CLUB DE MADRID

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR 21ST CENTURY DEMOCRACY

10th Anniversary Annual Conference of the Club de Madrid

November 8-9, 2011

Waldorf Astoria, New York City, USA
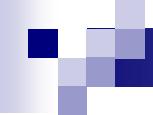
ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

- **Club de Madrid**
  - ☐ 87 former Heads of State and Government from 60 countries
  - ☐ Two lines of *action*:
    - Democratic Leadership and Governance
    - Diplomacy and Crisis Response

- **Annual Conference 2011 → 3 objectives**
  - ☐ Facilitate a *discussion* on how technology is impacting governance and democracy
  - ☐ Come away with a clearer *vision* on what kind of democracy we want to achieve and the impediments to that achievement
  - ☐ Identify *principles* and *projects* we can champion individually and collectively

- **Framing the Conference**
  - ☐ A *process*
  - ☐ Three *actors* / focal groups

THE PROCESS

Technology has been *disruptive*
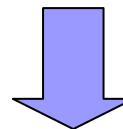
It is creating *expectations*
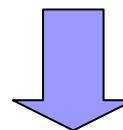
Expectations are associated with *needs* to be fulfilled
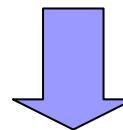
Work to be done on multiple fronts

THE ACTORS

State / Public Institutions

Citizens / Civil Society   Media / Journalists
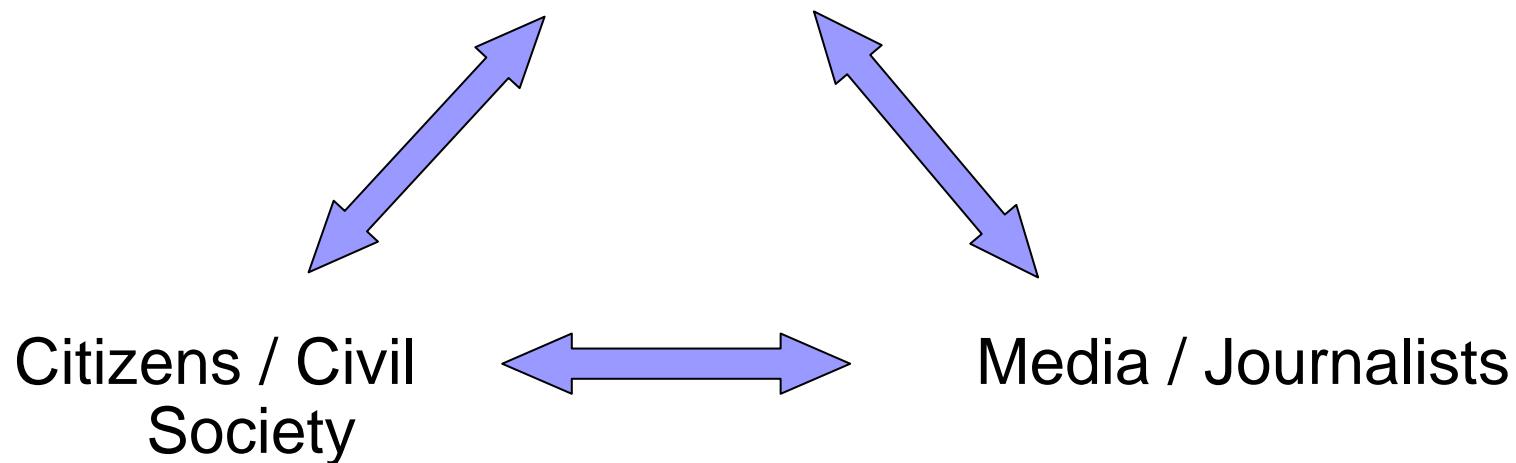
-Both *single* analysis of each actor and of *interactions* between them

-Starting from the basis that all are and should be *active* participants in this process (not merely *passive* recipients)

-Wide *representation* of these three groups among the Conference participants

Technology has been disruptive…

Starting point: digital tools have important transformative societal effects affecting and induced by the three focal groups

