The Telecommunications Industry Association Submission for NETmundial

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Abstract

The Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) and its member companies would like to thank the Government of Brazil and organizers for the opportunity to submit a contribution to help facilitate the discussions at the ?Global Multistakeholder Meeting on the Future of Internet Governance? (NETmundial) to be held in So Paulo, Brazil. Our comments are divided into three sections that provide examples of Internet governance principles that are commonly supported by many types of organizations, comments on the concept of a "roadmap" for Internet governance, and practical actions that countries can take to further enhance the deployment of the infrastructure to enhance access to the Internet.

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The Telecommunications Industry Association Submission for *NETmundial*

The Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) and its member companies would like to thank the Government of Brazil and organizers for the opportunity to submit a contribution to help facilitate the discussions at the “Global Multistakeholder Meeting on the Future of Internet Governance” (*NETmundial*) to be held in São Paulo, Brazil. TIA represents the global information and communications technology (ICT) industry through standards development, advocacy, policy initiatives, business opportunities, and market

intelligence. With support from hundreds of members, TIA enhances the business environment for companies involved in telecommunications, broadband, mobile wireless, information technology, networks, cable, satellite, unified communications, emergency communications, and the greening of technology.

We applaud the organizers for their efforts to stay true to the principle of "the multistakeholder model" by opening this event to the global Internet community, and we look forward to the contribution of the conference to the global discussion on enhancing the multistakeholder approach to Internet governance. As governments, inter-governmental organizations, academia, the private sector, civil society, the technical community, and other stakeholders discuss the evolution of the multistakeholder approach to Internet governance, participants of *NETmundial* should be mindful of creating an environment that promotes sustainable growth of and global access to the Internet. In response to the invitation for submissions for the agenda of the *NETmundial* conference, TIA submits the following views on beginning a dialogue on identifying a set of universal Internet governance principles and developing a "Roadmap for the Further Evolution of the Internet Governance Ecosystem".

Internet Governance Principles

Today, there exists a significant body of work by a variety of stakeholders to identify Internet governance principles, beliefs, and statements. The result of these efforts has led to a variety of positions on what exactly constitutes Internet governance, which are sometimes aligned and at other times divergent. In our view, an important goal of *NETmundial* will be to examine the variety of statements on Internet Governance and identify those principles that are universal in nature – principles that are commonly supported by a broad spectrum of stakeholders.

Given the rapid pace of technological change and the always evolving ways that persons and organizations make use of the Internet, it would be best to avoid principles that are overly prescriptive as they risk obsolescence in the near term. Principles that are high-level, technology-neutral, and focused on "the network", that is the Internet, will help ensure that any Internet governance principles identified at *NETmundial* remain relevant now and into the future. With these views in mind, TIA provides the following suggested principles for *NETmundial*:

- Ensure the stability, security, interoperability, and functionality of the Internet.
- Commit to the multistakeholder approach, and encourage openness and transparency in consultative processes related to technical and policy

aspects of Internet governance.

- Recognize the important economic role the Internet plays by minimizing impediments to the global flow of information on the Internet for the delivery of online services, applications, software, and other commercial uses.
- Promote universal access to the Internet.
- Promote voluntary, consensus-based standards that are developed in an open and transparent manner by a broad range of standards development organizations.
- Encourage policies that stimulate investment and deployment of networks and consumer uptake of connected devices, while avoiding policies that may distort the market and impede investment.

Roadmap for the Further Evolution of the Internet Governance Ecosystem

We recognize that there are a broad range of existing technical and policy discussions in various fora underway on the evolution of Internet governance, and believe that *NETmundial* can supplement these ongoing dialogues. However, we urge that the conference participants and organizers to refrain from attempting to create a specific roadmap, which could detract from other efforts underway to evolve the governance of the Internet.

We suggest three important themes be incorporated into these discussions of a possible roadmap: (1) the centrality of the multistakeholder approach to Internet governance; (2) the evolution of Internet governance is a continuing dialogue amongst a broad range of stakeholders and fora; and (3) the current governance model has resulted in the exponential growth of the Internet. We look forward to the proposals of *Netmundial* and its contribution to enhancing the exchange of ideas on Internet governance that will ensure the stability and continued growth of the Internet for the benefit of the global Internet community.

Practical Actions to Facilitate the Growth and Access to the Internet

While the discussion on the evolving multistakeholder approach to Internet governance is being thoughtfully considered, there are still fundamental challenges today on how to bridge the digital divide and how the public and private interests will enhance deployment of the Internet. TIA acknowledges that there are existing venues where these questions are being discussed, but the following is a non-exhaustive list of policies and practical suggestions that countries can implement today to encourage widespread investment and adoption of the Internet, including the mobile Internet.

- Promote joining the WTO Information Technology Agreement.
- Reduce tariffs on fixed and mobile telecommunications infrastructure equipment, undersea cables, and mobile devices and services.
- Remove local content requirements.
- Streamline customs procedures of ICT equipment.
- Strengthen intellectual property rights protection.
- Recognize and adopt market-based global voluntary standards, rather than country-specific standards.

TIA thanks the organizers for the opportunity to contribute to the dialogue at *NETmundial*, and should participants be interested in a discussion about any of the above topics or other suggestions TIA has, please contact us.