The Leadership Panel's proposed role in 'exploring new fundraising opportunities' was noted in this context. It was also felt that the Forum would benefit from professional fundraising expertise.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The IGF needs a clear fundraising strategy, to bring more financial sustainability to the Forum and enable the Secretariat to meet expanding responsibilities including those related to the Leadership Panel. It will also be important to focus on effective resource mobilisation.
2. The Leadership Panel should play a significant role in fundraising, leveraging the senior status of Panel members to encourage more governments and other stakeholders to make contributions to the Trust Fund.
3. The Forum should seek to diversify funding sources, for instance by approaching development banks, national development agencies and foundations for funding for specific activities, and by encouraging small donations.
4. The Secretariat should provide more information about income and expenditure, including quarterly or half-yearly reports to donors and the wider IGF community.
5. DESA should review the bidding process for countries to host the annual meeting to improve visibility, clarity, openness and hosting criteria, including financing arrangements.

Session/theme 10

Modalities to extend outreach, engagement and participation in the IGF

The *Tunis Agenda* declared that the Forum should be established 'for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue' and that it should be 'multilateral, multi-stakeholder, democratic and transparent' in process and activity. It recognised specifically the roles of governments, the private sector, civil society, intergovernmental and international organisations, and the academic and technical communities. Multistakeholder participation is considered fundamental to the IGF's character and its example has been influential in other areas of Internet and digital governance.

The General Assembly has drawn particular attention to the importance of ensuring full and equal participation of developing countries. While this has improved over the years, participation from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and from some regions remains low. Some concern has been expressed about relatively low rates of participation from governments and the private sector, and from some parts of the latter. The Secretary-General has drawn attention to the desirability of multi-disciplinarity within the Forum, enabling it to draw on expertise beyond as well as expertise within the Internet community. The IGF community has emphasised the need for gender equality, youth participation, accessibility for those with disabilities, remote participation, and linguistic diversity.

A number of issues concerning equitable participation and engagement were raised during discussion. Available data sets are concerned with registration as a measure of participation. Participants in the Meeting noted the importance of also assessing the engagement of registered participants in the work of the Forum, such as contributions from podiums and conference/session floors, which can be dominated by a few familiar faces. These questions are equally relevant to the work of intersessional fora and the NRIs as to the annual meeting.

Concern was expressed about the under-representation of certain regions, particularly Asia-Pacific, and certain countries, particularly LDCs, and of vulnerable and marginalised groups from all societies. While useful in encouraging individual attendance, fellowships and bursaries were considered insufficient to address inclusion challenges, and that more needs to be done to draw inputs from under-represented groups through means other than attendance at the annual meeting, including participation and representation through NRIs. Language, particularly the prevalence of English, was

noted as a factor that could exclude non-English speakers from full participation. The importance of youth participation was stressed by some participants.

It was also important, however, to attract more high-level participants and decision-makers to the annual meeting. It was hoped that this might be achieved through changes to the high-level track and the influence of members of the Leadership Panel.

The Forum's experience with remote participation was commended, but it was recognised that this had limited impact before the COVID pandemic. Remote hubs were felt to have enhanced engagement in locations where these were available. Hybrid delivery of the 2021 meeting, however, had pointed the way towards more inclusive and more equal participation of those online and in the room.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The Leadership Panel should encourage high-level participation in the annual meeting. Members of the Panel could act as "ambassadors" for the IGF, encouraging participation from within their regions and stakeholder groups and from decision-making bodies in which they participate.
2. The MAG should consider whether the high-level track should be moved to the end of the annual meeting so that it can focus on outcomes from previous discussions and contribute to the development of IGF messages/outputs.
3. The annual meeting agenda should include headline speakers whose presence would attract participation from a wider audience.
4. More detailed assessment should be made of participation in IGF activities, including active engagement in annual meeting sessions, intersessional activities and NRIs. NRIs should be encouraged to act as channels for input to the annual meeting from under-represented groups.
5. The Leadership Panel, MAG and Secretariat should develop a communications strategy for the Forum aimed at building awareness and disseminating outputs. This would benefit from professional public relations support. DESA and the Office of the Envoy on Technology could support and promote the work of the Forum within the UN system.
6. The MAG should consider innovations in the annual meeting structure that would be attractive to under-represented groups, such as "hackathons" and sessions concerned with the impact of the Internet on particular sectors or public policy issues (such as climate change). NRIs could consider similar innovations.

