African Stakeholders? Contribution to NetMundial

- Area: COMBINED INTERNET GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES AND ROADMAP
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Abstract

Contribution from cross-section of African stakeholders active in ICT and IG that emphasizes the need for Internet Governance to uphold the general principles of neutrality, inclusion, access to and transparency of the Internet while retaining an open architecture that promotes innovation and advances socio-economic development for all.

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African Stakeholders' Contribution to NetMundial

(This contribution is the collective effort of various African stakeholders active in the ICT and IG spaces, representing diverse sectorial, linguistic and geographic contexts.)

Agreement on the principles to be adopted under NetMundial should consider the following principles:

A. Internet Governance Principles

? The Internet is an inalienable public good that enables creativity, innovation and the emergence of new economic models.

? The Internet must retain its nature as an open-architecture tool for economic, social, cultural and scientific advancement.

? Globally accepted laws and standards that enable and protect human rights in everyday life should apply.

? Access to the Internet should be a universal right. It should be affordable, multilingual and open to all without censorship or restraint. Such access should be governed by a respect for minorities, linguistic and cultural diversity, intellectual property, freedom of expression and the privacy and protection of personal data, minorities and children.

? National regulatory agencies have a role to play in verifying the quality and consistency of services provided to end-users

? The technical management of the Internet should be inclusive, reliable, professional and transparent. It should adhere to the principles of multi-stakeholderism as stated in the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society.

? Critical Internet resources (including root servers, IP addresses, autonomous system numbers and spectral resources) must be governed by international law within a multi-stakeholder framework that ensures the Internet remains open and non-segmented.

? A secure Internet is one in which all peoples rights and freedoms are protected. Governments must continue to ensure that the security and protection of citizens is

balanced by the protection of their rights and freedoms as enshrined in international laws.

? The general principles of neutrality, inclusion, access to and transparency of the Internet underlie all these suggested principles.

B. Road map for further evolution of the Internet Governance Ecosystem

The road map for the evolution of Internet Governance must integrate models and mechanisms that are inclusive, transparent and neutral and serve the global public interest. The regional, national and global Internet Governance Forums as established by the Tunis Agenda are important. Specifically:

? Representation must be cross-sectorial with a balance of powers and responsibilities across stakeholders. It should support/adopt the multi-stakeholder model in accordance with paragraph 35 of the Tunis Agenda.

? Mechanisms must be in place to enable the effective participation of all stakeholders across all geographic regions particularly those from developing and least developed countries.

? Engagement and interaction between various actors must be strengthened to improve the quality and outcomes of the Internet Governance Forum and lead to increased influence on policy and governance of the Internet.

? The community must commit to clearly defining the role of government and other stakeholders in a multi-stakeholder environment that respects freedom and openness.

? While operational and technical management and maintenance of the integrity of the Internet is the responsibility of the private sector and specialized technical professional communities, all stakeholders should have a say in how the Internet evolves, develops and is governed.