

SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE BULLETIN

BULLETIN NO 4

Headlines and Key Remarks from the Global Digital Compact Thematic Deep-Dives on “Digital Inclusion and Connectivity” ([page 1](#)) and “Internet Governance” ([page 8](#))

The Summit of the Future (SOTF) Information Clearinghouse Bulletin is an initiative to objectively present the key elements and highlights of the SOTF preparatory meetings taking place at the United Nations.

PROJECT TEAM: Eliane El Haber and Jebilson Raja Joslin (Lead Authors, Bulletin No 4), Mwendwa Kiogora, Jeffery Huffines and Fergus Watt.

PROJECT PARTNERS:



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Global Digital Compact Thematic Deep-Dive – Digital Inclusion and Connectivity (27 March 2023)

ABOUT: The first thematic deep dive or informal consultations on the Global Digital Compact (GDC) was held on 27 March 2023 at the Trusteeship Council Chamber. “[The deep dives](#) aim to share knowledge and views, as well as allow for contributions on a wide range of digital issues”. The Permanent Representative (PR) of Rwanda – H.E. Mr. Claver Gatete and PR of Sweden – H.E. Ms. Anna Karin Eneström are [Co-Facilitators](#) of the intergovernmental process negotiating the GDC.

The meeting started with a presentation from the Secretary-General (SG) of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin followed by briefings from Mr. Gbenga Sesan, Executive Director of [Paradigm Initiative](#), representing civil society and Mr. Karim Lesina, Executive Vice-President of [Millicom](#), representing industry. Member State (MS) interventions followed the presentations after which civil society representatives made their interventions (refer “Stakeholder Remarks” in pages 7).

HEADLINES

Making the necessary efforts and investments to provide universal access to the internet for everyone by 2030, as mentioned by both Singapore and G77.

Common Themes

Upgrading of digital infrastructure was stressed as a critical area in need of attention by various MS to ensure improved connections for all citizens. Another significant issue was online safety, with several MS emphasizing how crucial it is to give their citizens a safer digital environment. An additional crucial aspect was affordability, with several MS emphasizing the significance of ensuring that all citizens, whatever their financial situation, had access to digital services. Digital literacy and skills were also given a lot of attention, with several MS highlighting how crucial it is for citizens to develop their digital literacy. The safety of women and children online was also emphasized with several MS stressing the significance of making the Internet a safer place for these vulnerable populations. Other important areas of focus included funding and investment, with some MS pointing to its significance for achieving digital advancements at the global level. Another significant issue was digital inclusion, with several MS emphasizing how crucial it is to guarantee that all citizens have access to digital services. As various MS discussed the significance of building a safer digital environment for their citizens, privacy and security was a major area of concern. Finally, meaningful connection was emphasized by numerous MS, who stressed the need to ensure that all individuals have access to high-quality digital services.

Highlights

SG of the ITU Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We cannot let existing digital divides widen when 2.7 billion people remain offline, including about two-thirds of the LDC population
Mr. Gbenga Sesan, Executive Director of Paradigm Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Multi-lingual digital inclusion focused on youth has a multiplier effect and helps to erase long-held literacy-means-understanding-English assumptions. ✦ Programs must be designed WITH those who are living through exclusion, not in comfortable strategy rooms.
Cuba on behalf of G77 and China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We underline the importance of ensuring synergies and avoiding duplication across various entities and processes related to global digital cooperation. To this end, we would like to highlight other important existing platforms in this regard, including ITU, the Internet Governance Forum, and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The digital transition cannot come at the expense of the green transition. We will promote green data centers and the deployment of submarine telecom cables equipped with ocean monitoring sensors. ✦ The spread of mis- and disinformation are among the challenges. Connecting people to internet should go hand-in-hand with the necessary digital skills
Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We must rally behind a human-centric approach to digital transition based on human rights and democratic principles
Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We should aim for interoperability at the global level. The GDC can include ideas on how different system can become interoperable, for example the integration of payment systems between India and Singapore.
Lithuania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ When natural disasters and conflicts strike, satellite connectivity will be the only option, thus, we must also look at it
Iran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We hope the global network will not be used to achieve political goals of countries that dominate the sector and that the GDC will address impediments to universal access. ✦ There is a need to protect women and children from online harm and emphasize the need to respect cultural differences
Colombia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We welcome participation of all relevant stakeholders from the private sector and academia to people living in vulnerable situations
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Unilateral Coercive Measures have exacerbated the digital divide between developing and developed countries. The UN must play a leading role in the digital space
Switzerland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ GDC must take into account the UN Internet Governance Forum
Republic of Korea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Must consider digital accessibility to all members of the society, including the elderly and vulnerable by developing accessibility design guidelines
Uruguay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ In Uruguay, the digital divide is not due to income, thanks to government policies, but due to education

RESOURCES

1. [Letter from the Co-Facilitators – 20 March 2023](#)

STATEMENTS

2. [SG of the ITU Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin](#)
3. [Cuba on behalf of G77 and China](#)
4. [European Union](#)