Session/theme 11

Strengthening the IGF in relation to capacity development

The IGF's mandate says that the Forum should 'contribute to capacity building for Internet governance in developing countries, drawing fully on local sources of knowledge and expertise.'

Participants in IGF activities, including NRIs, attest to the value of participation in building understanding of the Internet and Internet governance and the capacity to participate in other Internet-related public policy activity. The IGF has worked with other organisations to build understanding of the Internet in developing countries, including the network of regional Schools on Internet Governance. A number of initiatives concerned with capacity development for new IGF participants have been implemented by the MAG and Secretariat, including orientation activities for

new participants (such as the Newcomers Track, the Preparatory and Engagement Phase, and the Guide to Issues and Themes).

The need to address both institutional and individual capacity development requirements was emphasised in the discussion, along with efforts to address the needs of under-represented communities and to encourage youth participation. The parliamentary track at the annual meeting was instanced as an opportunity to improve lawmakers' understanding of the complexities surrounding legislative and regulatory aspects of Internet governance, which could provide a model for similar work with other influential groups.

In light of resource constraints, participants stressed the need for the IGF to work with other organisations that deliver courses and workshops or publish resources, including the Schools on Internet Governance. NRIs can and do also play a role in building capacity and understanding at national, sub-regional and regional levels.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The Secretariat should work with other organisations that already offer capacity development programmes on Internet governance (including the Schools on Internet Governance) to add maximum value with limited resources.
2. The Secretariat should provide information and access links to capacity development resources through its website. Capacity development experiences could also be shared online.
3. Capacity development initiatives concerned with participation in the IGF itself should recognise the needs of diverse audiences, seeking to maintain the engagement of established as well as new participants, and reaching beyond the governance of the Internet to include its impact on other areas of public policy.
4. The global meeting and NRIs should discuss and communicate priorities for capacity development to other stakeholders.
5. The Secretariat should consider other options for capacity development, including internships and the establishment of an alumni network.

Session/theme 12

Follow-up and implementation

The final session of the EGM considered ways in which the observations and suggestions made during the Meeting could be taken forward by the United Nations and the IGF community.

Participants in discussion noted the substantial changes that have taken place in the Internet and the wider digital environment since the establishment of the Forum, including the development of the IGF's own ecosystem. A further stage in this evolution has begun with the UN's Digital Cooperation Agenda and the introduction of the Leadership Panel, which set new parameters, present new challenges and offer new opportunities to the Forum. There was a strong desire amongst participants to preserve the unique, multistakeholder character and deliberative ethos of the IGF, while also seeking innovative ways of enhancing its contribution to the development of public policy towards the Internet and digital cooperation.

Two important challenges were emphasised.

- The time available to develop the IGF's contribution to the GDC is short. A great deal needs to be done to build momentum before that contribution is determined at the 2022 annual meeting which is scheduled to be held in late November/December.
- The relationship between the Leadership Panel and the MAG has not yet been clearly defined. The IGF community will wish to see the rapid development of productive and collaborative relationship between them, together with new initiatives by the Panel to tackle the strategic challenges that have been identified during the Meeting. Preparation of the IGF's input to the Global Digital Compact will be an important test of this.

Participants were concerned about the capacity of the Secretariat to manage the additional workload arising from the Leadership Panel and from the suggestions made in this report unless additional funding is obtained. The Panel's role in fundraising was therefore emphasised.

The following observations and suggestions arose from the discussion.

1. The Leadership Panel and the MAG will need to work rapidly, with DESA and the Secretariat, to establish cooperative working modalities that will enable them to initiate the Panel's work, implement proposals from the EGM and develop the IGF's contribution to the GDC.
2. This will require clarification of the relationship between the Leadership Panel and the MAG, including review of terms of reference.
3. The MAG should determine modalities for the work of the 2022 meeting in relation to the *Roadmap* and the GDC, encourage contributions to discussion of this theme from intersessional fora and from NRIs, and invite session proposals from the IGF community related to it. It should also consider modalities for the preparation of an output document related to the Compact.

