

Geneva Internet Platform



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ICANN President and CEO Fadi Chehadé encourages the Geneva Internet Platform to continue addressing key issues for the future of Internet governance

Geneva, 18 November 2014: *In his opening speech of the first [Geneva Internet Conference](#), Fadi Chehadé made a loud case for intensive discussions aimed at preserving a ‘decentralised, transnational, and not too fragmented Internet governance’. Otherwise, he warned the Geneva audience, ‘someone will fill the vacuum’.*

Invited to deliver the opening speech of the Geneva Internet Conference – taking place this Tuesday and Wednesday at the WMO Building – Fadi Chehadé, President and CEO of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) confirmed his organisation’s willingness to engage in intensive discussions to achieve a better governance of ‘the world’s most powerful solidarity platform’.

In front of a packed audience, and after paying tribute to the efforts deployed by the newly created [Geneva Internet Platform](#) (the conference host), Mr Chehadé insisted on the two dangers he foresees for the future: the ‘growing fragmentation’ of the Internet, and the progressive abrogation of its ‘transnational nature, crossing the boundaries of the nation state model’. ‘The Internet was designed and shall remain polycentric,’ he argued, warning against governments’ temptation to impose a centralised decision-making process: ‘Only initiatives involving the private sector and governments can successfully and effectively address crucial issues like cybercrime, taxation of e-commerce, and child protection.’

On all issues, ICANN stands ready to help, repeated Mr Chehadé, pleading for ‘ample, rapid, and effective mechanisms’ to improve the governance of the Internet. For him, ‘ICANN is not and shall not be an island disconnected from other stakeholders.’

Grilled with questions, Chehadé again underlined the cross-boundary nature of the Internet, arguing that one ministry alone cannot deal with all its aspects and impacts on our daily life. ‘Heads of state and government are being increasingly active in Internet-related negotiations,’ he followed.

His portrayal of Internet governance paid tribute to Geneva’s role as a perfect digital hub, with the presence here of international organisations, prominent NGOs, and representatives of numerous multinationals.

Dr Jovan Kurbalija, head of the Geneva Internet Platform (GIP) and Director of [DiploFoundation](#), welcomed ICANN’s views and reaffirmed that the GIP stands ready to provide all stakeholders with a venue for discussions. ‘It proves that the Swiss Confederation’s efforts to boost Geneva’s digital profile are being well received and are already bringing results,’ he said.

The Geneva Internet Conference officially starts this Tuesday at 9am. Its full programme is available here: <http://giplatform.org/gic>

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A press conference is organised for Wednesday, 19th November, at 13:00 at the WMO.

With the support of the Swiss Confederation.