KEY REMARKS

<p>Rwandan Co-Facilitator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Inviting all speakers to consider the following guiding questions, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can governments, international organizations, private companies, and civil society work together to close the digital divide and improve access, skills, and meaningful connectivity for all? 2. What actions should be taken to enable digital inclusion for all? 3. What policies, frameworks and programs have proven to be most successful and should be scaled up and adapted to other contexts to foster digital inclusion?
<p>SG of the ITU Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We cannot let existing digital divides widen when 2.7 billion people remain offline, including about two-thirds of the LDC population ✦ Three specific action areas to frame our discussions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access – What will it take to bring digital infrastructure access to everyone on the planet? Estimates from ITU and the IMF put that price tag at around at least 400 billion dollars. 2. Adoption – Right now, 95% of the global population lives within range of a mobile broadband network, but many people forgo connectivity because they can't afford it. They don't feel safe online, or the content just isn't meaningful or useful enough 3. Value Creation – the societal return on investment that digital brings. Our efforts must be motivated by the value digital technologies can create – not only to improve individual lives and livelihoods, but also to entire communities and economies. We can accelerate this even further by empowering marginalized groups to innovate digital services and resources that bring value to their communities. ✦ The digital future the UN targets envision is one where – everyone aged 15 or older uses the Internet, has a mobile phone, and is covered by the latest generation of mobile networks; where 100% of schools are connected (Giga Programme) and at least 70% of the world's population is digitally skilled enough to send an email, and over half can install new apps on their phone; and where broadband is affordable for all. ✦ Led by ITU, the Office of the Tech Envoy and OHRLLS, Partner2Connect has already mobilized over 600 pledges worth \$30 billion. Each pledge represents a concrete investment to bring connectivity to some of the hardest-to-connect places in the world. ✦ The GDC can catalyze action on digital inclusion and connectivity – by considering the work of the high-level panel on digital cooperation, and building on already existing platforms such as WSIS, the Broadband Commission, and CSTD. ✦ We are also seeing exciting developments in the Joint SDG Fund's new window on Digital Transformation – coordinated by ITU and UNDP to be launched later this year – which has identified “inclusive digital connectivity” among its investment strategies with the highest potential to accelerate the SDGs
<p>Mr. Gbenga Sesan, Executive Director of Paradigm Initiative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ For digital inclusion progress, we shouldn't only amplify successful models but must also admit and learn from failures. We must move from a mindset that assigns success to individual actors to one of joint ownership of wins based on diverse contributions. ✦ It is necessary to audit and mandate action for Universal Provision of Services across various countries while also making digital exclusion expensive by punishing countries that deliberately cut off citizens from digital opportunities ✦ Multilingual digital inclusion focused on youth has a multiplier effect and helps to erase long-held literacy-means-understanding-English assumptions. ✦ Programs must be designed WITH those who are living through exclusion and not in comfortable strategy rooms.
<p>Mr. Karim Lesina, Executive Vice-President of Millicom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ As we have transport infrastructure to move goods, we need digital infrastructure to move data and connect economies. Thus, we need to devote more resources to create digital infrastructure. ✦ To connect the unconnected, we suggest the following steps

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We need to keep raising the money needed to invest in digital infrastructure projects that can give secure returns 2. Change old axioms – reduce spectrum costs and sectoral taxes on technology 3. Teach communities on how to connect safely 4. Different markets and countries should be seen differently <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ While connectivity is infrastructure, the digital divide is now largely about Digital Literacy, Digital Safety & affordability (not just of connection, but also of devices). Calling for more tech adapted to low-income markets to increase connectivity.
Cuba on behalf of G77 and China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We underline the importance of ensuring synergies and avoiding duplication across various entities and processes related to global digital cooperation. To this end, we would like to highlight other important existing platforms in this regard, including ITU, the Internet Governance Forum, and the World Summit on the Information Society. ✦ Accelerating efforts to provide universal and affordable connectivity and access to the Internet by 2030 must be a central pillar of the GDC. ✦ Developing countries face common challenges including lack of infrastructure, high cost of digital equipment, lack of digital skills and literacy, that must be tackled through scaling up investments in digital infrastructure, technology transfer to developing countries, solidarity, cooperation and capacity building. ✦ The GDC should advance and promote international cooperation as well as development and technical assistance to address these issues, and promote new and innovative models of investment and funding to enhance connectivity. ✦ The GDC should also be the catalyst for the development of viable strategies to rapidly reduce the cost of information and communications technologies. ✦ It is important to avoid unnecessary politicization of technical issues to foster an open, fair, inclusive, and non-discriminatory environment for the development of digital technologies in developing countries ✦ The GDC should encourage international and regional cooperation to create an enabling environment at all levels, improve digital skills and literacy, develop and widen beneficial ICT applications, and foster and respect cultural diversity ✦ The Group also considers that other issues significantly impacting digital divide include technological monopoly, the promulgation and application of unilateral economic, financial or trade measures, the absence of consistent dialogue and institutionalized mechanisms for sharing knowledge, experience, expertise, and technologies and the need to improve regulatory frameworks.
European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Affordable access is not enough – we also need trust. Citizens need to know that their online data remains private and secure; that their right to privacy is preserved. ✦ We see the GDC as an opportunity to move towards human-centric, high-quality universal connectivity. Not only ‘connecting the unconnected’, but ‘connecting everyone meaningfully’. ✦ Global Gateway partnerships will contribute to deploying digital networks and infrastructure. We prioritize underserved regions, countries and populations. ✦ Hard infrastructure is not enough. A modern regulatory framework is another driver of success. ✦ We also need soft infrastructure for inclusion. Digital Public Infrastructure is essential for individuals to access public and private digital services. For example, World Bank data shows that lack of identification was a key barrier to opening a bank account. ✦ In order to monitor progress, the EU is working with the ITU on Universal Meaningful Connectivity Indicators that allow for the promotion of regulatory convergence and harmonization of digital policies worldwide. It is crucial that the GDC establishes baselines, targets and indicators for Universal Meaningful Connectivity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The digital transition cannot come at the expense of the green transition. We will promote green data centers and the deployment of submarine telecom cables equipped with ocean monitoring sensors. ✦ The spread of mis- and disinformation are among the challenges. Connecting people to internet should go hand-in-hand with the necessary digital skills ✦ Cybersecurity awareness and hygiene underpin the digital transformation
Brazil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ GDC must address systemic risks and promote international digital cooperation, knowledge sharing and technology transfer ✦ The specific needs and national priorities of recipient countries must be considered and thus flexible resources free of conditionalities are needed ✦ GDC must be focused on development and be human-centered and build on the Tunis Agenda
Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Need to ensure full and meaningful access to the digital world, including through digital literacy; availability of content in local languages; civic participation without undue censorship; safeguarding users' data; and including voices of women and youth
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Unilateral Coercive Measures have exacerbated the digital divide between developing and developed countries. The UN must play a leading role in the digital space ✦ We must stick to multilateralism, deepening international solidarity and cooperation based on mutual trust and respect ✦ GDC must take a people-centered approach ✦ To improve digital infrastructure and connectivity, we must mobilize both public and private resources ✦ We need a global environment that is conducive to digital connectivity as a global public good (Digital Silk Road Initiative)
Colombia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We welcome participation of all relevant stakeholders from the private sector and academia to people living in vulnerable situations ✦ GDC must contribute to national efforts ✦ The digital skills contemplated must include not just basic skills but advanced skills required for the labor market ✦ GDC must protect women and girls against multiple intersecting biases of algorithms. We recommend to take the CSW outcomes as an input into deliberations for the GDC
Holy See	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Digital inclusion and connectivity must be upheld, including in remote and rural areas in LDCs and by increasing broadband access ✦ Digital world can expose children to new forms of isolation
Intl IDEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Inclusion with regards to the process – it has been proven, time and again, that neither the development of digital technologies, nor the debates and interactions that they enable, treat all groups equally. Hence, consultations with CSOs representing women, youth, and other marginalized groups ought to be an indispensable part of the process leading to a GDC. ✦ Inclusion with regards to access to technology – in this time and age, digital exclusion leads inevitably to social and political exclusion. The GDC should consider access to digital technologies –and particularly the Internet—as a fundamental entitlement for all human beings. ✦ Inclusion with regards to attempts to break up the internet for political purposes – in a world that appears to be on a path towards more divisions between countries, we believe that maintaining connectivity will become essential to bridge these gaps. We therefore stress the importance of commitments by all countries to maintain global connectivity and avoid internet shutdowns and fragmentation.
Iran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Unilateral Coercive Measures have led to the fragmentation of the internet