Summary of outcomes

The EGM started from the premise that the IGF should do more than maintain its current role and level of activities, but respond to the changing Internet and Internet governance environment and achieve greater impact from its work. The observations and suggestions listed in this report stem from the desire of Meeting participants to fulfil those goals.

A number of clear priorities can be identified.

- In the immediate term, the Forum needs to establish effective collaboration between the Leadership Panel and the MAG, enabling it to implement improvements along the lines identified by the Meeting. Participants recognised that the quality of the relationship between the Panel and the MAG will be crucial to achieving progress towards a more impactful IGF.
- In the short term, the MAG, with support from the Leadership Panel, needs to ensure that the 2022 annual meeting enables the IGF to make an effective contribution to development of the Global Digital Compact which is to be presented to the Summit of the Future in 2023. Participants recognised that the quality of the IGF's contribution to this will affect perceptions of its ongoing value to digital cooperation.
- In the longer term, participants agreed, the Forum needs to build more coherent collaboration within the ecosystem that has evolved around its annual meeting, intersessional activities and NRIs, leading to more substantive, evidence-based discourse and to the production of actionable outputs which will have more substantial impact within the United Nations and in international decision-making fora concerned with the Internet and its impact on society. Its ability to achieve

this will have substantial influence on the scheduled review of the Forum's mandate by the General Assembly in 2025.

Participants recognised that substantial work towards these goals had been realised in recent years, and were optimistic that their suggestions would enable them to be achieved. While some of those suggestions would require additional funding, which should be sought as a priority, others were cost-neutral and could be implemented quickly. The short time now available between the EGM and the 2022 Forum should encourage all stakeholders to progress improvements with a sense of urgency.

Annex 1 – Participants in the EGM

INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM EXPERT GROUP MEETING

30 March – 1 April 2022, New York

Hosted at the premises of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations

Individual participants

- Aaron, Maniam - Ministry of Communications and Information Singapore, Deputy Secretary
- Arida, Christine - Strategic Planning, National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA) of Egypt, Sector Head
- Botsyoe. Lily Edinam - Ghana Youth IGF, Ghana
- Casasbuenas, Julian - Colombia IGF, Colombia
- Chung, Jennifer - Asia, Honk Kong S.A.R.
- Echeberría, Raul - Independent expert, Uruguay
- Erlingsson, Erlingur - Meta, Policy Officer, Iceland
- Evans, Desiree Zeljka - ISOC UK, Board member, Serbia
- Fernandez, Juan - Ministry of Communications of Cuba - Department of Transformation and Digitization, Deputy Director,
- Franz, Liesyl - Office of the Coordinator for Cyber Issues at the United States Department of States, Deputy Coordinator
- Hilali, Aziz - North African IGF, Morocco
- Hoferichter, Sandra - EuroDIG, Germany
- Horejsova, Tereza - DiploFoundation, Director Projects and Partnerships, Czechia
- Kleinwaechter, Wolfgang - University of Aarhus, Professor emeritus, Germany
- Kyryliuk, Olga - SEEDIG, Ukraine
- Mangal, Anju - WebFoundation, Head of Asia and Pacific Region, Alliance for Affordable Internet, Fiji
- Miya, Baratang - Girlhype Codersm, Director, South Africa
- Moisinder, Juuso - Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Department of Trade, Counsellor,
- Peake, Adam - ICANN, VP Civil Society Engagement, UK
- Suto, Timea - ICC Basis, Global Policy Lead, Romania
- Zhang, Xiao - China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) and China IGF, Vice Director and Executive Director

MAG Chairs

- Mitchell, Paul - MAG Chair, USA
- Esterhuysen, Anriette - former MAG Chair, South Africa
- St. Amour, Lynn - former MAG Chair, USA
- Karklins, Janis – former MAG Chair, Latvia
- Kummer, Markus – former MAG Chair, Switzerland

IGF Host Country Representatives

- Said, Myriam - Government of Ethiopia
- Ilda, Yoichi - Government of Japan
- Szubert, Krzysztof - Government of Poland
- Schneider, Thomas - Government of Switzerland
- Lauschner, Tanara - CGI.br

