



OPEN CONSULTATIONS Phase 2: Venue for WSIS FORUM

Submitted Contributions on Venue for WSIS Forum 2011

S. No.	Name	Organization	Org. Type	Country	Views
1	Udi Witelson	United Nations	IO	USA	Geneva would be best as it is closest to most of the international organizations.
2	Salgues	Institut Telecom	CS	FRA	dear organizer i think going to New York is a good idea
3	Tsone	Industry Canada	BUS	CAN	The WSIS should remain in Geneva.
4	Koushik	University of Geneva	BUS	SWI	New York
5	Mohammad Ziaul Ahsan	OSDUY	CS	BGD	Learn and share my opinion
6	Amadou Arfang	Horizon d'Echange et de Lutte contre la Pauvreté (H.E.L.P)	CS	SEN	Participate at the WSIS FORUM
7	Vakilian	Information Technology and Digital Media Center	GOV	IRA	As I remember in the last day of WSIS Forum 2010, in the "WSIS Action Line Facilitators meeting" Paris has been introduced as another option. France Delegate, Mr. Bertrand de La Chapelle, support this option for 2011. We should remind that UNESCO as one the main facilitators is in Paris. I think Paris should be considered as an option, as well.
8	Eram	Bahria University	CS	PAK	In my opinion WSIS Forum 2011 should be held at NewYork
9	Tymoteusz Kurpeta	Ministry of Infrastructure	GOV	POL	Poland's Administration fully supports idea od changing the venue for WSIS Forum for New York City.
10	Victoria Taiwo-Obasaju-Ayo	FAO-UN, Rome	IO	ITA	Venue could be in a developing country where ICT penetration is limited.
11	Mohammad Kawsar Uddin	Bangladesh ICT Journalist Forum	CS	BGD	UN conference Center, Geneva, Switzerland
12	Helpcentre	HELP CENTRE	BUS	IND	We would like to participate in WSIS Programmes
13	Daniel Nanghaka	Uganda Scout Asociation	IO	UGA	The venue for the Forum is okay
14	Tutu	Ministry of Communications and IT	GOV	AZE	New Venue - New York will bring new interests and new attendances to the WSIS forum.
15	EUROLINC	EUROLINC	CS	FRA	In response to the "Open Consultation: Expression of Views on Venue for WSIS Forum 2011", EUROLINC is submitting its views on Venues for WSIS Forum 2011 and following. - - - So far WSIS Fora have been held in Geneva. One can understand that some participants around the world would welcome a rotating scheme distributing travel expenses on a more equitable way. The other side of the coin is additional costs for organizers operating away from their headquarters. Finding a

					<p>balance in between would be an ideal objective. Customarily a major block of participants in open conferences come from the host country and neighbouring ones. Hence, picking a venue so as to increase local or regional audience results in reducing participation from more distant countries. The net effect boils down to favouring one particular region over others. As we are told «several WSIS Stakeholders suggested holding the WSIS Forum 2011 in New York». Besides the geographic factor addressed above, one particular argument for moving from Geneva to New York (NYC) stands out: «Enhance visibility of ICT debates in UN diplomatic circles of New York; which may result in better reflection of this aspect in the relevant UNGA resolutions concerning economic, social, educational and cultural development, particularly in the least developing countries, land-lock countries;» This is actually suggesting that UNGA resolutions made in NYC could be improved (somehow) on the ones that could be made in Geneva. In other words, a different context, audience or atmosphere, may slant resolutions in some palatable sense. Every large gathering of people being unique, this is indeed quite possible, though not really predictable. From the early debates having taken place in the WSIS process during the past ten years, the Internet governance domain has been a topical subject of discussions and disagreements. A recurring bone of contention is what is perceived by many countries as unilateral decision making by the USA. As predicted, the reaction is a developing trend of walled up national internets. One ingredient of a WSIS Forum in NYC is a high density of well trained powerful lobbies operating on their home turf. There is no reason to dismiss their capabilities of influencing the terms of UNGA resolutions. Combined with Internet governance issues, organizing WSIS Forum 2011 in NYC may appear as a move to strengthen USA control over Internet. While it seems desirable to host future WSIS Fora in a diversity of countries, rules for selecting future venues should be decided before a choice is made for WSIS Forum 2011. If selected, NYC should be a one time event. It would be inappropriate to make NYC a recurring WSIS Forum venue. As has been suggested in previous postings, Geneva (ITU) and Paris (UNESCO) could alternate with other cities in various regions. EUROLINC is a non-profit association founded for the promotion of multi-lingualism in Internet. It is accredited to UN WSIS (United Nations World Summit of the Information Society). mailto:contact@eurolinc.eu http://www.eurolinc.eu 10 Sep 2010.</p>
16	HPSKalra	Punjabi University	CS	IND	Why must the venue of any WSIS Forum 2011 be in a developed world? Asia, particularly India, that has seen enormous growth in certain sectors in information society should be considered as a venue.
17	Martin Boyle	Nominet	BUS	UK	Geneva was the centre for the work on WSIS, so has knowledge and experience of the process. In addition, CSTD meets in Geneva and the IGF secretariat and ITU are based there. For most stakeholders, Geneva is logistically easier to get to. The strong participation in 2010 is a strong endorsement for Geneva as the logical venue for the WSIS Forum 2011.
18	Hojatollah Modirian	Arianous ICTD Co.	BUS	IRA	I was participate in wsis from 2003 and I am interested in to Follow-up it.
19	Anriette Esterhuysen	Association for Progressive Communications	CS	SAF	This response to the WSIS Action Lines Forum consultation on the venue for the 2011 WSIS Forum is submitted by the Association for Progressive Communications (APC). APC is an international civil society network, with more than 50 member-organisations in more than 35 countries, the majority of these being developing countries. Its work to promote understanding and use of information, communications and the internet for sustainable development, poverty reduction and empowerment are widely respected across all stakeholder groups