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We hope the global network will not be used to achieve political goals of countries that dominate the sector and that the GDC will address impediments to universal access ✦ There is a need to protect women and children from online harm and emphasize the need to respect cultural differences
Latvia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Increasing digital connectivity must go hand-in-hand with enhancing digital skills, in particular critical thinking to fight mis and disinformation
Lithuania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The ITU initiative to meaningfully connect everyone to the internet is most welcome ✦ When natural disasters and conflicts strike, satellite connectivity will be the only option, thus, we must also look at it
Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ While the GDC must address connectivity and costs, it also needs to consider means of implementation, including technology transfer
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We need to take action to scale up public and private digital infrastructure, affordability of ICT tech, and capacity-building of all sections of society ✦ Implementation would require technology transfer and finance
Republic of Korea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Must consider digital accessibility to all members of the society, including the elderly and vulnerable by developing accessibility design guidelines
Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We must rally behind a human-centric approach to digital transition based on human rights and democratic principles ✦ Regarding the reduced taxation on technology – we implemented it in the IT software industry and it helped in improving access in Romania
Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ GDC must make a commitment to provide universal access to the internet for everyone by 2030. The estimated cost of \$400 billion will escalate if we do not act now ✦ The non-financial barriers to universal and affordable digital access must be considered, which include regulatory barriers or lack of digital skills ✦ We should aim for interoperability at the global level. The GDC can include ideas on how different systems can become interoperable, for example the recent integration of payment systems between India and Singapore.
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The plan for increasing connectivity must consider digital divide based on gender and territory and give access to marginalized people, including those living with disabilities ✦ As we take on the EU Council Presidency, we will focus on a Digital Connectivity Toolbox and the EU-Latin America and Caribbean Digital Alliance ✦ Spain will get actively involved in the Giga initiative to connect every school to the internet by 2030
Switzerland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ GDC must take into account the UN Internet Governance Forum ✦ To take action on digital inclusion, we must provide further support to ITU, Giga Initiative and other UN Institutions ✦ Support the work of Digital Watch operated by the Diplo Foundation
UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We need to have a common understanding on meaningful connectivity encompassing cyber hygiene, online safety, among others ✦ On access, we must consider last mile connectivity to remote communities, where markets conditions are not favorable ✦ Digital Inclusion must be considered from a social and cultural context
United States of America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Improving digital connectivity will have no meaning if there is no improvement in the quality of life ✦ We support the ITU's Partner2Connect initiative and through the Freedom Online Coalition, we are promoting a global rights-based approach and addressing the gender digital divide

Uruguay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ In Uruguay, the digital divide is not due to lack of income, thanks to government policies, but due to education ✦ We must strengthen national legislation and regional mechanisms and the UN Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes
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Stakeholder Remarks:

