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NETmundial Initiative

for Internet Governance Cooperation & Development

The Internet permeates all spaces: It weaves humankind's social and economic fabric across borders and cultures at unprecedented speeds. We must sustain its benefits and avoid its fragmentation to propel the Internet as a shared global resource for human solidarity and economic progress.

However, this dynamic resource is posing new challenges – as well as opportunities – for governance in multiple respects.

The pace of innovation and highly distributed nature of the Internet requires a new approach to global cooperation that maximizes the Internet's creative potential while enhancing its resilience; facilitates cooperation without over-centralization; embraces globalization while respecting local systems; and matches the dynamism of the Internet without sacrificing the accountability and inclusiveness of its governance processes.

PURPOSE

The NETmundial meeting held in São Paulo during April 2014 was historic. It united the private sector, governments, academia, technical and civil society in a productive dialogue that created a shared set of principles to guide the evolution of Internet cooperation and governance.

Many parties to these historic discussions wish to carry forward the cooperative spirit of São Paulo and work together to apply the NETmundial **Principles**[1] to solve issues in concrete ways to enable an effective and distributed approach to Internet cooperation and governance. **This is the purpose of the World Economic Forum NETmundial Initiative, which is being undertaken in partnership with ICANN and key governmental, industry, academic and civil society stakeholders.**

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[1] The NETmundial Principles stem from the consensus-based NetMundial São Paulo Statement developed during the NetMundial meeting in April 2014, including the private sector, governments, technical organizations, academia, and civil society from 100 countries (http://www.netmundial.br)

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Based on input and guidance from the global community, the NETmundial Initiative will sponsor and promote activities to:

- Facilitate a distributed environment of effective <u>global cooperation</u> among stakeholders through innovative and legitimate mechanisms to tackle current and future Internet issues;

- Inform and equip <u>capacity development</u> initiatives to ensure global participation in Internet cooperation, especially from under-represented regions; and

- Work to <u>build trust</u> in the Internet and its governance ecosystem.

ACTIVITIES

Building on the São Paulo meeting, the High-level Panel on Global Internet Cooperation and Governance Mechanisms established by ICANN and supported by the Forum recently produced a blueprint for a 21st century <u>collaborative and distributed Internet cooperation ecosystem</u>[2]. The ecosystem described by the Panel in its final report is a framework for understanding how global cooperation can evolve to align global, regional, and national policies for both technical and non-technical issues in a manner consistent with the core NETmundial Principles on:

- Human rights and shared values
- Protection of intermediaries
- Culture and linguistic diversity
- Unified and unfragmented space
- Security, stability and resilience of the Internet

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[2] The ecosystem is depicted in an appendix based on the May 2014 report by the Panel on Global Internet Cooperation and Governance Mechanisms, chaired by President Toomas Hendrik Ilves of Estonia. ICANN and WEF sponsored the panel. The full report is available at http://internetgovernancepanel.org/panel-report.

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- Open and distributed architecture
- Enabling environment for sustainable innovation and creativity
- Internet governance process principles
- Open standards

The NETmundial Initiative, based on input and guidance from the global multistakeholder community, will seek to enable this collaborative and distributed Internet cooperation ecosystem through the following activities:

- **Dialogue:**
    - o Global multistakeholder discussion to deepen understanding and expand common ground on a range of policy and other non-technical challenges through the engagement of an interdisciplinary range of decision makers and constituents (i.e., multiple relevant ministries, international agencies, industries, academic disciplines, user communities, etc.);

    - o Regional and country dialogues of this nature, inspired by the example of Brazil and NETmundial; and

    - o Support for efforts to facilitate progress through Internet Governance Forum (IGF) structures.

- **Action:**
    - o Mapping of Internet governance issues to existing potential solutions, including efforts to facilitate access by developing country governments and other parties facing specific problems to networks of experts and organizations which may be able to assist them;

    - o Mechanisms to coalesce relevant actors into distributed governance groups to address Internet issues and deliver solutions where none have yet been identified;

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    o   Capacity development for developing countries interested in strengthening their Internet governance frameworks and capabilities through regional/national multistakeholder partnership processes.

These activities will be designed to support the evolution of a more open, participatory, stable, and effective distributed governance ecosystem that both enhances trust and reflects the velocity and transnational nature of the Internet. The World Economic Forum, a global multistakeholder institution dedicated to advancing public-private cooperation, will serve as a platform for facilitating their organization and execution through its meetings, project facilitation and Global Agenda Platform, a digital collaboration system that enables closer cooperation of multistakeholder communities of top decision-makers and experts working on specific global challenges.

NEXT STEPS

Founding partners will announce the Initiative on August 28, 2014 at the headquarters of the World Economic Forum in Geneva, Switzerland.

The Initiative's activities will begin with an initial series of dialogues in certain regions during 2014 and a global multistakeholder summit on Internet governance and cooperation during the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2015.

In addition, over the next six months a series of consultations with multiple stakeholders will be organized to inform and help shape the Initiative's activities and ultimate organizational structure. These open and inclusive discussions will take place online and at Forum and other events across the world through the remainder of 2014.

The Forum and its partners will work as a multistakeholder coalition to help guide and support the Initiative, supported by an interim steering committee during the initial phase of activities and consultations.