NETMUNDIAL+10 CONSULTATION

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INTRODUCTION

The NETmundial+10 event builds upon the 2014 NETmundial meeting and its outcome statement to advance discussions pertaining to the further implementation of multistakeholder practices in the digital world. It is not the goal of the NETmundial+10 event to duplicate efforts in the discussion of specific Internet governance and digital cooperation issues. Nevertheless, the event will serve as an arena that enables the multistakeholder community to build together concrete political commitments and strong messages about the multistakeholder approach. Therefore, the NETmundial+10 consultation aims to be complementary to other consultation processes and to benefit from the unique political characteristics and goals of the event.

SCOPE AND GOALS OF THE NETMUNDIAL+10 EVENT

The main goal of NETmundial+10 is to discuss how to further the multistakeholder approach as the basis for consensus-building and decision-making in the governance of digital policy issues, including in existing multilateral and other relevant decisional fora, at all levels. To achieve this goal, the event scope intends to:

1. Reconfirm all stakeholders' commitment to the NETmundial Internet Governance Process Principles from 2014 and discuss their implementation in light of the changing landscape over the past decade;
2. Further the evolution and implementation of the multistakeholder approach as the basis for the inclusive governance of the digital world, improving governance processes to cope with issues arising from the accelerating pace of digitalization and disruptive technologies, as well as structural asymmetries, power imbalances, and gaps;
3. Strengthen discussions on mechanisms and structures, in order to further and improve multistakeholder approaches and protocols to shape better decisions in the field, reaching consensus among diverse communities, in multiple distinct national and international decision-making arenas, and setting the ways forward with effective tangible outputs.

Expected outputs

The event will generate a final document with concrete recommendations for the future of the digital governance ecosystem, including:

1. Improved process principles for the governance of the digital world;
2. A framework of shared guidelines for multistakeholder consensus-building and decision-making that could be applied in any relevant decisional fora, at all levels;
3. A commonly agreed set of areas for improvement in the multistakeholder governance of the digital world for the future attention of the international community.

The present call for inputs will serve as the basis for the discussions to be held at the NETmundial+10 event on April 29-30, 2024. This consultation is structured around three major groups of issues:

I. Principles for digital governance processes
II. Guidelines for the implementation of multistakeholder mechanisms
III. Input to ongoing processes

I - PRINCIPLES FOR INTERNET GOVERNANCE PROCESSES

I – A) THE 2014 NETMUNDIAL PROCESS PRINCIPLES

1. The 2014 NETmundial meeting adopted a set of 10 Principles for Internet Governance Processes. In light of the rapid technical, social, and economic evolutions that have taken place since then, please indicate below your degree of support for the following statements:

The 10 "NETmundial Internet Governance Process Principles" adopted in 2014 remain relevant to address today's digital governance challenges

[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

Our persistent difficulties in dealing with digital issues largely stem from insufficient inclusion of all relevant stakeholders in policy discussions

[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

Our persistent difficulties in dealing with digital issues reflect different interests, priorities and value systems of distinct stakeholders

[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

2. After reviewing the set of Principles for Internet Governance Processes from NETmundial 2014, do you think they need to be supplemented, in order to guide the development of the governance of the digital world? Please detail.

The NETmundial 2014 Principles remain deeply relevant and do not need to be substantially revised. The Principles' are grounded on the foundation of universal human rights; they call out relevant high-level objectives such as the protection and promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity, interoperability, security/resilience, and innovation; and they underscore key characteristics such as open architecture and open standards. The ten "Internet Governance Process Principles" are also enduring and appropriate, emphasizing the importance of multistakeholder processes, consensus-driven governance, transparency, accountability, inclusivity and equity, a distributed and decentralized ecosystem, collaboration, meaningful participation, accessibility, and agility. And yet too many processes, initiatives, and proposals that claim to embody these principles have failed to live up to them into practice. There could therefore be value in identifying appropriate guidance, good practices, and criteria for putting these Principles into practice.

I - B) STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES

NETmundial+10
Global challenges
for the governance
of the digital world

3.   The 2014 NETmundial statement includes the following "multistakeholder" Internet Governance Process Principle: *"The respective roles and responsibilities of stakeholders should be interpreted in a flexible manner with reference to the issue under discussion"*. The distribution of roles and responsibilities between stakeholders is an ongoing (and contentious) subject of debate. In this regard, please indicate below your degree of support for the following statements:

Each stakeholder group has different roles and responsibilities,
depending on the topic and phases of specific governance
processes

[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree

[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

Most digital governance processes are applying the
above mentioned "multistakeholder" principle

[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral **[ ] Disagree** *[ ] Strongly disagree*
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

4.   Do you see room for improvements in the implementation of the above mentioned "multistakeholder" principle? If yes, what would you suggest?