- ❖ The GDC must ensure unhindered access to knowledge to create knowledge producers out of consumers
- ❖ The main barrier to universal digital connectivity is not coverage – 95% of global population live within network coverage. We need to address the demand-side barriers like affordability and expand local digital ecosystems
- ❖ Rule of Law and Justice must be at the center of GDC incorporating, among others, inclusion in e-Justice; strengthened regulatory frameworks with feedback mechanisms; safeguards against biases and use of AI; governance of digital commons; and consumer ownership of their data
- ❖ Achieving a global interoperable internet would require an inclusive and multistakeholder approach to governance that is capable of accommodating multiple autonomous networks
- ❖ Data must be seen as a cross-cutting enabler. People must not be seen as passive subjects, but as active contributors. We need to invest in public participation, foundational governance systems and data on digital systems
- ❖ Being digitally included is a basic right and one must be included as a rights-based citizen.
- ❖ We need dedicated public funding for LDCs, including through a digital development tax to support infrastructure development
- ❖ We foresee the GDC as closing the architectural gap. We must strengthen the role of private sector to drive digital inclusivity and connect the unconnected, including through subsidies
- ❖ Regarding internet shutdowns and bandwidth meddling, we call on states to stop shutdowns, and during instances of shutdown, call on the governments to provide timely information on the reason and length
- ❖ To achieve universal access, we must extend coverage to commercially unattractive areas, reduce spectrum costs and fund R&D
- ❖ Rather than presume what would make women feel safe online, we must ask them what is needed to make them feel safe
- ❖ At Google, we are analyzing the most efficient way to encourage investment in ICTs
- ❖ The perception changes when access to the internet is seen as a human right. The barriers to achieve universal access are – lack of digital skills, electricity, required infrastructure and equipment required to connect
- ❖ 200 million more men have access to the internet than women and more men gained access to the internet than women during COVID. Thus, we call on the GDC to be women-centric and address the gender digital divide
- ❖ Internet access is a right recognized by the UN. Governments should recognize the role of community networks to connect the unconnected and private networks and CSOs must support the community network model
- ❖ Reiterate the Riyadh Call to Action of the Digital Cooperation Organization
- ❖ Women are not part of the movement where technology is created, thus a multifaceted capacity-building is needed
- ❖ Local and community-led approaches and small enterprises must be supported through microfinances and other finance mechanisms

Global Digital Compact Thematic Deep-Dive – Internet Governance (13 April 2023)

ABOUT: The second thematic deep dive on the Global Digital Compact (GDC) was held on 13 April 2023 at the Trusteeship Council Chamber. The Permanent Representative (PR) of Rwanda – H.E. Mr. Claver Gatete and PR of Sweden – H.E. Ms. Anna Karin Eneström, who are [Co-Facilitators](#) of the intergovernmental process negotiating the GDC, co-moderated the session. The meeting started with briefings from Mr. Vint Cerf, Internet pioneer; Ms. Helani Galpaya, CEO at LIRNEasia; and Ms. Tripti Sinha, Chair of [ICANN](#). Member State (MS) and civil society representatives made their interventions after the briefings.

HEADLINES

Multilateralism and cooperation between multi-stakeholders were mentioned repeatedly by several MS as well as many stakeholders. In addition to that, many of them also highlighted the importance of building on what was done before, such as, but not limited to, [ICANN](#), [IETF](#), and the [IGF](#).

Common Themes

Several MS emphasized the importance of multilateralism, democracy, and an inclusive system of Internet Governance to close the digital divide and ensure an inclusive, and sustainable digital future. Several MS called for international legislation following international law and stressed the need to keep the fundamentals of the Internet out of geopolitics. There was also stress on putting the human being and human rights at the center of digital development and dialogue; consultation, and cooperation in cyberspace were highlighted as key factors for success. Finally, there was a shared sense of urgency to enhance and foster more effective participation, particularly from developing countries.

Highlights

Helani Galpaya, CEO of LIRNEasia	✚ They (emerging economies) are desperate to see in their coffers at least a small portion of the global taxation revenues that their users generate for a handful of global north countries
Tripti Sinha, Chair of ICANN	✚ The multistakeholder model of Internet Governance (IG) that includes the technical community, among others, has been a success and is the only solution when shaping new policies and regulations
Estonia	✚ We do not need to create new international conventions but apply the existing ones in the cyberspace as well, otherwise in reality such new conventions will be used to increase a single state's control over the use of Digital Society and ICT
Spain	✚ The GDC has a crucial role because it precisely offers the opportunity to bring all these processes that are happening at the national and the regional level to the UN and enshrine a rights-oriented governance framework in a global multilateral setting
Switzerland	✚ As the Secretary-General's High-Level panel on Digital Cooperation had put it we are living in an age of digital interdependence where siloed thinking and top-down approaches are inadequate.
Singapore	✚ GDC should reiterate the importance of interoperability as a key principle of IG
El Salvador	✚ Ensure and enhance investment in digital infrastructure, digital skills, training and digital literacy to close the digital divides between and within countries

