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**INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM TO MEET IN RIO DE JANEIRO
FROM 12 TO 15 NOVEMBER**

Representatives of government, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, the Internet community and the media will converge in Rio de Janeiro for the second meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, to be held from 12 to 15 November.

The conference, to be held at Windsor Barra Hotel, will focus on the overall issue of "Internet Governance for Development". Five main themes will be addressed – access, diversity, openness, security and critical Internet resources. Some 2,000 participants from more than 100 countries are expected to attend.

"The Rio meeting," said Markus Kummer, Executive Coordinator of the Forum's Secretariat, "will build on the success of the first meeting in Athens, but it will go beyond repeating it and include new issues and try out new formats. There is a strong interest in initiatives to protect children and to provide Internet access to people with disabilities."

For his part, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon sees the Forum as a "multi-stakeholder collaboration, based on the exchange of information and the sharing of best practices".

"This new form of international cooperation is both inclusive and egalitarian," the Secretary-General said. "And it presents governments, the private sector and civil society, including the academic and technical communities, with the opportunity to work together towards a sustainable, robust, secure and stable Internet."

In addition to plenary sessions, there will be open meetings and thematic workshops to discuss specific issues and share best practices. Presentations and debates will involve representatives from governments, the private sector, civil society and academia from around the world.

The Internet Governance Forum is not a decision-making body, but a space for dialogue for all those involved to discuss Internet governance issues. There will be no negotiated outcome, but the meeting will seek to create an open and inclusive dialogue among all participants on public policy issues relating to the Internet and create new dynamics between participating institutions.

The first Forum meeting in Athens saw the creation of a number of "Dynamic Coalitions" of participants from governments, private sector and civil society to address issues such as privacy, digital identity and a proposed "Internet Bill of Rights". The meeting in Rio de Janeiro will provide space for these coalitions to allow participants to collaborate further.

Hadil da Rocha Vianna, Director for Scientific and Technological Affairs in Brazil's Ministry of External Relations, has been appointed co-chair of the Advisory Group for the Internet Governance Forum, which will assist in preparing for the Rio de Janeiro meeting. The other co-chair is Nitin Desai, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser for Internet Governance.

The 47 members of the Advisory Group, who serve in their personal capacity, come from government, the private sector and civil society, including the academic and technical communities, representing all regions (see list of members at http://www.intgovforum.org/ADG_members.htm).

The Internet Governance Forum is an outcome of the Tunis phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, which took place in 2005. In the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, governments asked the UN Secretary-General to convene a "new forum for policy dialogue" to discuss issues related to key elements of Internet governance.

The Forum's inaugural meeting, which took place in Athens in November 2006, was attended by 1,350 participants, including 397 delegates from 97 Member States and 152 journalists. "The meeting brought people together who would not normally meet under the same roof," Mr. Kummer said. "It encouraged dialogue on issues of common interest among people who would not normally interact."

The informal nature of the meeting in Athens, where all participants attended as equals, was seen as key to its success. Participants stated that the Internet should be accessible, usable and safe for all, and called for increased cooperation among the diverse components that make the Internet work in order to tackle the problems that need to be dealt with in Internet governance. Several initiatives emerged in the form of so-called "Dynamic Coalitions" – partnerships dealing with issues such as open standards, spam, access to knowledge and freedom of expression.

A round of open consultations held in Geneva in May showed broad support for keeping the four themes discussed in Athens – access, diversity, openness and security – and for adding the theme of critical Internet resources. Participants agreed that the Rio de Janeiro Forum should retain the overall theme of "Internet Governance for Development".

The main themes to be discussed cover the gamut of the functioning of the Internet. The theme of access includes infrastructure, connectivity and the role of government and the private sector to improve access by all. Issues of diversity and openness cover promoting local content, cultural diversity, the number of languages used on the Internet, and access by marginalized groups such as indigenous people and persons with disabilities.

Security means among other things cyber-security, the safety of the Internet and the fight against cybercrime. "Critical Internet resources" covers issues relating to infrastructure and the management of key Internet resources, including administration of the domain name system and Internet protocol (IP) addresses, administration of the root server system, technical standards, peering and interconnection, and telecommunications infrastructure.

The Forum will hold its 2008 session in India and its 2009 session in Egypt.

Journalists interested in attending the Forum should register at <http://intgovforum.org/register/index.php>

For further information, please visit <http://www.intgovforum.org> and <http://www.igfbrazil2007.br>.

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