

HLIG meeting, 2 October 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 23 HLIG Members (AT, BE, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, LU, LV, HR, HU, MT, NL, PO, PT, SE, SI, UK, CH, NO).

2. eIDAS: Presentation of the Legislation Team Task Force

Andrea Servida, Head of the Legislation Task Force (EC) gave an update of the proposal for a Regulation on electronic identification and trusted services for electronic transactions in the internal market (eIDAS Regulation) to the Group (Presentation attached). NO, expressed their satisfaction for this update, as they are not part of the Council Working Group. NO also enquired whether the time schedule is realistic.

3. Informal discussions on Internet organisational issues

Joergen Andersen, member of the ATRT2 (former Director General at the Ministry of Telecommunications in Denmark) gave the state of play of the activities of the team. Mr Andersen highlighted that Finances is a main issue for ICANN, given that ICANN is a private non-for profit organisation, and that there is no competition for the delivery of its services. Annual surpluses and personnel are on sharp increase, which leads to the legitimate question whether fees should be lowered. The question of examining the progression of the remuneration of senior management and also the possibility of organising only two ICANN meetings per year instead of three were also raised.

The other main point made by Mr Andersen concerned the GAC and the frustration created by the perceptions that GAC advice arrives often too late and that GAC advice is hard to understand for those outside the GAC perception. To the suggestion to create a code of conduct for the GAC, the Group remained sceptical on whether private entities should give such advice to Governments.

Mr Andersen mentioned also the final ICC report on PDP. As this is now publicly available, it is distributed to the Group (attached). As already mentioned in the June meeting, a main priority is to send a letter to Ministers responsible for Internet Governance matters.

Peter Major, the Chair of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation, then introduced the state of play within CSTD from an administrative point of view. HLIG members whose countries are also members of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation, FI, FR, LV, SE

mentioned they have already answered the Questionnaire. Upon the suggestion by the Commission (S. Viceconte), P Major mentioned that although not mentioned in the mandate, a mapping exercise will be performed.

LCS mentioned that at the WTPF in May 6 opinions were adopted without too much discussion, thanks to the work done in the preparatory experts group set up by the ITU in which UK, NL, SE and the Commission actively participated. There was a "7th draft opinion" related to "the role of governments in the multi-stakeholder framework for Internet governance", submitted by Brazil, which was left on the table for further consideration at some non-specified point in the future. On 24 September, the Brazilian President has made a speech in the UNGA calling for the creation of a "civilian multi-lateral framework for the governance and use of the Internet to ensure the effective protection of data that flows through the web".

According to PT, Brazil considers there has to be an intermediate position between ITU and ICANN, as in their view ICANN methods have no solution. SE mentioned that the principles are not that bad but expressed concern about the link between Global Internet Governance and surveillance. As pointed by the Commission (A. Glorioso) multilateralism is not in opposition to multi-stakeholderism – and in any case the WSIS Conclusions (WSIS is itself a UN process) refer to "multilateral governance of the Internet". According to the UK, Brazil will most probably make a proposal in the 2nd Committee of the UNGA (later this year). Brazil has agreed to lead a session on the role of governments in the IGF.

The overall opinion of the group was that this was a speech, and it was needed to examine what is going to follow. UK and SE expressed concern about the place chosen by Brazil (UN) According to NL, Brazil went beyond the WTPF Resolution. For HU, this was not a new situation, referring to the IBSA precedent and CH mentioned that there are good things and also things that might be problematic. IT: mentioned that they were studying this speech carefully and liked the ideas conveyed. DK: mentioned the importance to discuss about ICANN internationalisation.

The feeling of the Group that more information was required in order to properly follow-up. LCS mentioned that the Commission will develop a concept paper that establishes a coherent and consistent view, which will be shared with the Group when available.

4. Internet Governance Events

IGF 2013 Preparation:

LCS informed the Group that she will be leading the EU Commission to Bali. The Vice-President will not be able to attend due the European Council taking place around the same time. She will however address the plenary via a video-message. The delegation will be very small this year and limited to three people including Silvia Viceconte and Michael Niebel, Head of the Internet task force. Furthermore four MEPs will be attending the Forum. HLI members reported on the state of preparation for Bali including political attendance. So far only the UK signalled attendance at ministerial level (Ed Vaizey) whereas many members signalled no participation at all.

There was a request to ensure a proper slot for a donors' meeting in Bali. DG CONNECT has in the meantime sent a message to the IGF secretariat to ask explicitly for such a meeting.

WSIS Summit 2015 in Sochi The European Commission in its bilateral dialogue with Russia has learnt of their proposal for a WSIS summit. The feeling of the group was opposed to the organisation of a WSIS 2015 summit in Sochi.

5. ICANN issues

LCS stressed that for the Commission there are clear priorities for Argentina, namely ensuring that strings that are of relevance for the EU, in particular .wine/.vin (but also others like .bio, .organic, .eco, .health, .clinic, .healthcare, .bank, .financial, or .kids), are adequately protected, and that the agenda includes items such as the setting up of the new secretariat and the GAC working methods.

Furthermore LCS pointed out that the Commission is not entirely pleased with the way in which ICANN has dealt with .eu Greek string. VP Kroes has made it clear that she expects this issue to be sorted before the end of the year. EL then stressed that they have the same expectation for the Greek string for .gr (.ελ).

Nigel, Hickson, ICANN, who was invited to attend this point mentioned the new Fast Track Procedure, although the outcome of this procedure could not be influenced. Mr Hickson, also mentioned the international and regional strategies of ICANN and signalled the opening of an ICANN office in Geneva. FR questioned whether in this context ICANN has also a strategy for North America. UK signalled the opportunity of having a high level Ministerial meeting coinciding with the ICANN meeting in London in 2014.

6. AOB

Next HLIIG meeting : 3 December