Indonesia	✚ Global Internet Governance must have strong development dimension; it needs to empower developing countries and provide policy space to countries to adjust with the digital world which still continues to grow and take shift
Bangladesh	✚ We emphasize the need to continue dialogue through forums to build bridges between New York, Geneva and other multilateral forums among all stakeholders
Norway	✚ We remain particularly concerned by initiatives to change the global IG in the direction of a more state-controlled domain system to have more influence on the management of domains in their own countries, while at the same time, without disconnecting permanently from the existing domain system
United States of America	✚ The multi-stakeholder approach has been the bedrock that facilitated the incredible growth and resilience of the internet, including through the important work of multi-stakeholder fora that have sprung up to support it including ICANN , the IETF , IGF and many others the UN system
Kenya	✚ A truly inclusive internet is one that is accessible, fairly priced and has relevant content to enable positive social, economic and political outcomes
Mexico	✚ It is necessary to recognize the different capacities and infrastructures of all stakeholders particularly of the developing countries when we discuss IG process
Russian Federation	✚ It is thus fundamentally important that through the collective efforts of all countries interested in maintaining their own information sovereignty to achieve the internationalization of IG while increasing the role of states in this process
Netherlands	✚ The GDC should commit avoiding a fragmentation of the technical infrastructure of the internet impeding the ability of systems to interoperate and threatening the general integrity and availability of the core internet infrastructure
Iran	✚ We should also emphasize the accountability and responsibility of digital platform owners and operators as well as the protection of national and personal data
Denmark	✚ Building on previous efforts, including within the UN, the GDC should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, including governments and companies, to ensure responsible and human rights-based approach to governance of the internet at all its layers
India	✚ There is an incredible trust deficit between stakeholders that has become more apparent within the scope of Internet, especially in matter of cyber security and allied discussions. GDC should promote greater transparency and accountability of institutions and processes of IG, which will help in building confidence and trust among stakeholders

RESOURCES

1. [Letter from the Co-Facilitators – 5 April 2023](#)

STATEMENTS

2. [Remarks by Ms. Helani Galpaya](#) (CEO, LIRNEasia)
3. [European Union](#)
4. [Cuba on behalf of G77 and China](#)

KEY REMARKS

<p>Opening Remarks by Co-Facilitators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Inviting all speakers to consider the following guiding questions, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Over the last twenty years the share of world’s population connected to the internet has more than quadrupled. New internet-based tools – from smartphone to social media – have emerged and we are moving into an Internet of Things. How can we continue to ensure the unfragmented, safe, global, secure, and inclusive internet? 2. The 2005 Tunis Agenda endorsed a multi-stakeholder approach to the governance of the internet. How have we succeeded in realizing this vision? How do the roles and functions of various multi-stakeholder forums such as ICANN, IETF and the IGF come together to support internet governance? And how can they be strengthened? 3. How can governments, technical standard bodies, civil society, industry and all stakeholders work together for an open, indivisible, free, interoperable, global, secure, and inclusive Internet?
<p>Remarks by Ms. Helani Galpaya, CEO of LIRNEsia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We see the dominance of a handful of firms at each layer of the internet, and their ability to penetrate, participate and influence the conversations with governments at national level, and in between governments at international level, especially in multilateral spaces. We WANT these firms to be at these conversations. ✦ They (emerging economies) are desperate to see in their coffers at least a small portion of the global taxation revenues that their users generate for a handful of global north countries ✦ Moving forward means defining ways in which our speech, and therefore a big part of our democracy, is not given over to the private sector platforms to moderate ✦ Moving forward means, even more importantly, working out ways in which multistakeholderism interacts with multilateralism. ✦ Moving forward might also mean we take a careful look at all the challenges of new technology that we have somehow put under the Internet Governance (IG) umbrella – such as generative AI – and ask if there are other processes, venues that need to be created to address how these are governed. Putting everything under the IG umbrella creates a specialness, uniqueness and exclusiveness to the topic that often limits the discussion rather than broadening it
<p>Remarks by Ms. Tripti Sinha, Chair of ICANN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The GDC must aim to close the digital divide by examining and removing barriers to the development of ICTs ✦ The internet’s unique identifier system is a critical enabler of the single interoperable global internet ✦ The multistakeholder model of Internet Governance (IG) that includes the technical community, among others, has been a success and is the only solution when shaping new policies and regulations
<p>G77</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Any Internet governance approach should be inclusive and responsive to ensure that the Internet continues to remain open, secure, and interoperable. Our Internet governance approach should also continue to promote an enabling environment for innovation, cooperation, competition, and investment. An enabling environment, at national and international levels, supportive of foreign direct investment, transfer of technology, and international cooperation, particularly in the areas of finance, debt, and trade, is essential for the development of the Information Society, including for the development and diffusion of the Internet and its optimal use. ✦ Information sharing should be complemented by capacity building in areas relevant to Internet governance and strengthened international and regional cooperation, which can play a key role, drawing fully on local sources of knowledge and expertise. In this connection, the Group also attributes the highest importance to a framework that