Relevant international intergovernmental organizations

- UNESCO - Xianhong Hu, Program Specialist
- Universal Postal Union (UPU) - Paul Donohoe, Digital Economy and Trade Coordinator
- African Union - Margaret Ndung'u, Senior ICT Regulatory and Internet Governance Expert, Infrastructure and Energy
- European Commission - Velimira Nemiguentcheva-Grau, Policy Officer

A number of expert guest speakers contributed to individual sessions of the programme

- Desai, Nitin – former Special Advisor for Internet governance to the Secretary-General
- Berger, Guy – Director for Freedom of Expression and Media Development, UNESCO
- Chandler, Mandy – Senior Vice President for Government and Intergovernmental Organisations, ICANN
- Sullivan, Andrew – President and CEO, The Internet Society (ISOC)

United Nations personnel and consultants

DESA

- Zhu, Juwang – Director of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government
- Kwok, Wai Min – Senior Governance and Public Administration Officer
- Susar, Deniz – Governance and Public Administration Officer

Consultant to DESA for the EGM

- Souter, David – Managing Director, ict Development Associates

Office of the Envoy on Technology

- Munyan, Jason – Programme Management Officer

IGF Secretariat

- Masango, Chengetai – Head of Office
- Gengo, Anja – Associate Programme Officer
- Mazzucchi, Eleonora – Programme Management Assistant
- Teleanu, Sorina – Consultant for Dynamic Coalitions and MAG Support

Annex 2 – The agenda of the EGM

DAY 1: Internet governance in the broader world

30 March 2022

09:30 – 11:00	<p>Welcome and introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keynote addresses ● Structure and agenda for the meeting
11:00 - 11:10	Tea Break
11:10 – 13:00	Role of the IGF in relation to the <i>Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and Our Common Agenda</i>
13:00 – 15:00	Lunch in working groups <i>Which decision-making bodies – within and beyond the Internet governance ecosystem – should the IGF strengthen its relationship with, and how can IGF work feed into these bodies?.</i>
15:00 – 16:00	Relationship of the IGF to various intergovernmental, international and other decision-making bodies, including those within the Internet governance ecosystem and those in wider global governance
16:00 – 17:00	Development of outputs and expected outcomes that will facilitate the extended role of IGF in the international decision-making ecosystem
17:00-17:15	<p>Closing Day 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summary of the discussion and concrete action points and goals delivered by the MAG Chair and announcing next day's agenda

DAY 2: The internal dynamics of the IGF

31 March 2022

09:30 – 09:50	<p>Opening Day 2</p> <p>Welcome</p> <p>Recap of the previous day and brief introduction of the issues to be discussed</p>
09:50-11:20-	<p>(continued)</p> <p>Development of outputs and expected outcomes that will facilitate the extended role of IGF in the international decision-making ecosystem discussed during Day 1</p>
11:20 – 11:30	Tea Break
11:30 – 13:00	<p>Role and work of intersessional bodies, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic coalitions, best practice forums, policy networks; National, regional, sub-regional and youth IGF initiatives (NRIs);
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 16:00	Annual meeting of the IGF , including multi-year programming, hybrid format, issue focus in programme development.

16:00 – 16:10	Tea Break
16:10 – 17:10	Role of the Leadership Panel and the place of the IGF within the United Nations system
17:10-17:30	Closing Day 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of the discussion and concrete action points and goals

DAY 3: Implementation and way forward

1 April 2022

09:30 - 09:40	Opening Day 3 Welcome Recap of the previous day and brief introduction of the issues to be discussed
09:40 – 10:30	Funding of IGF activities including IGF Secretariat
10:30 – 11:50	Modalities to extend outreach, engagement and participation in the IGF
11:50 – 12:00	Tea Break
12:00 – 13:00	Strengthening the IGF capacity development
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 15:50	The way forward Implementation of the recommendations of this meeting Summary of the overall EGM and of subsequent steps required
15:50-16:00	Closing of EGM

Annex 3: Extracts from the *Tunis Agenda for the Information Society*

67. We agree, *inter alia*, to invite the UN Secretary-General to convene a new forum for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue.