- They are creating the infrastructure for *human networking,* expanding *roles* and *connections,* nurturing and furthering *collaborative behavior* (we-feeling / common values)
  - *Example: Wikipedia* - Thousands of contributors without proprietary claims have created a robust and shared vision of the truth and demonstrate the capacity to collectively solve problems.
  - *Example: Standby Taskforce* – Worldwide network of volunteers contributing to crisis maps and similar response mechanisms

- Ability to bring stories from areas where citizen frustration or civil unrest is now paramount → They are helping *participation* to emerge and voices to be heard (cf. "Liberation technology")
  - "You can shut off the public internet but you can't shut off the internet public" "Technology and interconnectedness has compressed time and widened the scale of the debate" (Jorge Quiroga)

Technology has been disruptive…

- They have created a rich information ecology that has *disrupted power structures*, particularly hierarchical and pyramidal systems, and promoted *individual empowerment*

  → The governed have become the governing and vice-versa

  → The line between domestic and international policy has eroded (cf. Wikileaks)

- Technology is *questioning the theoretical basis of journalism* → the watchdogs are being watched

- *Big Data Revolution* is changing the conception of *human rights*; makes them more "real"

  □ "When technology informs us of our rights, it becomes transformative" (Chat García Ramilo, APC)

- Remark: Technology has always been disruptive (Gutenberg, Radio, TV, etc.) What is different is the speed at which it is driving social change.

  □ Example: "Go from sound-bites to sound blasts" – The Obama race speech in the 2008 campaign viewed 6 million times in 37 minutes

It is creating expectations…

Despite the fast-changing world we live in, the key purpose of democratic institutions hasn't changed. What has changed are the *expectations* that arose from this disruptive evolution.

- Technology is creating the expectation of *accountability* to others because of a more *shared* experience

- The tools of big data, analysis, statistical probabilities, anticipation creates more pressure to be *socially responsible* and *coherent in practice*

- Digital tools pave the way for *greater civic participation, public discussion* and the *renewal of the social contract* that lies at the heart of modern society → giving power back to the people / revival of democracy
  - "The truly new phenomenon here which is this opportunity of people to take action together. In the political sphere we have too long assumed that what citizens can do is either vote or talk. They can deliberate, they can chat with their neighbours, but the notion that people can actually do things together… There is more to democracy than just voting" (Beth S. Noveck)

It is creating expectations…

Despite the fast-changing world we live in, the key purpose of democratic institutions hasn't changed. What has changed are the expectations that arose from this disruptive evolution.

- There is more to accountability than just the exposure of wrongdoing → the flood of information has made *journalism more essential* since it might be too hard too hard to really find the facts
  - "We need journalism, but in a different way" (Jeff Jarvis)
- At the same time, there is more to journalism than popularity → journalism to uphold *standards of quality and methodology*

- Remarks:
  - "The prediction of convergence and world peace after any given communications technology gets launched is a common trope of these new tools" (Clay Shirky)
  - Expectations and timetables are *"shorter" in time* → shift from multi-annual plans to monthly planning

Expectations are associated with needs to be fulfilled…

1. *Assume this change is happening and challenge the status quo*

→ "Potential for reinvention is all around us. There has never been a better time to take on challenge of the status quo." (Orlando Ayala, Microsoft)

→ "We live in a time of change and change is a positive thing rather than a negative thing and we should not be afraid of that." (Jenny Shipley)

■ Need for governments to be more *"aggressive"* or *assertive* (Technology is no longer the bottleneck) both in terms of behavior and investments.

■ Need for citizens to increase a sense of *ownership* in this process.
   □ "The purpose of governments is not only to create prosperity and security and define the rule of law, surely in a well-connected world, civil society is going to have to step forward further and engage in ways where they too moderate each other's behaviour and perhaps become part of the rule of law in terms of defining how the digital age will finish up enhancing and enriching democratic values." (Jenny Shipley)
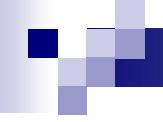
Expectations are associated with needs to be fulfilled…

- Governments *and* media need to *re-envision the newspaper and traditional print news.*
  - Why do we continue to start with the assumption that the traditional models of journalism have produced the best or highest quality information?