The idea that different stakeholders may have different interests and relative influence on distinct issues is axiomatic. As such, flexibility is an important concept that should be acknowledged and unpacked. Challenges arise when those responsible for a given process use this principle in order to justify inappropriately excluding or limiting participation by a particular set of stakeholders. There may therefore be value in developing criteria that can help determine when flexibility regarding the respective roles and responsibilities of stakeholders may be appropriate and when it may be improper.

By way of example, the Global Network Initiative is a 16-year-old multistakeholder initiative that has worked assiduously to build trust, foster collaboration, and facilitate accountability across academics, civil society, investors, and tech companies. The focus of our work is to collaboratively articulate and promote ways that technology companies should respect the freedom of expression and privacy rights of their users when addressing government requests and restrictions. While the membership boundaries of our four "constituencies" have broadened over time, GNI has no plans to include governments as members since their participation would chill the kinds of information sharing, collaboration, and accountability that we are mission-driven to pursue. Despite this structural exclusion, GNI endeavors to engage and work with governments around the world to ensure that their regulatory, procurement, and policy efforts promote freedom of expression and privacy for users everywhere.

I - C) COORDINATION

5.   Numerous initiatives and processes have emerged to address the broad diversity of issues raised by the digital revolution. Sometimes, multiple processes address the same issues in parallel. Please indicate below your degree of support for the following statements:

Separate siloed discussions on a specific issue risk
creating incompatible and even conflicting outcomes

[ ] Strongly agree **[ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree**
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

Distributed initiatives on a particular issue can help cover
the diversity of approaches and perspectives

[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

Better coordination is needed between
processes dealing with overlapping issues

[ ] Strongly agree <mark>*[ ] Agree*</mark> *[ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree*
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

6.   ***If you believe better coordination is needed,*** please suggest ways to do so
and specific text or language that could be included as recommendations in a
NETmundial+10 outcome statement.

*Some areas of digital governance are well coordinated, while others are not. The extent
of coordination is often positively correlated with the amount of time that the issue has
been garnering attention and the amount of transparency/information sharing.
Mechanisms that can facilitate information sharing and coordination, such as the Internet
Governance Forum (IGF) and its related events (NRIs) and intersessional work, are vital
to fostering and expediting coordination. GNI supports increasing the resources and
prominence of the IGF and opposes the creation of new, redundant
mechanisms/processes.*

If you do not believe better coordination is needed, please explain why, including
possible ways to prevent potential conflicts, and suggest specific text or language that
could be included as recommendations in a NETmundial+10 outcome statement.

II - GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF MULTISTAKEHOLDER MECHANISMS

There is broad consensus to support the multistakeholder approach, but little common
or broadly-shared understanding about how to put it into practice. NETmundial+10 aims

to help operationalize, through guidelines, principles and mechanisms, improvements for multistakeholder collaboration.

II – A) PARTICIPATION IN MULTILATERAL PROCESSES

7.   Some multilateral processes offer the possibility for non-governmental stakeholders to contribute through consultations. However, these examples remain limited and there is often no transparency on how these inputs are taken into account in subsequent stages of discussions among States. Please indicate below your degree of support for the following statements:

Since NETmundial 2014, opportunities for non-governmental stakeholders
to participate in multilateral processes have been improved

*[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond*

More transparent mechanisms should be put in place regarding how
input from non-governmental stakeholders is taken into account

*[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond*

Relevant non-governmental stakeholders should be able
to attend/observe multilateral negotiations on digital issues

*[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond*

Relevant non-governmental stakeholders should be able to contribute
in a meaningful way to multilateral negotiations on digital issues

*[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond*

8.   Please suggest ways to improve meaningful participation of non-governmental stakeholders in multilateral processes and add specific text or language in that regard

that could be included as recommendations in a NETmundial+10 outcome statement. If possible, please indicate examples you know of meaningful participation of stakeholders in multilateral-driven processes.

Meaningful participation of non-governmental stakeholders in multilateral processes hinges on three key criteria: access, support, and empowerment. "Access" refers to the extent to which participation by non-governmental stakeholders is allowed. For instance, many UN processes restrict participation by organizations that are not ECOSOC-accredited, and yet the process by which organizations obtain that accreditation has been consistently criticized as bureaucratic and politicized. Even where access is possible, the lack of structural "support" for non-governmental organizations often limits meaningful participation. Support can be provided by acknowledging and subsidizing the costs of participation through, e.g., travel support, stipends, etc., and by creating mechanisms to onboard new participants and facilitate their ability to get up to speed and remain informed. Finally, meaningful participation also hinges on the extent to which the views and inputs of non-governmental actors are taken seriously and demonstrably influence outcomes. Allowing and supporting these actors to speak, but failing to listen and take account of their views is not sufficient. It is important to underscore that actors from under-resourced contexts are often given comparatively less access, support, and empowerment.

