NETmundial-Global Multistakeholder Meeting on the Future of Internet Governance
23-24th April, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

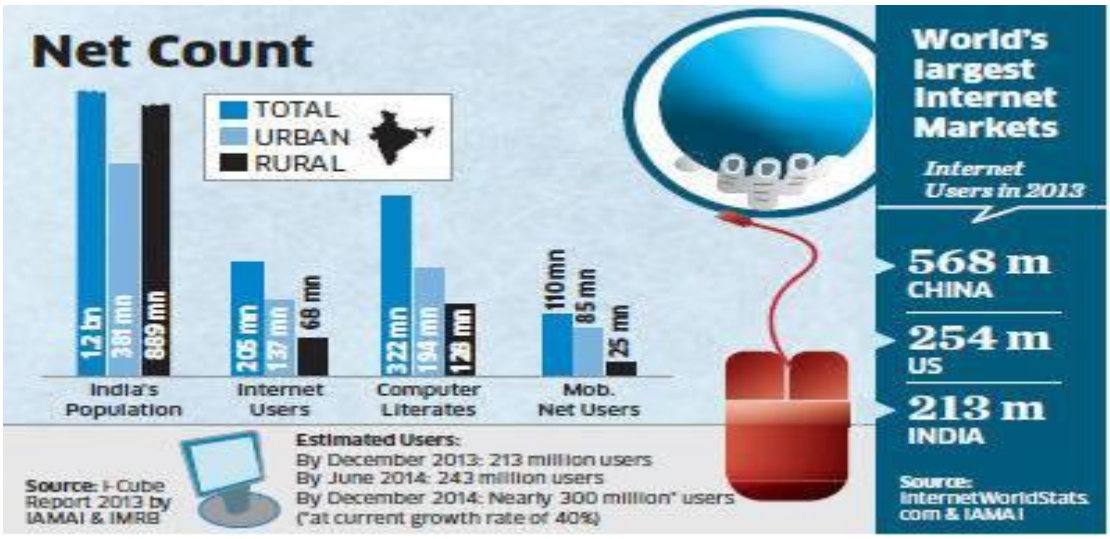
COAI Proposal

A. Internet Governance

1. The phenomenal growth of the Internet has facilitated individual empowerment and access to information, goods and services across borders; it has lowered entry barriers and supported the rapid development of small and medium sized enterprises; it has generated jobs for millions of people. In sum, the Internet has led to significant benefits to the society and the economy.

2. The Internet in India has only taken 3 years to grow from a subscribers' base of 100 million to 200 million. This has been catalysed by the growth of wireless telecom networks in India. On the back of higher adoption of mobile devices as a means to access the Internet according to the I-Cube 2013 report, the number of Internet users in India is expected to reach 243 million by June 2014. India is also expected to overtake the US as the second largest Internet base in the world by the same time. The robust growth is a result of fast growing Internet ecosystem with a multitude of local and global players and a thriving Internet economy.

3. Mobile Internet is going to be the game changer for Internet in India. Compared to 0.4 percent mobile Internet users in 2012, the penetration has grown to 2.4 percent, indicating a substantial growth in the mobile Internet user penetration levels. The National Telecom Policy (NTP) 2012 envisages broadband penetration to reach 600 million connections by 2020, this implies adding 7 million broadband connections each month from now onwards. According to an analysis conducted by McKinsey, the Internet economy in India could grow to $100 billion by 2015 to average 2.8 to 3.3 per cent of GDP, which could facilitate 22 million jobs, if India follows an inclusive path of Internet expansion.



4. Internet governance can be considered as the development and application of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that shape the evolution and use of the Internet. It applies to activities as diverse as the coordination of technical standards, the operation of critical infrastructure, development, regulation, and legislation of Internet. There is a need to develop a coherent strategy for Internet governance ensuring that difficult trade-offs between competing interests, as well as between distinct public values, are managed in a consistent, transparent and accountable manner that accurately reflects internet users priorities.

5. Multi-stakeholder or multi-lateral - two words encapsulating diametrically opposite views on internet governance stands at the heart of a raging debate across the globe. Multi-stakeholder control over the world wide web means parties other than governments, which include the tech community, academia, businesses and civil society. In a multi-lateral arrangement, only the governments will be the decision-makers and every other stakeholder barring the state, is relegated to a purely advisory role. Simply put, the choice is between total state control over the internet or a more democratic set-up where other sections of society are also represented.

6. Civil society and businesses are concerned that being relegated to an advisory role rather than a decision-making one could lead to disregarding or relegating their positions to a secondary level. Also with the internet being enhanced largely by private investment and individual demand it is important to safeguard their interests to enable sustained investment interest by potential investors who will enable the enhancement in networks providing access and services on the internet.

7. The internet architecture has traditionally been controlled by the US. The demand for a more democratised set-up, where other countries also have a voice, started in early 2000s. In 2005, a consensus document, Tunis Agenda, had been signed under the aegis of the UN. It laid out much of the terms of the debate around internet governance, including the focus on enhanced cooperation and the need for a multi-stakeholder model.