	<p>promotes and allows local internet content that suits the local needs of the people and takes into account national or local backgrounds and needs.</p>
European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ It is important that national and international legislation and government practices affecting the internet are in accordance with international law as well as designed to not just to protect but also to promote and fulfil human rights. ✦ The EU proposes that the GDC promote the following four commitments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The GDC should ensure the participation in and strengthening of the multi-stakeholder approach through an inclusive system of IG 2. Given its place as the premier independent forum for multistakeholder input, the GDC should support the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and its potential to grow into an ever more inclusive and sustainable model. In turn, the IGF can play an important role in the GDC process. 3. The GDC should aim to preserve the technical infrastructure essential to the general availability and integrity of the Internet, including by refraining from internet shutdowns or degrading internet access. 4. The GDC should put the human being at the center of digital transformation by committing to strengthen the democratic and participatory framework, ensuring the protection of and respect for human rights online and offline, fostering responsible and diligent action by all digital actors, public and private, as well technological capacity building for a safe and secure digital environment.
Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Any future IG framework must adequately address privacy, security and consumer and data protection while ensuring personal freedoms, access, inclusion and innovation. A delicate balance is necessary to avoid internet fragmentation excessive censorship and exploitation of personal data ✦ We emphasize the need to continue dialogue through forums to build Bridges between New York, Geneva and other multilateral forums among all stakeholders
Brazil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Our assessments of the WSIS process and the IGF on internet governance is by and large a positive one ✦ It is also pivotal to clearly articulate the relationship between the GDC and key internet governance bodies work such as WSIS, IGF and ICANN. In this connection, we hold the view that the GDC should help reinforce rather than weaken the parallel process of the WSIS follow-up
Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ During Canada's 2022 chairmanship of the Freedom Online Coalition, we launched the Ottawa agenda, which is a set of recommendations to forge a pathway forward for the promotion of internet freedoms. This year we are developing a set of rules of the road that reflect high-level rights respecting international norms to address Information Integrity online
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ On the basis of successfully hosting the 8th consecutive World Internet Conference, China has initiated an international organization of the World Internet Conference, which follows the development chain of the information age and responds to the international communities' desire for dialogue, consultation and cooperation in cyberspace ✦ We should also focus on the new challenges in cyberspace respecting national sovereignty in cyberspace and put people at the center
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Addressing the question of how and how not to govern the internet – this question is complex and grounds for debate among states, but we must insist on finding common ground especially as we seek to build a GDC ✦ GDC must present guardrails that preserve the technical infrastructure of the internet ✦ Building on previous efforts, including within the UN, the GDC should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, including governments and

	companies, to ensure responsible and human rights-based approach to governance of the internet at all its layers
Djibouti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ My delegation deplors the digital gap between developed and developing countries and would like to see rapid solution through collaboration and capacity building
El Salvador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ El Salvador considers that there is an urgent need to enhance and foster more effective participation, in particular, of developing countries on the existing platforms related to IG through which their interests and priorities could be considered ✦ Ensure and enhance investment in digital infrastructure, digital skills, training and digital literacy to close the digital divides between and within countries
Estonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We do not need to create new international conventions but apply the existing ones in the cyberspace as well, otherwise in reality such new conventions will be used to increase a single state's control over the use of Digital Society and ICT ✦ We support the strengthening of the IGF which must remain a non-decision-making dialogue platform
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Institutionalized mechanisms for knowledge sharing are a must, particularly for countries in the global South. For this purpose, existing institutions like the IGF may be strengthened to provide more policy-oriented deliberations. This will facilitate coordinated responses by countries without impeaching or impinging their sovereignty ✦ India is concerned with security concerns that comes with the advent of internet tools for countries with linguistic diversity. A key aspect is ensuring universality, openness and accessibility of internet lies in facilitating a multilingual internet ✦ There is an incredible trust deficit between stakeholders that has become more apparent within the scope of Internet, especially in matter of cyber security and allied discussions. GDC should promote greater transparency and accountability of institutions and processes of IG, which will help in building confidence and trust among stakeholders
Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Global Internet Governance must have strong development dimension. It needs to empower developing countries and provide policy space to countries to adjust with the digital world which still continues to grow and take shift
Iran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The GDC should establish a framework and ensure that the global digital network will not be used to further the political objectives and actions of governments and institutions that control such networks including through UCMs and interfering in internal affairs of other countries ✦ We should also emphasize the accountability and responsibility of digital platform owners and operators as well as the protection of national and personal data ✦ The GDC should bridge the digital divide between developed and developing countries through equitable distribution of resources and networking opportunities and avoiding the development of digital colonialism. The GDC should promote linguistic and cultural diversity on the internet and refrain from pushing policies of cultural integration and imposing a few countries values on others ✦ The GDC process should respect the right of countries to manage the harms brought about by service networks to protect families, children and women in particular from the dangerous side effects of harmful and illegal content and criminal activities
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ A truly inclusive internet is one that is accessible fairly priced and has relevant content to enable positive social economic and political outcomes ✦ Multi-stakeholder forums such as ICANN, IETF and IGF are critical players in support of IG. To strengthen the roles and functions of these forums several measures can be considered including - ensuring inclusivity particularly for underrepresented groups and developing countries; improving transparency and accountability mechanisms; providing capacity building support to stakeholders from developing countries;

