Perspectives from The Domain Name Association

- Area: COMBINED INTERNET GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES AND ROADMAP
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Abstract

The Domain Name Association believes the NETmundial meeting will be an important step in the evolution of governance and should focus on the presentation of narrow set of high level Internet Governance Principles. Attempts to deliver outcomes or decisions on highly complex issues in a limited forum would not be reflective of the multistakeholder holder approach. NETmundial?s High Level Principles will help frame on-going discussions at upcoming meetings that follow from this one where Internet Governance will also be discussed.

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Domain Name Association Introduction:

The Domain Name Association (The DNA) appreciates the opportunity to make this contribution to the Global Multi-stakeholder Meeting on the Future of Internet Governance. We sincerely appreciate the efforts of the Brazilian Government and CGI.br in leading and supporting this meeting and look forward to meaningful participation in Sao Paulo.

The DNA is the only non-profit global business association that represents the interests of the domain name industry. Its members are groups, businesses, and individuals involved in the provision, support, and sale of domain names. This includes such organizations as top-level domain name registry operators, registrars, resellers, and registry service providers. These are the operators of critical Internet infrastructure and as such have a keen interest and potentially unique contribution in these discussions. While our organization is relatively young, domain name industry members are globally dispersed, have been involved in the operations of the Internet since its founding, and avidly support and understand the importance of a single, interoperable Internet. In developing markets and domain name utility globally, it is important to The DNA that international Internet organisations are open to the needs and concerns of stakeholders from developing countries and that their processes are navigable and accessible.

Section 1. Internet Governance Principles:

As key participants in the Internet ecosystem, we have been closely following the recent developments surrounding Internet Governance. In our view, baseline discussion of Internet Governance Principles must include the following:

1. Unwavering commitment to a true multistakeholder bottom-up approach, which includes the institutions that have successfully fostered the development of the Internet to what it is today.

2. Governance principles that expect accommodate and encourage the evolution of technology and other forms of innovation. Evolution and change are the hallmarks of the Internet and its uses. The Internet in a few years time will differ markedly from what it is now. Its users have demonstrated remarkable resiliency in adapting to and fostering change. Technology, left to the private sector with appropriate governmental incentives, has demonstrated the ability to accommodate rapid change and growth.

3. Promotion and protection of the stability, security, interoperability, and resiliency of the Internet. Governments and the private sector should incentivize development of protocols and standards by appropriate standards and technical bodies to meet the needs of those expecting a secure, stable, resilient Internet.

4. Promotion of standard setting, regulatory, and legal environments across jurisdictional lines that support innovation, prevent malfeasance, and avoids unnecessary duplication or political interference.

5. Promotion, through incentives and lightweight regulatory schemes, of investment and development of high speed networks and cross border delivery of services.

We also appreciate the openness shown by the meeting organizers in soliciting these inputs and are hopeful that the final synthesis will occur in a multistakeholder and transparent manner to ensure all perspectives are accurately and appropriately reflected.

Section 2. Roadmap for the Further Evolution of the Internet Governance Ecosystem:

A detailed Road Map can be developed once agreed upon principles are developed. With only two days of consultation available during the meeting we believe that this meeting should seek to initiate discussions and debates as opposed to deliver outcomes or conclusions.

A general Roadmap follows a typical methodology. Once an agreed set of Internet Governance principles are developed, stakeholders in appropriate fora can:

· develop sets of objectives against each of the principles,

· measure the gap between the status quo and each of these objectives,

· form an issues statement identifying and describing the gaps or difference as the issues to be addressed,

· examine the available fora or Internet Governance bodies that develop policy or technical outcomes involved in these issues, and then

· test outcomes and develop implementation plans carefully to achieve broad multi-stakeholder consensus.

As supporters of the multistakeholder model that has operated in a way to bring the current vibrant Internet into being, we think that change should only be enacted through careful, thoughtful processes.

For example, as an active participant in the 1Net discussion forums, we have seen significant attention directed to the future of the IANA function. This has been a vibrant discussion but the possible intended and unintended effects resulting from specific changes are too complex to be developed without considerable analysis and test. Possible changes to the IANA function should be discussed after identification of the issues statement and the gap between its current operation and our principles.

Therefore, we believe that at this time it would be premature to try and reach conclusions on issues such as this and others. As such we encourage organizers and participants in NETmundial to focus on high level principles that will help frame on-going discussions at upcoming meetings such as the 2014 Internet Governance Forum, WSIS Review, High Level London Meeting and the ITU Plenipotentiary. In addition to the anticipated NETmundial session, we view the current set of Internet Governance Fora (http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/) to be an effective and available methodology for carrying discussion forward and developing principles.

Once again thank you for the opportunity to contribute and we look forward to bringing the perspectives of the Domain Name Association the NETmundial in Sao Paulo.