72. We ask the UN Secretary-General, in an open and inclusive process, to convene, by the second quarter of 2006, a meeting of the new forum for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue—called the *Internet Governance Forum* (IGF). The mandate of the Forum is to:

- a. Discuss public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance in order to foster the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet.
- b. Facilitate discourse between bodies dealing with different cross-cutting international public policies regarding the Internet and discuss issues that do not fall within the scope of any existing body.
- c. Interface with appropriate intergovernmental organizations and other institutions on matters under their purview.
- d. Facilitate the exchange of information and best practices, and in this regard make full use of the expertise of the academic, scientific and technical communities.
- e. Advise all stakeholders in proposing ways and means to accelerate the availability and affordability of the Internet in the developing world.
- f. Strengthen and enhance the engagement of stakeholders in existing and/or future Internet governance mechanisms, particularly those from developing countries.
- g. Identify emerging issues, bring them to the attention of the relevant bodies and the general public, and, where appropriate, make recommendations.
- h. Contribute to capacity building for Internet governance in developing countries, drawing fully on local sources of knowledge and expertise.
- i. Promote and assess, on an ongoing basis, the embodiment of WSIS principles in Internet governance processes.
- j. Discuss, *inter alia*, issues relating to critical Internet resources.
- k. Help to find solutions to the issues arising from the use and misuse of the Internet, of particular concern to everyday users.
- l. Publish its proceedings.

73. The Internet Governance Forum, in its working and function, will be multilateral, multi-stakeholder, democratic and transparent. To that end, the proposed IGF could:

- a. Build on the existing structures of Internet governance, with special emphasis on the complementarity between all stakeholders involved in this process – governments, business entities, civil society and intergovernmental organizations.
- b. Have a lightweight and decentralized structure that would be subject to periodic review.
- c. Meet periodically, as required. IGF meetings, in principle, may be held in parallel with major relevant UN conferences, *inter alia*, to use logistical support.

74. We encourage the UN Secretary-General to examine a range of options for the convening of the Forum, taking into consideration the proven competencies of all stakeholders in Internet governance and the need to ensure their full involvement.

75. The UN Secretary-General would report to UN Member States periodically on the operation of the Forum.

76. We ask the UN Secretary-General to examine the desirability of the continuation of the Forum, in formal consultation with Forum participants, within five years of its creation, and to make recommendations to the UN Membership in this regard.

77. The IGF would have no oversight function and would not replace existing arrangements, mechanisms, institutions or organizations, but would involve them and take advantage of their expertise. It would be constituted as a neutral, non-duplicative and non-binding process. It would have no involvement in day-to-day or technical operations of the Internet.

Annex 4: The Terms of Reference of the MAG

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) was established by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2006 to assist the Secretary-General in convening the annual IGF Meeting by preparing the programme and schedule. MAG members serve in their personal capacity, but are expected to have established linkages with their respective stakeholder groups.

I. Responsibilities:

The primary purpose of the MAG is to advise the Secretary-General on the programme and schedule of the Internet Governance Forum meetings. Concerted efforts should be made by the MAG to improve the IGF process through community consultations, outreach and stakeholder engagement. With the main aim of advising the UN Secretary-General on the programme and schedule for the annual IGF Meeting, the MAG is expected to carry out the following tasks:

1. Develop the detailed programme and schedule of the annual IGF meetings, including the identification of themes, sub-themes and issues taking into account inputs of all relevant stakeholders;
2. Determine how best to plan and organise the annual IGF meeting;
3. Organise main sessions and where necessary participate in dedicated thematic working groups;
4. Select workshops and facilitate the organisation of workshops;
5. Coordinate panels and provide support and guidance to panellists, moderators and speakers at the annual meeting;
6. Support IGF intersessional work;
7. Promote the work of the IGF amongst all stakeholders; foster multistakeholder participation and collaboration at the annual IGF meetings and intersessional work.

