

Summary discussion:

Whom do I contact if I want to raise my Internet Governance concern?

This theme is the second of three discussed in the build-up to the Geneva Internet Conference. The first theme discussed [How to overcome IG policy silos on global and national levels](#), while the third focused on [Evidence and measurement in IG: What sort of data and numbers are we talking about?](#) Each theme was introduced during a webinar, followed by two weeks of forum discussions. The webinar digest and discussion of the second theme is available [here](#). The following summarises the [forum discussion on Whom do I contact if I want to raise my Internet Governance concern?](#)

With Internet governance (IG) increasing in complexity, and with so many players dealing with IG issues, connecting the dots has become difficult. Not only are there many different stakeholders involved in the process, but various processes are taking place in parallel. A possible solution is the creation of a one-stop shop, or a ‘clearinghouse’ – a concept which has already emerged in climate change discussions and – in the IG process itself – during WSIS discussions in 2003. Therefore, we asked: should the one-stop shop be a new international Internet organisation, a global multistakeholder IG clearing house, a distributed governance system, or...?

Seun Ojedeji believes that it is important to determine what role the clearing house will have and whether it will do this in a manner which is different from what is already being experienced. He proposed the Africa IGF as a possible clearinghouse at a national level, with the global IGF being a possible clearinghouse on an international level. His reservation is that the uncoordinated approaches have given justification for other initiatives to be set up.

Ginger Paque believes that the impetus comes from related needs: a need to find the information we need, a need to organise the resources available into a coherent, useable source, and a need to share the information we want others to have, as well as others. She thinks the usefulness of the clearinghouse is evident, but is a huge undertaking. She proposes an interesting analogy (also in reaction to Dr Jovan Kurbalija’s [IG restaurant analogy](#)) with that of orchestra: The entire orchestra containing the musicians, with smaller groups of brass, strings, woodwinds (the topics, like cybersecurity and human rights), who have their own melodies and strategies. Smaller groups of trios and quintets can work on intersecting topics with their different instruments, and individuals practice on their own as well. The challenge is in identifying the instruments we will play: ‘We pretty much have to work together, or we risk playing different pieces at the same time, and ending up with a cacophony of clashing sound, rather than a beautiful harmony with a rich interplay of themes.’

Reacting to this analogy, **Vladimir Radunović** points out that the orchestra is a good analogy, as long as we do not portray the conductor (clearinghouse mechanism) as being the coordinator of all the instruments (WTO, UNESCO, IGF, NETmundial, ICANN) but only as a means to help us reach them in an easier way through a single ‘gateway’. He believes that a clearinghouse should complement, and not substitute, any current process, and should assist IG policy-making especially on national level by guiding the decision-makers and policy-shapers, especially in developing countries, through thematic and process challenges and best practices: ‘Instead of providing a solution, it should help these parties to find relevant data and success stories/best practices on specific topics of interests, find the way to participate in fora and international/regional discussions of relevance, find the appropriate capacity building and networking mechanisms, follow trends and policy and diplomatic developments in the area of interests, etc.’

Baudouin Schombe believes in the capacity of the IGF, stating that the creation of new platforms would mean that we are continuously reinventing the wheel. The IGF has already proven itself: it is a framework that brings together multistakeholder groups to exchange and discuss the evolution of the Internet, its development, and other problems. This has led to the emergence of regional and national IGFs.

Agreeing with Mr Schombe, **Stephanie Borg Psaila** also believes the IGF is a good model. It has legitimacy, and a solid foundation. It has become a process in itself with the establishment of national and regional IGFs. However, she believes it is premature to discuss a model, without first having a clear idea of the functions the clearinghouse should have. If the functions are [aimed to assist players – especially governments and stakeholders from developing countries](#), then the needs of developing countries should be the starting point.