In addition, transparency and accountability are transversal principles that enable the above-mentioned criteria and allow for credible, independent assessment of the extent to which those criteria are being met. As such, multilateral processes must demonstrate appropriate commitments to transparency and accountability.

NETmundial+10 should endeavor to articulate these criteria and make a robust, multistakeholder case for enhancing access, support, empowerment, transparency, and accountability across relevant multilateral institutions and processes.

II – B) GUIDELINES FOR MULTISTAKEHOLDER CONSENSUS-BUILDING AND DECISION-MAKING

Principles of open and inclusive multistakeholder collaboration in digital governance are scattered in various foundational documents and declarations. The characteristics enunciated below are distilled from some of those documents that deal with multistakeholder collaboration processes as well as from current good practices and experiences.

The aim here is to obtain feedback from the community as to the relevance of each of these characteristics, with a view to elaborating a sort of "gold standard" or "protocol of protocols" that may serve national, regional, and global communities to establish and develop multistakeholder collaboration processes and mechanisms, as well as to assess processes and mechanisms that are presented as being multistakeholder.

9.   Please rank the relevance of the following guidelines in the order of importance in your view. Assign a number from 1 to 12 to each item, where 1 indicates the most important and 12 indicates the least important:

[11] Multistakeholder processes should be accessible to all stakeholders, regardless of their background, status, or level of expertise.

[1] Multistakeholder processes should empower stakeholders by providing them with the necessary information, resources, and skills to participate effectively.

[4] Stakeholders should treat each other with mutual respect, recognizing the value of diverse viewpoints and contributions.

[3] Multistakeholder processes should involve informed and deliberative discussion among stakeholders.

[12] Stakeholders should share responsibility for the outcomes of the multistakeholder process.

[5] Multistakeholder processes should be governed by the rule of law, with respect for constitutional principles, human rights, and legal frameworks.

[10] Mechanisms for resolving conflicts among stakeholders should be in place to enable decision-making.

[6] Digital governance processes should be flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances, evolving technologies, emerging issues, and changing geopolitical dynamics.

[8] Decisions should consider the long-term implications and sustainability of outcomes.

[7] Capacity-building efforts enhance understanding and skills of stakeholders, particularly those from developing countries and underrepresented communities.

[9] Multistakeholder processes should strive to treat all stakeholders fairly and equitably, considering their respective needs, capacities, and vulnerabilities.

[2] A global multistakeholder approach to digital governance should recognize the need for collaborative action across national borders and stakeholder groups.

10.   Please identify up to three relevant items from the above list you consider are not being effectively implemented in current digital governance processes.

[ ] Multistakeholder processes should be accessible to all stakeholders, regardless of their background, status, or level of expertise.

[x] Multistakeholder processes should empower stakeholders by providing them with the necessary information, resources, and skills to participate effectively.

[ ] Stakeholders should treat each other with mutual respect, recognizing the value of diverse viewpoints and contributions.

[ ] Multistakeholder processes should involve informed and deliberative discussion among stakeholders.

[ ] Stakeholders should share responsibility for the outcomes of the multistakeholder process.

[ ] Multistakeholder processes should be governed by the rule of law, with respect for constitutional principles, human rights, and legal frameworks.

[ ] Mechanisms for resolving conflicts among stakeholders should be in place to enable decision-making.

[ ] Digital governance processes should be flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances, evolving technologies, emerging issues, and changing geopolitical dynamics.

[x] Decisions should consider the long-term implications and sustainability of outcomes.

[x] Capacity-building efforts enhance understanding and skills of stakeholders, particularly those from developing countries and underrepresented communities.

[ ] Multistakeholder processes should strive to treat all stakeholders fairly and equitably, considering their respective needs, capacities, and vulnerabilities.

[ ] A global multistakeholder approach to digital governance should recognize the need for collaborative action across national borders and stakeholder groups.

11.   Please suggest additional elements that could take part in a set of guidelines for multistakeholder collaboration that could be included as recommendations in a NETmundial+10 outcome statement. If possible, please indicate examples you know of multistakeholder processes that stand out in your view as positive models of such collaboration.

Many efforts that are labeled as "multistakeholder" remain opaque, exclusive, and

inaccessible. GNI is a multistakeholder initiative that has consciously and diligently worked ot expand both the geographic and subject-matter diversity of its membership, and opportunities and support for those members to meaningfully engage in different aspects of the organization's activities and governance.