II. Individual Member Responsibilities:

As a member of the MAG, individuals are expected to engage actively in the work of MAG throughout the year, not only during the annual forums but also the bi or tri-annual physical meetings and virtual meetings. Specifically, each MAG member is expected to carry out the following tasks throughout the year:

1. Attend up to three MAG physical meetings per year; if physical presence at the meetings is not possible, every effort should be made to participate online;
2. Participate actively in the annual IGF meeting;
3. Participate in inter-sessional work; including online discussions and virtual meetings;
4. Engage in outreach communication to the wider community and bring other networks related to Internet governance into the MAG discussions and planning;
5. Explore new fundraising opportunities for contributions to the IGF trust fund;
6. Identify emerging Internet governance issues and other areas in need of discussion, research or recommendation.

III. Group Procedures

MAG meetings are held under the 'Chatham House Rule' and follow pre-approved agendas prepared by the Secretariat together with the MAG itself prior to each meeting. All MAG meetings, virtual or otherwise, are open to observers unless stated otherwise. When making decisions, a rough consensus will be sought making sure that each member has an equal say.

The MAG meets face-to-face officially twice to three times a year between the annual meetings and holds periodic virtual MAG meetings. Ongoing discussions and planning will continue to take place throughout the year online and through virtual meetings as the situation warrants.

IV. Composition

The MAG is comprised of approximately 50 Members (*total number of MAG members is subject to change from year-to-year*) from governments, the private sector, media, civil society, and the technical community. Additionally, former host countries have a standing seat on the MAG. Proportionally the MAG is approximately 40% governments and the rest is divided more or less equally between other stakeholder groups. The proportions

vary slightly from year to year. Representatives of intergovernmental organisations, are invited to attend and contribute to the meetings and work of the MAG.

V. Appointments and Duration of Terms

MAG members are appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General for a term of one year. Generally, this term is automatically renewable for two consecutive years, contingent on a yearly evaluation of their engagement and contribution to the work of MAG. The MAG is rotated by roughly one-third each year, in order to enhance diversity and bring in new viewpoints.

VI. Compensation

MAG members shall not receive any honorarium, fee or other remuneration from the United Nations. However, some MAG members may be eligible^[1] to receive some funding to cover travel and daily subsistence costs for their participation in face-to-face MAG meetings and/or the annual IGF meetings.

Annex 5: Terms of Reference of the Leadership Panel

In line with the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and as recommended in the Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, the United Nations Secretary-General has established the IGF Leadership Panel as a strategic, empowered, and multistakeholder body, to address strategic and urgent issues, and to highlight Forum discussions and possible follow-up actions, in order to promote greater impact and dissemination of IGF discussions. The following terms of reference provide the overall framework for the IGF Leadership Panel.

Responsibilities

The Panel performs the following key functions:

- Provides strategic inputs and advice on the IGF;
- Promotes the IGF and its outputs;
- Supports both high-level and at-large stakeholder engagement in the IGF and IGF fundraising efforts; and
- Exchanges IGF outputs from the Forum with other stakeholders and relevant fora and facilitates the feeding of input of these decision-makers and fora to the IGF's agenda-setting process, leveraging relevant MAG expertise.

Individual member responsibilities

As a member of the Panel, individuals are expected to engage actively in the work of the Panel throughout the year. Specifically, each Panel member is expected to carry out the following tasks throughout the year:

- Attend the Panel's meetings. If physical presence at the onsite meetings is not possible, every effort should be made to participate online;
- Advise on emerging and urgent issues and IGF priorities;
- Participate actively in the annual IGF meeting particularly the High-Level sessions but also in other relevant sessions, and actively seek to engage other relevant high-level representatives from public and private organisations;
- Familiarise themselves with the IGF's intersessional work and all IGF relevant updates communicated by IGF Secretariat;
- Support raising awareness about the IGF and engage at-large stakeholders in its processes and debates;
- Explore new fundraising opportunities for contributions to the IGF trust fund;
- Communicate IGF outputs and update the Panel on outcomes and decisions of other processes and initiatives;
- Help promote and elevate the level of participation in the annual IGF meeting; and
- Help identify prospective host countries for future IGFs.

Membership and tenure

The Panel's members will serve a two-year term.

The selection of members will be made following a similar process as the MAG selection, with a public call for nominations from the respective stakeholder groups, with the eventual decision to be made by the Secretary-General, with due regard for regional and gender balance, following recommendations from the IGF Secretariat and the Office of the Envoy on Technology, taking into account other possible inputs as well. The nomination processes will be kept distinct from each other as separate exercises.

