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Participación Remota para inclusión e impacto en los procesos de políticas internacionales de Gobernanza del Internet

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Good afternoon,

My name is Ginger Paque, from Maracay, Venezuela. I am coordinator of DiploFoundation's Internet Governance Capacity Building program, and co-coordinator of the Internet Governance Caucus or IGC. Thank you, Martha (CLARA) for your emphasis in the fact that nowadays research is a global exercise, a point I will also make now. And to Ana Laura for underlining the digital divide, which is so obvious that we sometimes forget that it is part of every issue... and Fernando for your work on Open Source, which is the future for all of us.

My colleagues on this panel are a clear demonstration that Latin America and the Caribbean are fortunate to have strong regional initiatives and programs such as LACNIC, ISOC, Fundación Getulio Vargas, Fundación Via Libre en Argentina, Derechos Digitales en Chile, APC in Latin America, as well as many other organizations and individuals working in Information and Communications Technologies. Their work is solid, informative and complete. There are many organizations and individuals working in the areas of digital inclusion, digital rights, access to knowledge, broadband, and other areas.

DiploFoundation offers courses in Internet governance capacity building. It is a program that is especially useful for specialists like yourselves, who have a deeper knowledge of one area of specialization in Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), but might be weaker in another aspect. For example, a lawyer might have mastery of the legal facets, but less knowledge in infrastructure or economics. Another might understand perfectly the nuances of the socio-cultural themes, but need more information on security and privacy, the role of government or how these themes affect development. In this course, the participants themselves are the experts, and teach, while the facilitators share and learn in a dynamic environment, to fill in our needs in order to be able to take part in the international policy processes surrounding Internet governance.

In a similar way, today, I am not here to offer you something, but am here to ask for your collaboration. YOU are the experts, you are the researchers. You have worked hard and long to produce valuable information for all of us.

These resources, the ideas that you have developed, and the product of so much work, should be included in the international processes so that this information can be used to maximum advantage.

Nonetheless, it is not easy to finance the participation and engagement of our members in regional and international meetings in India, Paris, Cairo and other places. But we can use Remote Participation to complete and reinforce our direct impact on the international policy processes that surround Internet Governance in particular. Today, I will use the example of the Internet Governance Forum or IGF, which is an important environment for discussions on IG or Internet Governance, particularly when dealing with less technical and more intangible concepts such as Diversity, Access, Openness, Privacy, Human Rights, Child Protection or similar issues. These techniques can be adapted for other processes as well.

For those of you not familiar with the IGF, it is the discussion space that grew out of the Tunis Agenda of the World Summit on the Information Society.

The mandate of the IGF is that of a discussion forum for facilitating dialogue between multistakeholder participants.

All of you study, and carry out research. You work with words. So you should easily be able to understand that the IGF is a space designed for “talking”. This is one definite case where “walk the talk” actually does mean talking. Talk can be action, and in this situation, it is. But for talk to be worth anything, first you must define your issue, and define your objective. You cannot get what you want if you don’t know what it is. Do you want to raise awareness on a particular issue? Do you want it to be publicized so that its importance and pros and cons become obvious to people working in the field, so that its conflicts will be debated and possibly solved? Just as in any other area, you must know first what your goal is. Then set up a plan.

Although this forum takes place during 4 days at the end of each year, most of the significant debates are going on during the whole year. This year has already seen dynamic meetings and planning, such as the discussions on the IGC mailing list, the Open Consultations with the IGF Secretariat in Geneva, and the Multistakeholder Advisory Group or MAG meetings. Statements are already online, and the process is already started on its way to Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt in November.

The process of input for the Sharm el Sheikh meeting actually began in India last year. Not only at the meeting itself, but later online, through statements, questionnaires and YouTube videos. Individuals from all over the world have told the Secretariat what they liked and did not like about the 2008 IGF. What went well, what didn’t, what was missing, what was excessive. We even mentioned that we thought the lunch at the venue was a great idea for continuing networking meetings, and that there were not enough electrical outlets at the conference venue. Of course major issues were evaluated as

well, such as what will be the overarching theme for 2009, and how the main sessions and workshops should be managed.

I do find it almost unbelievable that only 26 people filled out the IGF Secretariat formal questionnaire. How do we dare say we have no opportunity for input after a lack of response like that?

Who here answered the questionnaire? Made a YouTube video, worked on drafting a statement to be read into the OC? Followed the OC meetings on Twitter? Who is a friend of the IGF on Facebook? These are all chances to start raising your topic among the people who are involved in IG.

If you presented an idea, and it was not taken into account in the Synthesis paper published by the Secretariat, or not given the emphasis or summary you thought it deserved, it was still possible to write a statement to be read aloud and included in the transcript at the Open Consultation in Geneva in February, again in May or once again in September if you or your organization were unable to be present. Every statement emailed to the Secretariat in February was read aloud and noted.

Additional asynchronous continuous involvement from stakeholders can go on all year:

- The IGF has 57 videos on YouTube, 40 followers on Twitter, 223 friends on Facebook, 6 photos posted by Chengatai to Flickr, and 3,156 users on the IGF Forum at the igf2009.org site. Take advantage of these tools.
- Continuous input to the IGC list to collaborate on important issues, or new issues you want to bring up is another option.

