What to expect from the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) 2016

Alejandro Pisanty
Facultad de Química, UNAM
Sociedad Internet de México, A.C.

The purpose of this document is to present a general outline of the IGF 2016 to facilitate effective participation.

Introduction

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is an annual event that brings together various stakeholders of global internet governance to discuss the main developments and problems presented by it. The IGF is organized by the UN but unlike other events of its events, it is not a governmental forum, but a place where all parties participate, in principle, on equal footing.

The IGF consists of different types of sessions, including plenary sessions, workshops, best practice forums, dynamic coalitions, "flash sessions" and open forums. These will be described in the following sections along with the methods of participation.

The IGF program is organized throughout the year by the MAG or Multisectoral Advisory Group, following different procedures for each type of session. There is also a session called "Zero Day", scheduled for the day before the formal start of the forum, which is also described in subsequent sections.

The Forum is disconcerting to some participants as its objective is the analysis, discussion, debate, and in-depth study of the issues, but explicitly should not formulate conclusions or decisions that lead to action. This is reserved for appropriate existing organizations and mechanisms for each subnational, national, regional, international, or global theme. The Forum avoids formulating documents so that negotiations on agreed texts are not presented, which are seen as limitations on open discussion, and avoids making decisions that in general would duplicate the functions of the previously mentioned organizations and mechanisms. If non-covered issues are detected this way, the parties will have to negotiate their solution.

Thus, the main value of the IGF is that the participants can return to their places of origin and organizations being informed, updated, steeped in the various criteria at stake, and prepared to advance each theme with a well-defined, problem-solving orientation, with the appropriate actors and structures based on a principle of subsidiarity, all of which are traits of the most effective Internet governance thus far.

Sessions

1. **Plenaries**

    Plenary sessions in general are multi-sectoral panels that discuss the major themes and sub-themes selected each year for the Forum. Each plenary thrives on the contents of the workshops grouped under its theme, or provides them with bases and information. The plenary sessions are organized by the MAG.

    In addition to the plenary panels, there should be an opening session, an initial general session, the staging panel of the general topics, a closing panel of the event, the presentation of the summary of the Forum Chair, and the closing session.

    The discussion panels provide for the discussion between the panelists and its extension towards the present audience and those participant at a distance. Unlike the usual format in Mexico, to take the floor it is necessary to form a line in front of the microphone located generally in front of the room and intended for public participation. Plenary sessions provide an unparalleled opportunity for the most advanced and often conflicting views on the future of the Internet, spoken by the most authoritative and representative actors, including the creators of the technology and their most advanced executors.

2. **Workshops**

    The workshops are discussion meetings focused on specific topics of the broad general themes of the Forum. They are organized by groups of people or institutions that propose them to the MAG, and are selected by the MAG from among the set of proposals through a complex selection process based on previously set criteria.

    Each workshop should be multisectoral and have gender, regional and functional, or professional group balance, as far as possible. The workshops provide for a discussion between the invited panelists and an extension of it to both those present in the room and remotely.

    The workshops' diversity of topics and participants virtually guarantees that the interests and objectives of every possible Forum participant are met and that there is enough and even an excess of sessions to attend, and other participants with whom to form networks and communities of interest and projects. This is undoubtedly one of the greatest incentives to participate in the IGF.

3. **Best Practice Forums (BPF)**

    The Best Practice Forums or BPF study the solutions with the best results that are being given for topics such as cybersecurity, gender, IPv6, IXPs, or Internet traffic exchange points, and Internet access. These forums are led by experts and are based on documents created over a period of several months by groups of specialists.

    The BPF sessions allow in-depth research into problems and lessons learned about proposed solutions, the difficulties encountered in different contexts, and the ways in which such difficulties can be effectively overcome. The BPFs are

distinguished from the rest of the sessions in that they are not for the purpose of producing conclusive knowledge to act on in the short term.

The BPFs documents are available in advance for study and comment, as preparation for the Forum. It is convenient to study them and make them known to specialists who may be interested in them and participate or support the participants. Once the IGF is finished, what has been learned and the BPF documents can be used immediately.

4. **Dynamic Coalitions (DC)**
   The Dynamic Coalitions (DC) are groups formed between IGF participants with a specific theme and a determined goal and that last for some years. Some DCs are those of Internet Rights and Principles, Internet Core Values, Net Neutrality, Internet Access in Libraries, and others of recent formation.

   In principle, the DCs should organize two types of sessions: an internal working sessions in which they discuss their organization and plan their activity, and a public multisectoral and expert discussion sessions that illustrate their results, invite participation, and open a wider analysis of its theme.

   The creation of new DC is subject to criteria regulated by the MAG; they must always have open meetings During the IGF 2016, one of the plenary sessions will be dedicated to the work of the Dynamic Coalitions.

   In 2016 at least a new training DC will be presented, whose theme is advertising, not in the sense of marketing and sales, but around the necessary public character of some types of information, and its contrast with the "right to forget".

5. **Open Forums**
   Open Forums are sessions of a single organizer, who tend to present organizations or to formulate discussion of very specific topics by a reduced number of actors. This does not prevent them from being of great interest, as will be the sessions organized by ICANN and the Internet Society in 2016.

6. **"Zero day"**
   a. High Level Event of the Host Country
      For some years, the government of the host country has organized an event under its leadership the day before the formal start of IGF sessions. Perhaps the initial milestone of this type of event was the Ministerial Meeting organized by the Kenyan government prior to the start of the Nairobi IGF a few years ago. Since the meeting needed information, criteria, and debate from other sectors, the name was changed in the following years. It is likely to be of general interest. The host Government has the ability to determine if this meeting is open or closed.

   b. Other
      Different actors such as companies and international organizations put on events on "Zero Day" authorized by the MAG and the Secretariat to

hold them at the premises of the Forum, or on its immediate periphery without the need for authorization. Some are of general interest and others are specialized by subject, region, or sector. In this category impromptu "flash sessions" are also included.

