November 13 2020

Dear Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) of the Internet Governance Forum,

CC: Executive Office of the Secretary General; Chair of the MAG, Anriette Esterhuysen; IGF Secretariat

**Re: Internet Governance Forum Multistakeholder Advisory Group Working Group on IGF Strategy and Strengthening, 2020 Response to the paper on** [**“Options for the Future of Digital Cooperation”**](https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/filedepot_download/10447/2267)

The Internet Governance Caucus writes to express our support for the report of the “MAG Working Group on IGF Strengthening and Strategy Response to the paper on “Options for the Future of Digital Cooperation””.

A number of individuals and groups that form part of the IGC have actively followed and participated in the UN Secretary General’s Roadmap on Digital Cooperation from the beginning, including in the consultations that fed into the High Level Panel Report.

We remain committed to the realisation of the Roadmap’s goals, and to an inclusive process to its implementation, as recently noted in a joint civil society letter to the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres (dated 22 October 2020). In line with this, we support the IGF MAG’s WG response to the paper on “Options for the Future of Digital Cooperation”, version of 29 September 2020. In particular, we agree that a sequenced and gradual way forward, to first build on the strengths of the IGF to achieve the discussed IGF+ model is required. We acknowledge and support our colleagues at [Association for Progressive Communications (APC)’s reflection on the Options Paper](https://www.apc.org/en/pubs/apcs-reflection-options-future-global-digital-cooperation-recommendation-5ab-un-high-level) as well.

In particular, we take the opportunity to highlight the following elements of the report that enjoy our support:

* The importance of leveraging digital technologies to improve and increase inclusivity, including the need for capacity building and the need for voluntary financial contributions to support this.
* The need for stronger links between the IGF Secretariat and the Office of the UNSG, and close links between the Tech Envoy and the IGF, in order to ensure higher visibility for the IGF and better coordination with various other UN processes and projects. We likewise agree that both the appointment and eventual office and work of the Tech Envoy should be grounded in “principles of multistakeholder dialogue and transparency”.
* We also believe that reforms to the IGF should build on existing structures. This means that, for example, existing intersessional streams like the BPF and Dynamic Coalitions should be the basis for more actionable and concrete outcomes. The IGF should remain the inclusive, open, gender-responsive and multistakeholder nature of the IGF which have been its hallmark.

With regards to the approaches “A”, “B”, and “C”, we believe these should be the basis of robust dialogue amongst the IGF community. The value of the current MAG, in outreach to the multistakeholder community, raising awareness of the IGF and its discussions should be maintained. The proposed approaches, and any changes to the MAG should therefore reflect the following criteria: The MAG retains its role as a representative multistakeholder body that supports outreach with the wider stakeholder community and provides strategic support for the development of the IGF programme and its intersessional work. In this sense it should avoid any duplication of its already existing role and functions. We propose a visualisation of the three approaches proposed in the Response to the Options paper be developed to clarify the differences between the proposals put forward in the Response.

We look forward to engaging in this reform effort and to ensuring a broad and inclusive discussion in the implementation of the UNSG’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation,

The Internet Governance Caucus