- *Communal learning and filtering* is key to efficiency and accuracy

- Challenge *private sector* to open their data

Expectations are associated with needs to be fulfilled…

2. Embrace Policy of Innovation and Collaborative Networking

- Governments must not only create prosperity, security and the rule of law but encourage society to *step forward to moderate each other's behavior*
  → Promote dialogue between all key stakeholders and provide the infrastructure for this dialogue to happen
  → Promote collaboration and "collaborative democracy" through digital tools
  → Allow sustainable applications to emerge from the bottom-up

- Find ways for governments to embrace the *immediacy* of digital interaction

- Need to transfer processes from e-government to *We-Gov* → increase openness, access and sharing of information

- Creating *incentives for interoperability*
    - Joys Law: "no matter who you are, you have to remember that most smart people in the world work for someone else"
    - Emulation for innovation (cf. HHS)

Expectations are associated with needs to be fulfilled…

- There must be some *thoughtful design and structure* to the design of technology and the process by which it is used if it is to be useful for improving quality of life. Tools alone are not enough
    - Public structures are needed to guide participation but cannot predetermine outcomes, so it is essential to look at citizen innovation as an equally important driver of change.
    - Nurture the right talent to extract value out of big data and social network.

- Increased human networking shows the importance of *partnerships* to solve collective problems → importance of getting *the right stakeholders* involved and *leadership* to ensure that people do not feel disempowered or disengaged

- Media must embrace *innovative and innovating journalism*; otherwise they won't be able to participate in this "shift" that is equalizing power between governments, citizens and the media
- Journalism should *invest in collaborating* with readers about how to make sense of the information flow and *partner-up* for distribution

Expectations are associated with needs to be fulfilled…

3. Understand the risks, downfalls and shortcomings of digital tools

- Question of how to give *access* of data while preventing access to those who would do harm with it (not so much the question of the who but rather the how)
  - "Corruption of Access" (Arianna Huffington)
  - Assange vs. Zuckenberg dilemma: one gives private corporate information to the public and is declared an enemy; and the other give private personal information to the corporations and is the man of the year (Andrés Pastrana)

- In many regions of the world, digital literacy, the effective use of digital tools and access to technology first require addressing *development challenges* such as poverty, access to water, healthcare and education
  - "Big data and network technology is only useful if you have the system to use it and if you know how" (Mary Robinson)

- *Digital divide* is still huge both *horizontally* (between countries and regions, between urban and rural areas) and *vertically* (between generations) → *Capability - Expectations Gap*

Expectations are associated with needs to be fulfilled…

- Important not to get lost in the data and also focus on the *storytelling* and context
    - *Too much data*?
    - "Cacophony of voices"

- We can't expect black and white answers right away as to how technology affects democratic governance → we need to *experiment* and evolve
- Government platforms must be *places for sharing*, not just fetching.
- Data is "big" and "instantaneous" but decision- and policy-making still requires *time* and *reflection* + you can still *disguise* bad policy under propaganda even using modern tools
  → must use data and information to shape the right public platforms

- In the human rights arena, technology itself can be a *threat to civil liberties*

- Remark: technology comes with risks, but the risks are *necessary*

Expectations are associated with needs to be fulfilled…

4. Regulation and Standardization

- Generate a *consensus on* and *regulate the use* of data (by governments, citizens and the media) to counter the risks …
  - We all know this noise, this messiness, this disorganisation is necessary if we are to unleash the cognitive surplus, the collective surplus, the power of collective intelligence, first to make governance for effective and more efficient, and ultimately to transform what we mean by governance, but what does it mean to "use technology well" ? (Beth S. Noveck)

