

## High-level Panel Follow-up Roundtable 5A/B - Digital Cooperation Architecture

1<sup>st</sup> Session: 19 December 2019, 10am - 12pm EST

### Meeting Note

*Recommendation 5A: We recommend that, as a matter of urgency, the UN Secretary-General facilitate an agile and open consultation process to develop updated mechanisms for global digital cooperation, with the options discussed in Chapter 4 as a starting point. We suggest an initial goal of marking the UN's 75th anniversary in 2020 with a "Global Commitment for Digital Cooperation" to enshrine shared values, principles, understandings and objectives for an improved global digital cooperation architecture. As part of this process, we understand that the UN Secretary-General may appoint a Technology Envoy.*

### Champions

Government of Germany, Government of the United Arab Emirates, Office of USG Hochschild

### Key Constituents:

Government of Canada, Government of Denmark, Government of France, Government of Japan, Government of Malawi (Least Developed Country Group Representative), Government of Paraguay (Landlocked Developing Countries Chair), Government of Switzerland, Government of the United Kingdom, European Union (EU), Association for Progressive Communication (APC), Bosch Stiftung, Diplo Foundation, Ford Foundation, Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), International Chamber of Commerce Business Action to Support the Information Society (ICC BASIS), Internet Society (ISOC), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), JSC National ICT Holding Zerde, New America, United States Council for International Business (USCIB), Ushahidi, World Economic Forum, World Bank, United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Office for Information and Communications Technology (OICT), Internet Governance Forum – Multistakeholder Advisory Group, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

### Opening remarks of the recommendation champions

Noting that the IGF plus model was the most widely supported from feedback, this roundtable should engage in debate and discussion about what that would mean specifically and how to incorporate other ideas from the High-level Panel report. It was further noted that the UN Secretary-General will be taking the Tech Envoy role forward and further updates will follow as options are considered.

Champions outlined their proposed way forward on soliciting feedback including consultations organized by the Key Constituents, consultations organized by grassroots or civil society organizations and consultations on the margins of stakeholder meetings organized by governments. In facilitating these consultations it will be important to take note of those not included and reaching out to smaller states.

## **Themes raised by Key Constituents**

Importance of transparency: Given that this recommendation will have a tangible impact on the governance of the global digital ecosphere, it is critical that the process is open, transparent and inclusive. Noting that this multistakeholder discussion is a good starting point but that it should have a clear path forward and that this must include all stakeholder groups.

IGFplus: It was noted that the report considers several elements under the IGFplus model and that this group should further analyse the role they could play. This will include a policy incubator, a cooperation accelerator, and potentially an observatory and help desk function. Consideration should also be given to the long-term funding structure and the Secretariat and a movement towards a more outcome-oriented Forum, though that need not be consensus outcomes as there is a keen effort to avoid negotiations among groups.

Importance of inclusion: It was frequently noted that many countries and groups have not been included in the governance of the digital space to date and that this process must make strong efforts to include under-represented groups. These groups would also benefit most from the observatory and help desk functions outlined in the report and these should be closely considered.

Engage with existing mechanisms: There are many ongoing digital cooperation mechanisms, including conferences, forums and meetings and these roundtable discussions should seek to engage on the agenda's and platforms provided, including those under UN auspices. There also exist ongoing digital cooperation efforts in the human rights and business ethics space that can be brought into discussions of the digital governance architecture. This engagement should also include close consultation with the institutions that helped to shape the current internet governance architecture, including many among civil society who have been active participants through WSIS and IGF processes.

Need for action: It was repeatedly noted by participants that improving digital governance is an urgent global priority. This is especially true given the rapid innovation and evolving nature of emerging digital technologies. The new architecture must find ways to foster digital cooperation for current challenges but also those to come in the future.

## **Champions closing remarks and next steps**

Champions welcomed the diversity and substantive nature of the comments and proposed that a consultation process and a timeline be circulated among all stakeholders for consideration. It was further encouraged that Key Constituents put forward their ideas for consultative meetings or processes.

It was also noted that the process going forward should be as inclusive, transparent and deliberate as possible, recognizing the short time frame and building on much work that has already been done.

The Government of Switzerland offered to host a meeting in Geneva and this offer will be considered by the Champions.