Panel configuration

The Panel will be composed of ten [10] Members plus the ex-officio members described below with the following configuration:

- Two [2] ministerial-level or above representatives from Governments that are Member States of the United Nations or regional intergovernmental organizations that have observer status in the General Assembly;

- Two [2] CEO-level (or deputy-level) representatives from each of the other three stakeholder groups (private sector, technical community and civil society), a total of six [6]; and
- Two [2] at-large members (distinguished or prominent persons who do not fall under above stakeholder groups).

The roles of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Panel will be held on an annual rotating basis amongst members, elected by members of the Panel.

Ex-officios of the Panel consist of:

- A total of three [3] senior representatives (Minister or head of agency-level) made up of the current, immediately previous, and the immediately upcoming host countries;
- The Chair of the IGF’s Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG); and
- The Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.

Meeting procedures

The Panel will meet at least three times a year, in the first quarter, the second quarter, and at the IGF annual meeting.

Relations between the Panel and the MAG

To ensure that there is no overlap between the functions of the Panel and those of the MAG, the two bodies will function as distinct entities, but with close linkages and continuous efforts to promote collaboration and cooperation within the IGF. For instance, the Panel will draw on the expertise of the MAG and IGF established networks.

Recognising the relevance of existing IGF structures and activities, the MAG will continue to lead on the IGF annual work programme and the global forum. The Panel will contribute strategic inputs to the programme-setting and support the visibility of the IGF consistent with the responsibilities and functions described above. The Panel will also provide high-level input and promote IGF outputs. This will not substitute but rather complement and support similar and ongoing efforts by the MAG.

Secretariat support

The Panel will be supported by the IGF Secretariat. Funding will come from the IGF Grant for which additional donations will need to be sourced. Funding will be in line with what is currently provided for the MAG (e.g., travel support for members from developing countries).

Panel procedures

The Panel’s meetings are held under the Chatham House Rule, unless the Panel decides otherwise. They will follow pre-approved agendas prepared by the Chair, in consultation with the Panel and with the support of the Secretariat. A summary note of each meeting will be prepared and widely disseminated.

Compensation

There shall be no relationship between membership of the Panel and financial contributions to the work of the IGF. Panel members shall not receive any honorarium, fee or other remuneration from the United Nations. Some Panel members may be eligible to receive some funding to cover travel and daily subsistence costs for their participation in in-person IGF meetings, subject to prior written authorization and availability of funds and in accordance with the relevant provisions of United Nations rules governing payment of travel expenses. Where possible, it is encouraged for the Panel members to seek other sources of funding to cover their in-person participation.

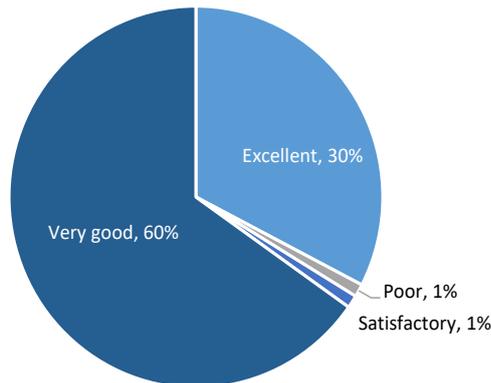
Annex 6: EGM Evaluation Results

In accordance with DESA practice, EGM participants were invited to complete an evaluation questionnaire following the Meeting. Overall impressions of the event were positive, as indicated by the graphs of responses set out below.

Your overall impression of the EGM



Clarity of the EGM objectives



Selection of the EGM sessions



Quality of the materials used during the EGM



Your overall impression of the EGM



Regarding the most useful elements of the EGM, among others, participants indicated the value of an in-person and visionary exchange, agenda structure and format of the meeting. The opportunity to meet bilaterally within a diversified group of participants was also seen as useful.

Some concerns were expressed about lack of clarity regarding implementation, especially in the domain of funding, and disconnect between the EGM and appointment of the Leadership Panel.

There were calls for a concrete implementation plan of the EGM's suggestions to be developed.