7.   **Other events**
Throughout the week, from before and until after the official IGF period, events will be held, such as training courses, debates, social meetings and others. Organizations such as ICANN and the Internet Society bring together interested parties and its members. Internet Society and other organizations will hold a training workshop on community networks for Internet connection of isolated or marginalized populations. Some organizations oriented towards the defense of human rights will hold coordination meetings. Governments of various countries and companies also put on training programs.

GIGANET is a research symposium on the Global research network for Internet governance, an academic association. The works submitted have been selected by an evaluation committee and represent some lines of research of high interest. Attendance is free.

In many countries and supra-national regions, working meetings on Internet governance are being conducted regularly. In some cases, these are meetings with operational conclusions, while in others, the orientation toward open dialog of the global IGF is maintained. These initiatives under the title NRI ("National and Regional Initiatives") will be mentioned in some sessions of the IGF. In the case of Mexico, two sessions on "dialogues about Internet governance" have been held in recent years.

During "day zero," the Internet Society organizes the CLX or "Collaborative Leadership Exchange" to bring together global and regional leaders of society with experts and focus groups of young people whose attendance it sponsors.

8.   **Participation and other related topics**
Participation in the IGF is open to all, as already mentioned in this document. Applicants intending to participate must register (prior to November 17, 2016) on the Website of the Forum or appear in person at the Headquarters (PALCCO, Zapopan, Jalisco, in the metropolitan area of Guadalajara) starting December 3.

IGF actively seeks to provide remote participation for those who cannot attend sessions in person. In each main session, a moderator is assigned for remote participation, who actively promotes it to participants present on the site. In addition, "hubs" or poles are established for remote participation, in which a meeting is organized around an Internet connection system. The "hubs" should be registered previously and receive special attention.

While the dominant language in the Forum is English, simultaneous interpretation is provided into the official languages of the UN in the main sessions. In the workshops and other non-plenary sessions, the availability of simultaneous interpretation depends on the organizer of the session or a donor who makes the necessary contribution to finance it.

It is important to note that participation in the IGF is governed by a code of conduct (see https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-code-of-conduct-0 to learn about it). This code is aimed at allowing maximum openness in the discussions within a framework of mutual respect among international agencies. Freedom of expression is protected under the UN flag and thus limits expressions directed at individuals or specific countries, display of banners, and other similar activities.

The Forum venue is under the UN flag, which means that the rules of conduct protect the citizens of countries subject to authoritarian and severe restrictions on freedoms of expression and association. For the inhabitants of some liberal countries, it is important to understand the liberating value of these conditions and be attentive to the origin and value of the restrictions that may accompany these standards. For the inhabitants of some liberal countries, it is important to understand the liberating value of these conditions and be attentive to the origin and value of the restrictions that may accompany these standards.

Outside of the enclosure, a more open space is often created, but that is subject to the national, state and municipal rules of the town where it is located. In this are located "booth" or "stand" type spaces of various organizations in which information is disseminated and informal interactions are encouraged.

Numerous and diverse organizations actively provide support, including with funding, the attendance of groups of experts, youth, activists, journalists, etc., according to the objectives of each. This enriches the participation and the diversity of the Forum and makes it especially attractive for the formation and consolidation of networks of interaction between people and organizations. At this time, (November 2016) these programs have closed their calls.

Attendance at the Forum does not exempt the participants on their own from achieving proper immigration status to be present at the site. Visas and entry permits must be managed in advance before the representations of the host country, applicable to the place of residence of the foreign participants.

2016 IGF Theme

IGF 2016 continues the original subject prescribed for the Forum in the agreements of the World Summit on the information society (WSIS) and the developments that have taken place over the years. The Forum was created by agreement of the UN General Assembly based on the WSIS and was extended by the same AG starting from the evaluation of the first decade in December of 2015.

The full program can be viewed at http://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/12/123 and click the interactive format on the homepage http://intgovforum.org with constant updates and options to use it dynamically on mobile devices.

The 2016 themes are Access and Diversity, Critical Internet Resources (a euphemism for identifiers such as domain names and IP addresses), cybersecurity, emerging themes, gender and youth, human rights on line, multisectoral cooperation ("Multistakeholder") and sustainable development and the Internet economy. As was mentioned before, a

plenary session and numerous workshops correspond to each one of them. Some workshops may be associated with different themes; for example, gender issues also appear in discussions of cybersecurity, human rights on line, multi-sectoral cooperation, and sustainable development, at least.

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References and additional information

CODE OF ETHICS
https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-code-of-conduct-0

The IGF programme:
http://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/12/123

Official Page of the Internet Governance Forum: http://www.intgovforum.org

Registration: https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-2016-registration
Note: deadline to register and participate in person in the IGF expires on November 17.

Dynamic Coalitions:
https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/dynamic-coalitions-4

Best practices forums:
https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/best-practice-forums-4

Information policy documents on the Internet by the Internet Society, "Policy Briefings", http://www.internetsociety.org/what-we-do/policy

""The Internet Ecosystem": (Internet Ecosystem, document of the Internet Society):
http://www.internetsociety.org/sites/default/files/Ecosystem_Factsheet.pdf

"Introduction to Internet Governance" e-book of the Diplo Foundation (available in several languages): www.diplomacy.edu/igbook

How to prepare proposals for workshops for IGF 2016 (and review) for the different types of sessions https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNnmoyDZ0wk&feature=youtu.be