Internet Governance Principles: Securing the Future of the Internet

- Area: SET OF INTERNET GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES
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Abstract

When the fathers of the internet came up with the world wide web, they conceived a web architecture which is free and open. Therefore, as the world meets in Brazil to discuss the future of the internet it must bear in mind this facts and reflect upon the visions of the founders. That said, we must also be cognisant of the present day dynamics and challenges which force us to consider a set of internet governance principles. The mere mention of 'internet governance principles' does send alarm bells in to some quarters who see this as a mechanism in which nation states are seeking to take away the internet from the population. Therefore, it is with this in mind that I try and look at the existing governance principles which have been written and agreed upon in the last few years before the current storm brought about by Edward Snowden revelations. We wish to see a united approach in securing the future of the internet by agreeing on a set of internet governance principles.

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As noted in the Deauville G8 Declaration *the internet has become essential to our societies* and as such we envision a universal internet which embodies the principles as advocated by Brazilian President HE Dilma Rousseff in the 68 session of the United Nations General Assembly. In her speech to the assembly she addressed the following;

Creation of multilateral mechanism for the world wide network capable of ensuring principles such as; 1. Freedom of expression, privacy of the individual and respect of the human rights. 2. Open, multilateral and democratic governance, carried out with

transparency by stimulating collective creativity and the participation of society, governments and private sector. 3 Universality that ensures the social and human development and the construction of inclusive and non-discriminatory societies. 4. Cultural diversity, without the imposition of beliefs, customs and values. 5. Neutrality of the network, guided only by technical and ethical criteria, rendering it inadmissible to restrict it for commercial, religious or any other purposes.

The creation of a multilateral mechanism would see to it that the present day institutions such as ICANN are reforrmed to meet the concerns raised by president Dilma.

Touching on the Principles we would wish to see discussed in the Global Stakeholder meeting. We would wish to see the issues of Human Rights enjoyed by netzens addressed. This is in light of state centric developments where freedoms and rights of individuals online are sacrificed at the behest of 'national security' concerns. Under this we recognise the Brazilian Internet steering committee's principles for the governance and use of the internet - *Freedom, Privancy and Human Rights.* Which is driven by *the principles of expression, individual privacy and the respect of human rights, recognising them as essential to the preservation of a fair and democratic society.* This is in light of the Edward Snowden revelations on the National Security Agency spying activities.

Universality of the internet

Certain stakeholders have been looking for avenues of bypassing the United States in a new internet artchitecture so as to prevent spying by United States but doing so would interfear with the Universality of the internet as we know it today. Hence, the global stakehoder meeting must come up with a way forward on the current universality of the internet taking on board the concerns of routing traffic through USA. This has been efficiently put forth by the European Union Vice-President Neelie Kroes;

We should safeguard the idea that, on the internet, every node can communicate with every other. This unity is what allows the internet to thrive in the way it has; we need to avoid fragmentation. - Neelie Kroes, European Union Vice-President

Security of the internet /Security on the internet

Cybersecurity is the one of the problems of our time. A number of convention have come to play with the Convention of Europe being the most predominan one while from the part of the world I hail from, the African Union is currently in the last stages finalising the draft African Union Cybersecurity Convention. All this are as a result of real concerns on security on the internet. This is bound to become more complicated as we enter into the era of 'internet of things'.

The conversations around this realm have been instituted and revolve around the states level. however, there is need to broadedn these conversations to the non-state actors.