

HLIG meeting, 13 June 2013

Meeting Report

1. Chairing-attendance

The HLIG meeting was chaired by Linda Corugedo-Steneberg (LCS), Director for Cooperation in DG CONNECT and was attended by 21 HLIG Members (AT, BE, BG, DK, EE, EL, FI, FR, IT, LU, HU, MT, NL, PO, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK, CH, NO).

2. HLIG Functioning/participation

LCS mentioned that the HLIG fulfils the role of a "soft coordination". Taking into account the current budget constraint, the Commission asked Members to consider options which would further streamline the budget, notably participation via video-conferencing, audio-conferencing or via Permanent Representation representatives (not necessitating travel reimbursement). Alternatively the number of yearly envisaged meetings could be reduced, or travel reimbursement of experts could be terminated.

EL, IT, PT and UK stressed the importance of physical, face to face meetings AND of travel reimbursement. DK stressed the importance of physical, face to face meetings but signalled that travel reimbursement was not a major issue for them although they could understand the position of other Members. PL took a position after the meeting supporting the idea of HLIG meetings in the form of video or audio conferences, as any action that could reduce the costs, while preserving high efficiency, deserves support. For the cases that a physical meeting is required, PL is in favour of reimbursement as otherwise there is a risk that due to the cost some representatives will not be able to attend.

LCS concluded that it is indeed very useful to meet in person and with a certain frequency. The soft coordination has worked very well and this was reflected by the "on the spot" coordination for GAC or WTPF.

3. ICANN: 2nd Accountability and Transparency Review Team – state of play and next steps

LCS referred to the recent public consultation on the matter to which a number of EU Member States have replied (UK, DK, ES, NO). It is important to set up a link between the work of the ATRT2 and: a) the on-going reform by ICANN of its "ethics and conflict of

interest" policies; b) the work accomplished by IIG members with Spain holding the pen on "GAC working methods" (paper attached).

Jürgen Andersen, member of the ATRT2 (former Director General at the Ministry of Telecommunications in Denmark) gave an overview and state of play of the activities of the team. The work to be done was rather comprehensive and that the ATRT2 had met so far 3 times (Los Angeles, Beijing and Los Angeles), with another meeting scheduled in Durban and in Australia in the near future. One drawback flagged was that the conference call system was perhaps not the best suited in order to address a task of this level of complexity. In addition, no secretariat has been established in order to support the work of the ATRT2.

Mr Andersen noted that he would welcome input to his work in the ATRT2, and highlighted that during the consultation only 29 responses out of 149 GAC members were received.

One of the main priorities is to send a letter to Ministers responsible for Internet Governance matters. It would be necessary to hire external experts to support the work of the team (during the 1st ATRT Berkman Center was tasked with drafting an expert report). Funding to this end seems not to abound and be flexible enough (public tender).

For what concerns the review of the implementation of previous recommendations that they were address through a "tick in the box approach" in the sense that the recommendations focused more on achieving outputs rather than impact. It was suggested to employ proper key performance indicators in order to monitor the implementation of the ATRT2 recommendations.

In addition, one pressing issue which seems not to gather much traction among the topics to be address by the ATRT2 is the analysis of ICANN's finances, particularly now that the new gTLD process will bring about substantial revenue for the organization.

Mr Andersen also highlighted that legitimacy shall be treated as a cross cutting issue in the ATRT2, since proper functioning, accountability and transparency necessarily leads to enhanced legitimacy. The importance of this statement is rather polarized among members. It was stressed that from a government perspective, high amounts of information and short deadlines made difficult a proper follow-up of critical issues, diminishing the level of transparency. It was suggested to gather input as regards cases in which ICANN does not act in a sufficient transparent manner.

In conclusion HLIIG members will provide support to the work of the ATRT2 though comments and facilitate that their constituencies reply to the letter to Ministers responsible for Internet Governance matters.

The European Commission will support the outreach of the letter to Ministers by providing the necessary contacts.

EU Member states to share ATRT2 work with research centres and academic institutions at national level in order to explore the possibility of hiring experts to back the work of the ATRT

4. Debrief WSIS- Enhanced cooperation

LCS mentioned that the time spent at WSIS and WTPF has been an excellent opportunity to continue bridging the gap between like-minded countries on internet governance. The atmosphere in Geneva, both in this event and in the WTPF, indicated that there has been a general awakening to the risks of the internet being fragmented or closed down in some areas.

Whereas there was a clear opening of ITU in several aspects at the WTPF, its working methods at the WSIS remained opaque and we are not satisfied with the way the concluding documents were prepared- in complete isolation by the ITU secretariat.

CH mentioned the support they provided, by paying for the meeting rooms this time and signalled their support to open up to observers. UK and SE signalled the common European position on the Russian proposal to hold a summit in 2015.

LCS also mentioned that as the Commission is not a member of the ITU Council and the CSTD Group, we rely on Member States which are members of the Group to keep us informed on, notably the discussion on opening up the Council working group on Internet related policies and the CSTD process.

EL signalled the activity of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly that will take place in Istanbul from 29 June to 3 July 2013. The issue of internet governance is included at the end of the 2nd Committee's Draft Resolution and Russia had proposed amendments.

5. WTPF: Debrief and discussion on next steps

LCS mentioned that following the WCIT, many people expected the fight over Internet governance to continue into the WTPF in Geneva; however, there was a much more cordial and cooperative atmosphere than Dubai.

The proof if some of the more "difficult" ITU members are accepting that only a multi-stakeholder approach can generate real consensus on Internet governance will come in future events such as the World Telecommunications Development Conference (WTDC) next year and the 2014 plenipotentiary meeting.

UK confirmed that it was a good result, thanks to the good preparatory work of the informal experts group. PT, UK, SE signalled their agreement to EU coordination. The Commission (E. Hartog) believes that the Brazilian initiative to discuss "the role of governments in Internet governance" deserves serious engagement, especially as the Brazilians accepted that it could not be adopted an opinion at the WTPF. The IGF in particular is a good opportunity to have multi-stakeholder discussion on the Brazilian initiative.

Referring to the possibility that the theme of the role of governments in International Internet public policy becomes the central theme of the IGF Ministerial, NL UK and DK signalled that a follow up is required. LCS concluded in the need to exchange documents and have a platform.

6. **Global Internet Policy Observatory – state of play and next steps**

The Commission (A. Glorioso) gave a detailed presentation (attached) to provide HLIG members with more information on the rationale for launching GIPO, on the reactions so far and on the plans to go forward.

7. **EuroDIG**

PT informed the Group about the EuroDIG event.

8. **Session with Jari Arkko, Chairman of the Internet Engineering Task Force**

LCS welcomed Jari Arkko congratulating him on his election as Chairman of the Internet Engineering Task Force and stressed that Jari is a European, Finnish national and for many years dedicated to making Internet work better, in his company, within the IETF and also, with the work we are doing in Brussels. J. Arkko gave a presentation (attached) on the IETF and the way it develops standards.