

UPDATE ON POLICY PROGRAMMES
BoT Meeting 10/11 February 2006

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1. Internet Governance Debate

The issues of Internet governance, ITU reform in the post-WSIS environment and pressures at the multi-lateral level related to the “control” of the Internet are inextricably intertwined and will be the subject of continued discussion throughout 2006. While much of the debate over Internet governance has focused on ICANN and domain names, the bigger issue is whether governments will have a larger role in shaping Internet standards, controlling the market for bandwidth, limiting the content that flows over the Internet, and monitoring the communications of Internet users.

The Internet Governance debate (an incredibly broad debate that ranges across issues such as single control of the root file, allocation of IP addresses, international connectivity and spam) continues with the formation of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) as foreseen by the WSIS Tunis Agenda. ISOC continues to push for a central role for itself and for recognition of the Internet community as a principle stakeholder. We have communicated with a range of government and other stakeholders on the structure and focus of the Forum (through direct communications, including to the United Nations Secretary General, an ISOC survey, participation in policy seminars, participation in other surveys, etc.). ISOC has participated directly or been represented by BoT/Chapter members in a range of IGF-related meetings in a range of countries.

ISOC has reached out to and continues to involve Chapters in the Internet governance discussion, soliciting comments through a number of mechanisms including Cyber-survey #20 on the WSIS – results: <http://geneva.isoc.org/surveys/results/20/> and through our Member Public Policy Discussion list.

ISOC, and many ISOC friends, will be participating in the first consultations on the IGF in Geneva on 16/17 February.

By the end of Q1, we anticipate that the results of the IGF consultation will be known and that there will be clearer indications of the structure, issue focus and timeline for the Forum. In parallel with the aforementioned activities other Policy commitments will be put in place, including expert roundtables and webcasts to complement the issue areas in the Forum – see education section.

Governance will also be an issue in the ITU “post-WSIS reform” and Plenipotentiary activities (ITU’s Strategy and Budget for 2007 - 2010) that are being kicked off this Quarter. Some countries continue to push for a greater role for the ITU in Internet-

related policy matters. ISOC participated in the first “reform” discussion; we believe that the ITU’s reform discussion should focus on operational issues and core competencies rather than any expansion of responsibilities.

2. The Board of Trustees has an extended WSIS/IGF Policy Session meeting scheduled for 10 February 1100 – 1500 hours. This session is a critical element in the continued development of ISOC’s position. The agenda is included here with relevant links.

11:00 - 15:30 – Policy session

Purpose:

- Review outcomes/interpretations of WSIS II
- Update on and discussion of IGF's future paths
- ISOC role and opportunity

11:00-12:00 Ambassador Karklins - WSIS II PrepCom Chair - in person. Ambassador Karklins will review the WSIS process and outcomes.

Key links for the discussion:

ISOC WSIS page:

<http://www.isoc.org/isoc/conferences/wsis/index.shtml>

Tunis Agenda: <http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs2/tunis/off/6rev1.pdf> - the Tunis Agenda is the final outcome document of the WSIS

12:00 - 12:30 Nitin Desai - WGIG Chair and United Nation’s Secretary General’s appointment to help kick-off the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) - by conf. call. Nitin Desai will discuss the formation and his expectations of the Internet Governance Forum

Key links for the discussion:

IGF page: <http://www.intgovforum.org/index.htm>

Tunis Agenda: <http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs2/tunis/off/6rev1.pdf> - paragraphs 72 to 82 are the specific paragraphs related to the Internet Governance Forum.

IGF outline (from Tunis Agenda):

<http://www.intgovforum.org/about.htm>

12:30 - 13:00 EU/National Representative - M. Boyle (Department of Trade and Industry - UK) exact time TBC - to discuss the enhanced cooperation process (internationalized control of the Internet) outlined in the Tunis Agenda

Key links for discussion:

Tunis Agenda: <http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs2/tunis/off/6rev1.pdf> - paragraphs 68 to 71 are specific to the “enhanced cooperation procedure”

13:00 - 14:00 Lunch

14:00 - 15:30 Discussion on implications of the above

3. Regionalizing and globalizing Public Policy

Most activity in this area related to preparing for and getting feedback on the 1st ISOC Regional Bureau to be situated in Africa. The development of the Regional Bureau will be led by the Membership department and a more detailed update will be provided therein.

The Regional Policy Councils have been renamed Regional Policy Advisory groups to better reflect their advisory nature. A call for expression of interest is planned in early February. These Advisory Groups will help provide guidance and advice as to the ISOC policy focus in the different regions, that will lead to more nuanced and regional tailored policy work. We expect the Advisory Groups to be constituted on a staggered basis, with the Africa Group as a priority (to complement the establishment of the Bureau) (by end Q1).

4. Enhancing and strengthening the Public Policy Team

The Manager Public Policy position is in the process of being finalized and will be published by mid-February.

5. A trusted source on Internet policy – The Policy Portal and other tools

Initial work has been done on identifying changes to be made in the Policy part of the existing ISOC website.

Also, in preparation for the WSIS/governance meetings, a special section on Internet governance was placed on the policy webpage as a part of the WSIS coverage.

By end Q1, we expect to begin an “Africa policy page” to support the regional Africa Bureau and the Africa Policy Advisory Group.

6. Education and advocacy

A new initiative that has been kick-started in late January was the concept of a “Big Issue” focus. This is an activity to demonstrate “bigger picture” thought and policy leadership for ISOC. The program will be implemented through press placements, editorials, webcasts and discussion spaces on the ISOC website. In Q1 we will tackle the issue of fragmentation of the Internet as this is a serious threat confronting the Internet and has significant relevance in the current Governance debates. This will focus on the attraction and dangers of alternate roots, walled gardens, etc.

We are working with the IAB and key technical experts to identify other “Big Issues”
Other areas under consideration:

- IPv4 to IPv6 transition,
- Next Generation Internet (NGN),
- Multilingualism on the Internet/Internationalized Domain Names (IDN)

Obviously, leadership in this regard will have an extremely useful impact on our policy initiatives and visibility, and links to our other policy commitments.

For policy education activities and planning please see the education section.