

# Geneva Internet Platform

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Geneva Internet Conference's first edition delivers powerful recommendations and questions for the future of Internet governance**

*Geneva, 20 November 2014: Following ICANN President Fadi Chehadé's opening speech, around 50 leading figures/authorities and high-ranking officials in Internet governance participated in this high-profile event, scanning all pending Internet governance issues. This conference is a perfect illustration of the Geneva Internet Platform's (GIP) potential role as a prominent facilitator and a natural hub for incoming digital negotiations.*

More than 250 participants attended these last two days, the first Geneva Internet Conference, organised with the support of the Swiss Confederation. A number of high profile speakers shared their views here over the future of the Internet, highlighting the following facts and challenges:

- Need to advance innovation in Internet governance triggered by NETmundial and advanced by other major events (WSIS +10 and Internet Governance Forum)
- More than 50% of global Internet policy is discussed and decided on in Geneva
- Concerns about surveillance and lack of privacy protection are increasingly growing
- Most of the content on the Internet is still easier to get from illegal rather than legal sources
- The more the Internet impacts all spheres of our life, the more complex and broader Internet governance will become
- There is a need to aggregate the information available on Internet governance to make it more accessible
- Every Internet entity has its own needs
- There is a communication problem between engineers, politicians, or diplomat

Lively discussions roved around the following key questions:

1. To map or not to map: the more mapping that we engage in, the more it seems that complication ensues
2. Business sector involvement in IG: are they profitable partners or will they hold IG hostage to their needs?
3. The double-edged sword of Human Rights: the platform Human Rights so desperately needs can and does create the need for surveillance
4. The NETmundial initiative: a new paradigm or more of the same?
5. ICANN: monopoly or model of diversity?

Other items under discussion included:

- Issues of conditionality and the relationship between policy positions, actions, and activities and the provision of funds
- Sustainability of investment
- How to use innovative ways of funding

## Conclusion

Philipp Metzger, Director General of the Swiss Federal Office for Communications (OFCOM) compared Internet Governance to a 'building under construction' with different layers. Here, there are many elevators to help actors move up to the higher levels of debate in that building. Moving between different layers of the building should be perceived as a challenge, rather than as a dead end: an avenue to continue walking down together. The conference has helped to highlight this opportunity.

'The Internet governance build-up presents an extraordinary and not to be missed opportunity for Geneva', concluded Jovan Kurbalija, Head of the Geneva Internet Platform. 'This conference has shown clearly that the city, with its whole range of experts and organisations, brings an extraordinary added value to the IG process.'

All interventions and questions are recapitulated in the conference live report here:

<http://giplatform.pbworks.com/w/page/87716515/Home>

Photo galleries are available here:

<http://diplo.smugmug.com/Geneva-Internet-Platform-/GIC-Day-0>

<http://diplo.smugmug.com/Geneva-Internet-Platform-/GIC-Day-1>

<http://diplo.smugmug.com/Geneva-Internet-Platform-/GIC-Day-2>

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