

REMARKS BY LYNN ST. AMOUR, PRESIDENT AND CEO, INTERNET SOCIETY, AT THE OPEN CONSULTATION OF THE WORKING GROUP ON INTERNET GOVERNANCE

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Thank you Chairman Desai and Ambassador Kummer, and thank you to all the WGIG members for all the time and work you have given to this matter. It is sincerely appreciated.

The Internet Society (ISOC) would like to strongly and fully support the statement made earlier by Brian Carpenter; given the time allotted to this vast subject matter we will not repeat his statements but rather endeavor to cover some other equally important areas. So, these statements should be seen as parts 1 and 2 of the ISOC statement.

Internet development and operation - a long-standing example of successful multi-stakeholder cooperation:

One of the benefits of the debate around the issue of Internet Governance has been the increased visibility of the role of the technical groups and other Internet organizations as the entities that have supported the development and operation of the Internet for many years. Inevitably, there have been some misunderstandings about their responsibilities, about the technical aspects of the Internet and about the fairness and openness of the current processes. However, ISOC is happy to note that there is now much wider recognition of how these groups have worked to make the Internet function smoothly and why these Internet models have been so successful. We strongly urge the WGIG to build upon these models and work with these organizations rather than creating a new body.

Traditionally, the technical groups have carried out their work with little fanfare and only a desire to serve their communities openly, transparently and inclusively. Their focus has always been on meeting the needs of their communities in a manner that encourages participation and builds consensus. These are groups that are not dominated or managed by any single interested party, but which are multi-stakeholder and are open to all - including private sector, civil society and governments. Cooperation between all these organizations has always been extremely strong, and the community has shown time and again that it works together in a very open manner to evolve organically in response to community or technical needs.

During the WGIG discussions there have been many calls for effective multi-stakeholder processes. Those of you that have taken the time to study how the Internet's current processes and groups function will have found an excellent example of such cooperation in the way groups such as the IETF, the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) and ICANN, etc. work together. Their operations are built on sharing, openness, inclusiveness, and principles such as: "Give one idea and get two back". The success of the Internet has depended to a large extent on this approach and it can be seen in many areas of operation. Some examples of these principles are mentioned below.

Internet number resources - maintaining an open, community-responsive allocation process:

One important area that is coordinated under consensus agreements is Internet number resource distribution. The five RIRs (AfriNIC serving Africa, APNIC, serving the Asia-Pacific region; ARIN, serving Northern America; LACNIC, serving Latin America; and RIPE NCC, serving Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia) develop allocation principles and procedures in regional fora which are open not only to RIR members, but to all interested parties including Governments, private sector and civil society. They are specifically accountable to their regional communities and ICANN review.

A recent proposal from the ITU called for a new IPv6 address space distribution process, based solely on national authorities. It seems to some that behind the proposal is an assertion of primacy of public sector and national interest in the administrative task of assigning address space for the Internet. The RIRs recognize not only the legitimacy of the public sector interest but also that of the private sector and have worked diligently to involve all parties equally and fairly. Perhaps more to the point, the proposal disregards the fact that IP addresses are endpoint network identifiers that intrinsically have no national attributes, and that allocation principles regarding their distribution must be guided primarily by technical considerations relating to the viability of the operation of the Internet. A 'national allocation scheme' would not only be impractical, but it could also lead to fragmentation and de-stabilization of the Internet.

Root servers - stability through diversity:

As I mentioned earlier, a clear benefit of this process has been the opportunity to share how things such as the root name server system operates. Specifically, it now seems to be widely understood that the root name server operators do not determine the content of the root zone file. No Internet traffic passes through the root name servers at all, and further they have

nothing to do with routing Internet traffic! Furthermore, many root server operators now provide service from multiple locations using a method called "anycast" which increases the availability and resilience of the DNS system. In fact, as of December 2004, there were root name servers being operated at more than 80 locations in 34 countries, most of them outside the United States of America. And, this number has grown considerably over the last 6 months and will continue to do so.

This diversity and the distributed authority has been a critical element of the reliability of the root name service. We are happy to see that a consensus seems to be emerging that today's arrangements have significant value to the Internet, as it is far from clear what value would be added by creating a new authority to oversee the root name server system. In fact, there is a real risk that this could weaken the robustness of the current operations by creating a single point of failure, or a potential target for capture and abuse.

Participation in open multi-stakeholder processes - the principles that have stood the Internet so well:

All organizations within the so-called Internet Community (in other words those organizations involved with developing and operating various administrative aspects of the Internet) honor and embrace the values of participation, democratic decision making, due process, consensus, and often vigorous passionate debate. These are all fundamental to the community's overall values and also include the following:

- Ensuring a single, end-to-end interoperable Internet
- Bottom-up technical policy making and decision making
- Participation open to all who wish to do so
- Significant outreach to include greater participation of Lesser Developed Countries – efforts such as LACNIC and AfriNIC or the workshops ISOC has been holding for the last 13+ years are all good examples.
- Legitimacy determined by open participation, transparent processes and the value of the contribution to the joint effort, rather than more traditional power based mechanisms or structures.
- Consensus based decision making

- Cooperation, Coordination, Collaboration and Consultation among participants and groups advocating initiatives/change
- Local decision making wherever possible
- Supporting and encouraging spirited and public debate

We understand there is a need for this "Internet Community" to continue to reach out to and help organizations, policy makers and individuals understand technological developments, their potential impacts and most importantly how we can all help the Internet deliver all the promise it holds for mankind. We all look forward to helping and we expect to make further suggestions in this vein in the weeks to come. This is in addition to our continued and many efforts to build capacity in the Lesser Developed Countries.

Finally, it is worth restating here that the processes that support the development and operation of the Internet are truly open to all and are already multi-stakeholder. They have supported the development of the Internet for many years and we welcome increased participation by all in these processes. To specifically address the WGIG Questionnaire, we do not see the benefit of creating new organization(s), but welcome initiatives that foster continued dialogue and recommend these be built on existing institutions and fully utilizing the Internet and the new technologies and communications options that the internet affords. It will truly allow us to maximize participation while supporting the most effective and timely progress on many fronts.

Thank you again for the opportunity to address the WGIG and for all your efforts.