	enhancing coordination and coherence among different multi-stakeholder forums; and ensuring effective implementation of policy outcomes by relevant stakeholders
Korea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ In accordance with the multistakeholder approach adopted in the Tunis agenda, the UN recognized and supported the role of tech communities such as ICANN and IETF and has supported the IGF for multi-stakeholder discussion on challenges and solutions related to IG. ✦ The Korean government supports such efforts to enhance the participation of multi-stakeholders and expect practical implementation of specific plans for strengthening the IGF as recommended in the SG's roadmap for Digital Cooperation.
Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The same human rights protected offline must be protected online ✦ We need to achieve a more fluid and structural communication and collaboration considering the rapid technological change and have mechanisms for immediate and effective multilateral and multi-stakeholder dialogues and solutions adapted to the challenge of our historical moment ✦ It is necessary to recognize the different capacities and infrastructures of all stakeholders particularly of the developing countries when we discuss IG process
Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The GDC should recognize that no stakeholder group has the sole responsibility to manage the internet or possibility to influence the functioning of the internet substantially ✦ The GDC should commit avoiding a fragmentation of the technical infrastructure of the internet, impeding the ability of systems to interoperate and threatening the general integrity and availability of the core internet infrastructure ✦ The GDC should therefore also commit to refrain from government-imposed internet shutdowns
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ We remain particularly concerned by initiatives to change the global IG in the direction of a more state-controlled domain system to have more influence on the management of domains in their own countries while at the same time without disconnecting permanently from the existing domain system
Portugal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ While governments will adopt the GDC, implementation will be undertaken by the whole multi-stakeholder community, whose perspectives should be fully represented. Therefore, the GDC should reaffirm the definition of multi-stakeholder IG as agreed in the Tunis agenda and reaffirm the importance of the IGF ✦ Digital public policy processes such as GDC and the review of the WSIS later this year cannot be seen independently, yet they are not interlinked. In this context, we believe that the IGF mandates must continue to be discussed under the WSIS+20 process
Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The internet together with Artificial Intelligence and Quantum Computing is actually the trinity that paves the way for many avenues to come that will benefit Humanity ✦ Internet must be protected from political interference and we must protect and fortify a multi-stakeholder ecosystem of IG and keep the fundamentals of the internet out of geopolitics ✦ There is no difference between closing the blog of a descending voice and shutting down an uncomfortable newspaper
Russian Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Russian Federation consistently calls for the internationalization of IG and equal better participation of states in this process; also, sovereign right of states to regulate national segments of the internet. Actually, the vast majority of countries would support such a truly democratic approach, which was recorded back in 2005 in a number of paras in the Tunis agenda of the WSIS, specifically para. 35 ✦ It is thus fundamentally important through the collective efforts of all countries interested in maintaining their own information sovereignty to achieve the internationalization of IG while increasing the role of states in this process

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The dominant position in market is maintained by large technological conglomerates. In fact, they seek to replace the state. The regulation of the internet exclusively by the private sector has long been shown to be ineffective. Only states can guarantee the protection of rights and freedoms of citizens and play a unique role in matters of economy, security and stability of critical information infrastructure ✦ Russian Federation tends to approach the GDC to create a balanced international system for managing the internet and developing global policy in this area under the auspices of the UN
Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The GDC should encourage efforts to ensure that our IG mechanisms are truly global in nature. In this regard, Singapore supports the G77 statement that we should maximize the participation of developing countries in decisions regarding IG ✦ The GDC should reiterate the importance of digital inclusion and the acceleration of the SDGs. ICANN's work on internationalized domain names and universal acceptance is a significant positive example in this regard. Our IG mechanism should be encouraged and indeed empowered to make technical decisions in support of our broader sustainable development and inclusivity goals ✦ GDC should reiterate the importance of interoperability as a key principle of IG
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The GDC offers an opportunity to promote a number of principles regarding IG including accessibility, inclusivity, transparency and accountability ✦ 22 countries of the Ibero-American space signed "The Ibero-American Charter of Principles and Rights in Digital Environments" and the OECD countries signed a declaration on a trusted, sustainable and inclusive digital future ✦ The GDC has a crucial role because it precisely offers the opportunity to bring all these processes that are happening at the national and the regional level to the UN and enshrine a rights-oriented governance framework in a global multilateral setting ✦ Spain supports the U.N Secretary-General's strategy for Technology and his UN 2.0 quintet of change
Switzerland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ As Secretary-General's High-Level panel on Digital Cooperation had put it, we are living in an age of digital interdependence where siloed thinking and top-down approaches are inadequate ✦ It is Switzerland's strong conviction that this be realized especially through further strengthening, effective, proactive and politically visible UN IGF. The Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation made important recommendations in this regard by endorsing the development of the IGF into an IGF plus and Switzerland welcomes the significant progress made ✦ We also believe that these existing structures provide an appropriate basis for follow-up with regards to the GDC. As an inclusive, multilateral and multi-stakeholder Forum the UN IGF is ideally placed as a platform for periodic discussions and actions related to the implementation of the GDC
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The GDC should champion access to the free, global, open and interoperable internet as an enabler of Human Rights and Sustainable Development ✦ We want to see the compact reinforce the IGF, ICANN, the IETF and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process. The compact should not add further complexity to the governance ecosystem that could create new barriers to participation. We therefore particularly welcome the co-facilitator's and Tech envoy's active engagement with the IGF ✦ The work of the IGF's policy network on Internet Fragmentation demonstrates how a global breakdown of multi-stakeholder processes would affect the global reach and resilience of the internet. This is particularly timely ahead of the WSIS review, through which we will collectively reaffirm our commitment to the multi-stakeholder IG system

United States of America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The multi-stakeholder approach has been the bedrock that facilitated the incredible growth and resilience of the internet, including through the important work of multi-stakeholder fora that have sprung up to support it including ICANN, the IETF, IGF and many others in the UN system ✦ We were also pleased to partner with over 60 member states last year to launch the Declaration for the Future of the Internet. That declaration reclaims the promise of the internet and commits to an open Internet that fosters competition, privacy and respect for human rights. We encourage all stakeholders to consider its principles within the context of the GDC
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Stakeholder Remarks:

- ❖ There is a need to create mechanisms for multi-stakeholder participation in decision-making related to technology at all levels, from research and development to implementation, impact, and evaluation.
- ❖ The GDC should provide for proactive actions towards building effective multi-stakeholder processes for increasing broader participation in all digital cooperation and internet governance discussions.
- ❖ The GDC marks a relevant moment as it allows the reinforcement of agreements such as the application of human rights to the digital space and guaranteeing a people-centered and inclusive information society, but for this process to maintain its relevance, there is a need for improvements in the IG ecosystem.
- ❖ The relevance of the [IGF](#) should be acknowledged within the broader GDC discussions, and the Forum should have a relevant role in the GDC follow-up stages.
- ❖ The [IGF](#) is crucial to maintaining multi-stakeholder participation and ensuring transparency. Decision-making spaces in MS of the U.N. need to acknowledge the [IGF](#).
- ❖ Any ideas about the creation of spaces as follow-up structures to the GDC should take into consideration the need to leverage the already existing structures and be cognizant that the replication of spaces is an issue for ensuring proper and qualitative participation from all stakeholders, including those based in the Global South.
- ❖ The threats to an open, interconnected, and interoperable internet have increased, which likewise undermines the internet's ability to act as an enabler of human rights and sustainable development. This is increasing as a result of policies, measures, and actions by states and companies, whether intended or otherwise, that restrict the free flow of information and undermine human rights.
- ❖ The [IGF](#)'s policy network on internet fragmentation has recently provided a framework for understanding these phenomena that highlights three dimensions through which to understand fragmentation, its drivers, and its impacts: fragmentation of the user experience, internet governance, coordination fragmentation, and also fragmentation of the technical layer.
- ❖ There is a need for continued efforts by all stakeholders, individually and collectively, to address internet-related issues through the promotion of greater cooperation among organizations. Such cooperation should be guided by the objectives of information sharing, awareness raising, and, where appropriate, coherence among work programs.

- ❖ An open, stable, and trusted internet is vital for business operations worldwide and the effective functioning of public services such as education, healthcare, and various government services.
- ❖ The phenomenon of the internet over the last few years has seen the evolution of governance in cyberspace to monitor virtual relationships. During the last few years, we've also seen the rise of misinformation and fake news. Data from the framing of personal information, human exploitation, cyberbullying, and the rise of cybercrime education in particular should sit at the heart of conversations on internet governance.
- ❖ There is a need to ensure a people-centered, inclusive, development-oriented, and non-discriminatory information society. This manifests itself in many ways, such as the guidelines created at the 2023 Paris Internet Conference for trusting states to apply the regulation of the Internet in alignment with international human rights standards to avoid illegal content or content that could risk or harm human rights or democracy.
- ❖ There is a need for a polycentric internet that respects the aspirations, needs, and personhood of students in the educational, recreational, and commercial use of virtual spaces in a truly inclusive and democratic way.
- ❖ Internet Governance should be more agile, inclusive, and focused on diminishing fragmentation and reducing the saturation of power. There is also a need to work on bridging the digital divide and ensuring everyone has access to the Internet, which includes building and expanding the Internet infrastructure, providing affordable Internet access, and increasing digital literacy.
- ❖ The esteemed Secretary General's stated goal of avoiding internet fragmentation indicates that, given the growing geopolitical tensions today around how key aspects of the internet's infrastructure are maintained and governed, such fragmentation is indeed a genuine threat, but there is a need to take full measure of the problem. It is not simply about unilateral action by individual states or regimes, but a larger Democratic deficit that is allowing the Internet to serve as a site where extraneous power struggles are carried out. Rectifying this will entail large-scale and meaningful institutional reform.
- ❖ To broaden and create a truly whole-of-society approach, all the groups need to be brought together at an existing forum or elsewhere, most notably including different international organizations such as [OHCHR](#), the [ILO](#), [CERN](#), [UNEP](#), etc., which represent global constituencies, along with MS, civil society, activists, and the private sector, seated together in equal and institutionalized places.
- ❖ There is a need for a neutral registry infrastructure, which is crucial to the internet's interoperability.
- ❖ The GDC should commit to preserving the stakeholder approach to internet governance. Organizations like [ICANN](#) must continue to exist, and this process must bring conversations to a wider global audience.
- ❖ The GDC needs to include a reaffirmation of trusted global processes when it comes to discussing Internet governance. The multi-stakeholder model is such a proven process that it allowed audience stewardship to transition from U.S. oversight to an empowered multi-stakeholder community.
- ❖ The global public corps management system should be equal for all parties, neutral, and immune to geopolitical challenges. We must avoid politicizing the internet.
- ❖ What has made the Internet so successful is its unique technical design and the standards and protocols that enable communication between devices as well as collaboration among diverse stakeholders. An important consideration when deploying new technologies and proposing new regulations is whether they go along with or work against these characteristics, and if it's the latter, then there is a risk of

technical fragmentation of the Internet. Multi-stakeholder collaboration is important when shaping new policies or regulations to avoid unintended consequences for the Internet.

- ❖ Civil society has the role of empowering marginalized communities and those who are excluded to be sure that they can access the internet equitably, including Indigenous people and persons with disabilities.
- ❖ It's very critical to support an open, interoperable, inclusive, and decentralized internet that is not managed by one stakeholder group, and it's very critical to ensure a multi-stakeholder internet governance process.
- ❖ A recommendation is that the GDC include an additional automatic area on green digitalization. This is an important issue that we feel has not been given enough importance.

Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
CERN	Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire, or European Council for Nuclear Research
GDC	Global Digital Compact
ICANN	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IETF	The Internet Engineering Task Force
IG	Internet Governance
IGF	Internet Governance Forum
ILO	International Labor Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SG	Secretary General
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society