U.S. Government Submission for NETmundial

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Abstract

The Government of the United States of America appreciates the opportunity to participate in the ?Global Multi-stakeholder Meeting on the Future of Internet Governance,? or NETmundial. We commend the effort of the Brazilian government in coordination and consultation with the global Internet community to convene this meeting. We look forward to participating in meaningful discussions that generate support for the evolving multistakeholder framework for the future of Internet governance.

Document

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evolving multistakeholder framework for the future of Internet governance.

The United States Government submits the following contribution in response to the request for views on two topics:

1. "Internet governance principles," and
2. "A roadmap for the further evolution of the Internet governance ecosystem."

Internet Governance Principles

We understand that the meeting organizers would like participants to reach agreement on Internet governance principles. Achieving consensus on such a set of principles will require flexibility, a fair process, and cooperation. Our primary goal is to work with all stakeholders to achieve shared support for multistakeholder Internet governance.

There is precedent for this effort, as other conferences, organizations, nations, and individuals have previously compiled high level principles on Internet governance. Accordingly, we submit that a good starting point for discussions would be the consideration of principles that are common among these existing efforts and have already garnered widespread or universal support.

Based on our review of, and participation in, the formulation of various sets of principles, we note that many of these efforts include the following goals for Internet governance and policymaking:

1. Commitment to the multistakeholder approach, with processes rooted in democratic values, involving the participation of all interested stakeholders, and occurring in a transparent manner.
2. Protection of human rights, which apply online just as they do offline.
3. Promotion of universal and non-discriminatory access to the Internet.
4. Promotion of the stability, security, interoperability, and functionality of the network.
5. Promotion of standard setting, regulatory, and legal environments that support innovation and avoid unnecessary duplication.

These principles appear in previous works that the U.S. has supported, including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Council Recommendations on Principles for Internet Policymaking, the founding declaration for the Freedom Online Coalition, and the Deauville G8 declaration. These goals are also the basis for many independent sets of principles, notably including the Brazilian Internet Steering Committee's (CGI.br) principles and the United States' International Strategy for Cyberspace, as well as many other documents from civil society and other stakeholders.

We welcome the consideration of additional similar common principles.

We believe it is wise to avoid excessive deliberation on issues known to divide participants beyond a distance that can reasonably be bridged in two days. For example, we would discourage meeting participants from debating the reach or limitations of state sovereignty in Internet policy. We are optimistic that *NETmundial* can meaningfully contribute to the development of Internet governance principles by focusing on those topics that enjoy broad support.

A roadmap for the further evolution of the Internet Governance ecosystem

The High Level Panel on Global Internet Cooperation and Governance Mechanisms is currently convening to review the multistakeholder system of Internet governance and propose recommendations for future growth and evolution. We understand that the panel will construct proposals for discussion during *NETmundial*. We look forward to considering these proposals and we appreciate the other multistakeholder efforts to explore opportunities for positive, inclusive evolution and cooperative problem solving.

Ultimately, the Internet's global multistakeholder community should work cooperatively on continuing to improve and evolve the Internet governance ecosystem. The more open and inclusive the approach, the greater the legitimacy the system will have.

The United States government believes that existing multistakeholder institutions deserve significant credit for the Internet's global growth and dynamism and should remain the cornerstones of the Internet governance ecosystem. Multistakeholder organizations should continue to evolve alongside changing technologies and stakeholder needs and to address all relevant opportunities and challenges. Governments should participate meaningfully in this system, and may also play an enabling or facilitating role to help the multistakeholder system to function well. Finally, governments should ensure that the proper incentives and environment are in place domestically so that a single, interoperable Internet can flourish globally, enabling freedom of expression and economic prosperity.