Synchronous and asynchronous well-prepared involvement--including the gathering of several people's or groups' ideas into one statement, is a direct and efficient way of presenting an idea and showing that it has multistakeholder support. This can be achieved in many ways:

- Work with a Dynamic coalition on your issue, or form and facilitate a DC in your subject area
- Make a statement to the OCs, and attend the OC through RP
- Prepare Workshop proposals or suggest a focus, and find partners for networking for workshop collaborations on the IGC list
- Continue your follow-up on workshops. Support or join another workshop effort
- Stay current on contributions to the IGF website--the statements and workshops in particular. This is a good way to find partners for similar issues.
- Prepare a Regional IGF, which emits a statement to the IGF Secretariat like the one organized by Ken Lohento in Africa, which then can make a recommendation, or a declaration, and have it seriously considered as a contribution at the IGF in Egypt.

Then you have Attendance at the IGF itself--If not in person, you can always :

- Organize or attend a Remote Hub in parallel to the IGF-- 8 hubs were registered to the IGF 2008 and more are expected in 2009. Olga Carvalho, and Monica Abalo organized a very successful RP hub in Argentina. There was also one in Sao Paolo, Brazil, and one in Colombia.
- Attend and participate in the 2009 IGF through RP's webcast, audio, chat and video interventions.

All of these facets of RP will be improved at this year's IGF, as the Secretariat and RPWG have already begun preparations, including more training of participants and moderators to foster successful inclusion during the sessions.

Internet rights and principles has been proposed as a major theme again this year. The IGC, supported by other groups such as APC are requesting Internet Rights and principles as an overarching theme or issue for 2009. In spite of substantive discussion and agreement at the OC in February, this has still not been accepted.

The IGC has noted and discussed this, and the issue will come up again at the OC in May. One does not give up after just one try! If a group has a long range goal of getting an issue like Internet Rights and Principles as a major theme, you can't just try once and give up! You have to plan, bring it in, bring it up, introduce the idea, get it accepted or rejected, then try again. That's how new ideas get introduced. Critical internet resources was brought in as a theme in this way. Remote participation had a hard time getting off the ground, with setbacks in Rio, and a slow start for India, but now has widespread support.

What is my conclusion?: You can change the world of IG. You have to know what you want, you have to clarify your issue, and what you want to achieve with it, and plan a strategy to insert it in the appropriate forum. You have to be motivated, you have to be willing to work. But whether you want to highlight a tool for inclusion, like RP, or you want to shift emphasis to another area, like a rights and principles-based agenda for the IGF, teamwork, coordination, motivation and more hard work will get you a long way.

Notes:

www.Igf2009.org
www.igfremote.org
www.igcaucus.org
www.diplomacy.edu/ig

According to paragraph 72 of the Tunis Agenda, the IGF will *"identify emerging issues, bring them to the attention of the relevant bodies and the general public, and, where appropriate, make recommendations,"* but the IGF does not have any direct decision-making authority.

(<http://www.intgovforum.org/mandate.htm> paragraph 72 of Tunis Agenda)

The discussion lists are a good way to try out ideas, as no one is afraid to take a stance. You will get a good idea of the reactions, a straightforward response that will help you critique your ideas. You might not like what you hear, but it is the best advice you can possibly get. The discussion will help you understand more facets of the situation, and will even help you to trial and prepare counter arguments. You will learn from people from different backgrounds and balance perspectives

An example of successful persistence through interaction was bringing "critical internet resources" onto the agenda last year and as a main theme for the second day at the 2009 IGF.

“While some favoured the inclusion of ‘Internet rights and principles’ as a cross-cutting theme, the view was also held that there was no established definition of this theme and that therefore it should not be discussed at the Sharm El Sheikh meeting”.

23-24 February: Open Consultations
25-26 February: MAG meeting
Location: ITU Room B

15 April 2009: Workshop proposals for Sharm El Sheikh meeting submission deadline.

13 May: Open Consultations
14-15 May: MAG meeting
Location: UN/Palais des Nations

16 September: Open Consultations
17-18 September: MAG meeting
Location: [EBU, Geneva](#)

15-18 November: 4th IGF Meeting in Sharm El Sheikh.

Remote participation had definite success last year, and will be better this year. RP through Dimdim was used for more than 450 event-hours after the start of the event with a total of 522 attendees who joined the remote meetings throughout the four day event. This was approximately 130 attendees per day and 16 attendees per room. Each web meeting had approximately 4 remote hubs connected. There were an average of 15 physical attendees in each workshop room in the venue, so the ratio of physical attendees to remote attendees was approximately 4:1.

- Dimdim was used for more than 450 event-hours after the start of the event.
- A total of 522 attendees joined the remote meetings all throughout the four day event. This roughly approximates to 130 attendees per day and 16 attendees per room. This count is cumulative.
- On an average each, web meeting had approximately 4 remote hubs connected.
- On an average there were 15 physical attendees in each workshop room in the venue. So the ratio of physical attendees to remote attendees was approximately 4:1.
- In about 8 sessions, including the main session, questions posed by the remote participants were relayed to the session coordinators in the physical room. The presenters in the physical rooms answered these questions which were heard by the remote participants.
- The video and audio of the remote participants were projected across the big screen in the physical venue (and to all the other remote participants) and full audio video interaction was enabled.
- DimDim was also used to enable panelists to speak remotely.