  → *Dual use* of technology

- …but *without over-regulating* it
  - Heavy monitoring of online access not only leads to greater distrust in government but may lead to a greater distrust in technology
  - "Big data is not about creating big brother but rather to defeat notions of big brother in governments"
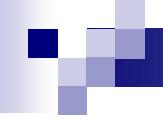
Expectations are associated with needs to be fulfilled…

- In considering how government regulate big data, there must some special attention paid to *privacy concerns, data integrity, intellectual property* and *national security* → prevent the misuse and mismanagement of big data

- The sense of selectivity and community must be *locally created* (to ensure greater inclusion and sustainability) yet *balanced with* opportunities for new communities at *other scales* (regional, global)

Work to be done on multiple fronts

How to extract value out of big data, networks, digital tools and make governance better, democracy stronger and citizens more powerful?

- Both *top-down* and *bottom-up* approaches

- Mobilize *political will* and *challenge status quo*
    - "We need the people in this room who have been in government to legitimise these innovations and pave the way" (Beth S. Noveck)
    - "We should build it to show a willingness to listen. If we don't they will come, but they will come angrily." (Susan Pointer, Google)
    - Cost of building platforms to allow collaboration is in fact low
    - Example: Open Government Partnership

- *Advocate* for open data, transparency and accountability in *public* policy, decision-making as well as in *private* sector activity
    - "The more governments are transparent by default and secretive by necessity, the better information ecosystem we will have" (Jeff Jarvis)

Work to be done on multiple fronts

How to extract value out of big data, networks, digital tools and make governance better, democracy stronger and citizens more powerful?

- Promote the use of digital technologies to effectively reach the *Millennium Development Goals* → "Getting from here to there and everywhere" because *Scientia potentia est*" (Knowledge is Power)
  - ☐ <u>Example</u>: enable underprivileged, marginalized people and communities to harness potential of networked societies by creating local architectures that people govern and participate in on the ground (IT for Change)
  - ☐ <u>Example</u>: accelerating connectivity and access to technology (ITU)

- Generate *consensus* on innovation and the use of digital tools for democratic development
  - ☐ 1. Consult and work with experts and practitioners to define about *what* is new and innovative
  - ☐ 2. Discuss "bad" and "good" *use* of data and technology

Work to be done on multiple fronts

How to extract value out of big data, networks, digital tools and make governance better, democracy stronger and citizens more powerful?

- Generate, accompany and strengthen *collaboration* and *collaborative schemes* as well as *networking* and *information sharing* within and between the three focal groups
  - Example: connecting generations of leaders in Tunisia and Moldova (Leaders Engaged in New Democracies - LEND)
  - Example: reconnecting citizens with their representatives through online platform in South America (Microsoft)
  - Example: young Europeans ("lost generation") collaboratig on a massive scale to aggregate their expertise into the world's largest think tank (Edgeryders; CoE/EC)

- Protect open-source data software to help journalists *mine data* and *lower the costs of inputs* to investigative journalism BUT at the same *protect* the very basic function and efforts of *journalists*
  - "Governments should take action to uphold the principle that journalism in new times equals the public good" (Alfred Gusenbauer)
  - Example: Freedom House

Work to be done on multiple fronts

What can the Club de Madrid do to make governance better, democracy stronger and citizens more powerful through digital technologies?

- ■ *Create* a specific and new program on "Digital Technologies for 21st Century Democracy"

- ■ *Partner* with institutions implementing initiatives already designed (one-shot activities)

- ■ *Mainstream* "Digital Technologies for 21st Century Democracy" into current programs with activities implemented in each:
  - ☐ Empowerment and Development through IT in Women, Peace and Security
  - ☐ Include "Use of Digital Tools" and "Promotion of Collaboration and Information Sharing" in *Shared* Societies Project
  - ☐ Innovation and Technology in Climate Change, Access to Water, Sustainable Development
  - ☐ Freedom of Association and Civil Society Capacity-Building through ICT in the MENA region

CLUB DE MADRID
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR 21ST CENTURY DEMOCRACY