8. The internet architecture has had a significant bering on the leadership of the US in this regard. The demand for a more democratised set-up, where other countries also have a voice, started in early 2000s. In 2005, a consensus document, Tunis Agenda, had been signed under the aegis of the UN. It laid out much of the terms of the debate around internet governance, including the focus on enhanced cooperation and the need for a multi-stakeholder model.

9. In 2011, India put forward a detailed proposal for a multi-lateral UN body that was widely criticised by activists and business bodies at home. In Geneva, Government of India's response to a question on implementing "enhanced cooperation" in a WGEC questionnaire stated: "A suitable multilateral, transparent and democratic mechanism must be created where governments, on an equal footing, may carry out their roles and responsibilities in international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet and public policy issues pertaining to coordination and management of critical Internet resources, in consultation with all other stakeholders." This position has been crticised by cvil society and businesses.

10. A critical factor in the success of the Internet has been the multi-stakeholder framework and open access. In recent days, however, there is a growing concern about the excessive influence of one country over some of the internet governance mechanisms. Governments are coming to terms with their new role in the internet and social media space. The Tunis Agenda 2005 recognizes a role for multi-stakeholders such as government, businesses, civil society, technical community, academia and media.

11. Several meetings are expected to be held in 2014 including WSIS+10 Review (February), UN CSTD Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation (February), the Brazil conference “The Global Multistakeholder Meeting on the Future of Internet Governance” (April), ICANN High Level Meeting (June), UN Internet Governance Forum, Istanbul, Turkey (September) and ITU Plenipot in Busan, South Korea (October – November). Much of the discussion in these meetings is about initiating dialogue on core internet values and principles that must govern the internet at a national and global level.

B. Internet Governance Principles

12. COAI, which represents the largest industry association and serves nearly 800 million mobile subscribers, provides the platform for the single largest access to internet and social media platforms, using wireless devices, smart phones and other related technologies. Our members who are primarily responsible for access, and also participate in a range of issues which comprise the "internet governance" space, including Access and Diversity, Multilingualism, New Technologies such as IPv6, Cyber and Telecom Network Security and several Emerging Issues. A draft of some of the basic principles is provided below:

a) **Recognize and develop a multi-stakeholder approach to policy development:** Internet governance efforts cannot be limited to global governments; the Internet is a system that has thrived on the cooperation of a diversity of stakeholders including the industry, civil society, and the technical community. Therefore, an Internet governance policy has to be formed through an open, transparent and inclusive process.

b) **Support and promote an open and connected Internet:** The Internet has flourished in an open and free environment through a successful combination of user empowerment, consensus driven voluntary codes and free market dynamics. It must be recognized that the real value of the Internet comes from the fact that it empowers the individual to access and share information across borders and if barriers are introduced that interfere with this openness and connectivity, the real value of the Internet will be diminished. Therefore, any policy framework for the Internet must support openness and connectivity.

c) **Promote investment in critical infrastructure**: Deployment of high-speed broadband Internet networks is essential for promoting access, driving economic growth and creating jobs in India. India must invest in developing the required broadband infrastructure on a national scale public policy should provide appropriate incentives to the private sector to provide last mile connectivity to the end users, especially in rural areas**.**

d) **Promote and protect the free flow of information**: The Internet's openness has played a central role in empowering individual's to access and disseminate information globally. While the Govt. must work towards addressing concerns relating to protection of personal data, safety of children and cyber security, fundamental freedoms of speech and privacy should not be curtailed under the garb of security. The government must adopt a principles based approach to

surveillance especially ensuring an independent judicial oversight mechanism for all surveillance activities.

e) **Promote creation of multilingual content**: There is a dearth of multilingual content and public policy should provide incentives for entrepreneurs and app developers for the creation and dissemination of content in all major Indian languages. This will empower people from all states in India to access information, goods and services of their choice.

f) **Limit intermediary liability:** Intermediary laws in India need to be reviewed so that hampering of free speech on the Internet by encouraging private censorship of content and hindering innovation and investment by imposing burdensome compliances on intermediaries conducting business in India is taken care of. Laws imposing appropriate limitations on intermediary liability particularly in relation to third party content should be fair and reasonable and provide for expression of free speech within constitutionally permissible limits and allow intermediaries to provide services without undue harassment so that the Internet remains a level playing field that rewards innovation and entrepreneurship.

C. Roadmap for the Further Evolution of the Internet Governance Ecosystem

13. The policies that shape the Internet impact not only the development of the technologies themselves, but also the realization of internationally agreed human rights, social equity and interdependence, cultural concerns, and both social and economic development. Our vision is that Internet governance should be inclusive, people centered and development oriented. Any policy framework for the Internet must support openness and connectivity.

14. The avialbility of affordable broadband connectivity to support internet services must make a feasible business case for the private sector which is expected to invest most significantly in laying down the networks and infrastructure support.

15. Internet governance efforts should encompass all necessary stakeholders in a manner that ensures that views of all stakeholders including the Govt. are considered on an equal footing, and all stakeholders have a role in the decision-making.

16. The government must adopt a principles based approach to surveillance especially ensuring an independent judicial oversight mechanism for all surveillance activities. Futher, vernacular support should be encouraged to increase the proliferation of Internet services.