III - INPUT TO ONGOING PROCESSES

III-A) THE INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM – IGF

12.   The IGF environment, including the global annual event, the National and Regional Initiatives and the intersessional work, brings together all stakeholder groups on an equal footing. Please indicate below your degree of support for the following statements regarding the IGF:

The IGF has been an effective space for Internet governance debates and cooperation

[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

The IGF lacks the required financial resources to properly perform its mission

[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

With appropriate conditions, the IGF has the
capacity to innovate multistakeholder approaches

[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

A strengthened IGF would be the preferred space to improve
coordination among digital governance processes

[ ] Strongly agree *[ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree*
[ ] I don't know / I'd rather not respond

13.   Do you believe that a strengthened IGF environment, including the NRIs and the intersessional work, could be the right place to coordinate debates on the governance of the Internet and digital issues, and thus help tackle the problem of governance fragmentation? If so, in which ways should the IGF environment be strengthened in order to fulfill this role?

The IGF is an instrument of great value. The amount of institutional knowledge it holds and the community of technologists, civil society groups, businesses, researchers and policymakers it has fostered over the years is incomparable to any other existing process. It is for these, among other reasons, that the IGF, including intersessional work through the NRIs, Dynamic Coalitions, and Policy Networks, has become a vital component of the governance of the Internet and related technologies, and why it must be preserved, protected, and expanded.

The annual IGF is an essential avenue for discussing some of the foremost challenges in a rapidly evolving field, on a consistent and timely basis, which facilitates predictability, transparency, and accountability. This year, in particular, it can play an additional role: it can serve as a venue for examining how states respect and respond to the outcomes of other key convenings expected earlier in 2024, including the Global Digital Compact (GDC), the WSIS+20 High-Level Event, and the Summit of the Future.

The IGF could be strengthened in the following ways: (i) clarifying that the IGF's remit includes all technologies, laws, and topics that relate directly or indirectly to individuals' abilities to use the Internet and associated tools, platforms, and services to realize and protect their human rights; (ii) establishing a sustainable funding mechanism that supports both the logistical costs of organizing the IGF and NRIs, as well as the ability of under-resourced stakeholders to participate; (iii) a more robust and independent IGF secretariat to better tie together aspects of the intersessional work, the NRIs, and the IGF; and (iv) a commitment on the part of key actors, including governments and international/regional organizations to use the IGF as a platform for meaningful stakeholder engagement and consultation on relevant digital policies and processes.

III-B) OTHER PROCESSES (GDC, WSIS+20 Review)

Several processes are under way in the UN context regarding the governance of digital issues, in particular the negotiations around the Global Digital Compact (included in the Pact for the Future) and the WSIS+20 review process. They may set fundamental guidelines and recommendations for the further development of the Internet and the digital ecosystem as a good for society and for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals – SDGs. As a unique gathering with all participant stakeholders on an equal footing, do you believe that NETmundial+10 should send messages to these processes?

14.   If you think NETmundial+10 should send messages to the Global Digital Compact, please indicate below what these key messages would be.

NETMundial+10 can and should support the following messages regarding the GDC:
- *Emphasize the importance of supporting and strengthening, and not duplicating or distracting from existing, well-respected forums such as the IGF and the WSIS Forum.*
- *Underscore the centrality of the international human rights framework (the treaties, as well as relevant multilateral spaces/mandates) as both a foundation for and an enabling environment to support all aspects of internet governance.*
- *Ensure that information and communications technologies – including new generations of existing technologies (e.g., 5G and 6G telecommunications) and new tools such as those powered by AI – are globally interoperable, secure, and accessible, and that their governance and regulation is conducted consistent with human rights and rule of law principles.*

15.   If you think NETmundial+10 should send messages to the WSIS+20 review process, please indicate below what these key messages would be.

The WSIS+20 Forum High-Level event must explore ways to translate its discussions into tangible outcomes and commitments that can be pursued and implemented after the forum. These outcomes and commitments should be available to all stakeholders and participants, have broad consensus and buy-in, and where relevant, have the support and backing needed to ensure sustainability. The Forum should start from the premise that the IGF's mandate should be extended and expanded, and should actively engage with IGF Dynamic Coalitions and Policy Networks to involve their expertise and perspectives in the planning and execution of the Forum. This collaborative approach will ensure that the WSIS Forum builds upon existing work and fosters and supports partnerships to address critical internet governance issues.

16.   Do you think there are other processes that could benefit from the outcomes of the NETmundial+10 meeting? Please detail and indicate which key messages could be sent to those processes.

Given the overlap of NETmundial+10 with the G20 side event on information integrity, there should be thought given to how the former can influence the latter, as well as how it can support further multistakeholder approaches by the G20, as well as how G20 outcomes can endorse and support multistakeholderism and related principles.

NETmundial+10 can and should also consider ways to underscore the same messages mentioned above vis-a-vis the GDC, in the context of the broader Summit for the Future and its outcome Pact for the Future. Here the key messages to underscore are the centrality and fundamentality of international human rights and the strengthening and non-duplication of existing institutions and mechanisms. If stakeholders agree, the NETmundial+10 outcome(s) should be submitted as inputs into the Summit and Pact.