				<p>involved in WSIS follow-up and other ICT activities. APC welcomes the present consultation. However, two aspects of the proposal remain unclear and it would have been helpful if more information about these had been given in the consultation invitation. Firstly, the invitation says that "several WSIS Stakeholders suggested holding the WSIS Forum 2011 in New York." It would have been helpful if it had indicated how many stakeholders had expressed this view, and if it had identified these stakeholders. This is particularly important given the multistakeholder character of WSIS and its follow-up process. Perhaps it could be rectified when the outcome of the consultation is announced. Secondly, it is unclear from the invitation whether it is proposed to hold the WSIS Forum in New York in 2011 only or also to hold it there in subsequent years. There are clearly substantial differences between the two scenarios, and it would have been helpful if the proposal had clarified this point. APC played a prominent part, along with its member-organisations, throughout the World Summit on the Information Society and has continued to do so in WSIS follow-up activities including the Commission for Science and Technology for Development (UNCTAD-CSTD), WSIS Forum and the Internet Governance Forum (IGF). It believes that these activities have benefited greatly from the multistakeholder participation which was pioneered in WSIS and adopted in the WSIS outcome documents as an integral part of the follow-up process. Ensuring the continued involvement of stakeholders with diverse backgrounds from all countries is essential to the value of WSIS follow-up activities. APC also believes that this has been facilitated by the sharing of responsibilities for WSIS implementation between ITU, UNESCO, UNDP, UNCTAD and other agencies, with their different strengths and expertise, and that the WSIS follow-up process would be seriously weakened if these diverse agencies were not all able to play their full part in it. In the past two years, the WSIS Forum has made a significant contribution towards reviewing the implementation of WSIS objectives, facilitating the interchange of ideas and building relationships amongst participating stakeholders. Like many that participated in WSIS, APC was disappointed by the clusters of action line meetings that took place in 2006-2008. The decision to move from an amorphous collection of action line meetings to the more concentrated, wide-ranging and diverse format of the Forum that has taken place in the past two years has been valuable and important. In particular, it has encouraged the development of a committed group of participants from all stakeholder communities who are familiar with the way in which the Forum works and able to make an important contribution. It is important to build on this. The revised Forum has also gained value from the presence in Geneva of many of the international agencies that are concerned with its objective, the implementation of WSIS outcomes, and the relative proximity of other implementation agencies such as UNESCO and FAO which are based elsewhere in Europe. In addition, it has been valuable that meetings of the Forum have been held alongside other meetings that are relevant to stakeholders, including meetings of CSTD and the IGF process, enabling government, private sector and civil society participants to make a much greater contribution to WSIS follow-up than would have been possible had these meetings been held at different times and in different places. At this stage, APC believes that the WSIS Forum should build upon these strengths, and that they would be jeopardised by moving the 2011 meeting to New York. Firstly, while it is useful to rotate venues for international meetings of this kind, it is also important to hold them in places where relevant international institutions are based. The UN institutions most actively involved in WSIS implementation are UNESCO, which is based in Paris, and the ITU, which is based in Geneva. Others which are active in WSIS areas of engagement include UNCTAD, the Secretariats of CSTD and the</p>
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					responsible for the Forum and the wider stakeholder community.
20	L Franz	TechAmerica	BUS	USA	<p>TechAmerica Comments on WSIS open consultation – supports holding WSIS Action lines Forum 2011 in Geneva to maximize participation of relevant stakeholders. TechAmerica is pleased to provide comments to the WSIS action lines Forum 2011 consultation on ‘Expressions of Views on the Venue for 2011’. With over 1200 member companies, TechAmerica represents the broad spectrum of leading ICT small, medium, large, and multinational corporations. In addition, TechAmerica is the U.S. member association of the World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA), a global technology association of over 70 associations. TechAmerica’s members regularly participate in the WSIS action lines Forum events to provide their expertise and input. In previous considerations, TechAmerica supported consolidating the Action Lines meetings into a single week in Geneva in May. It is in the same spirit of maximizing stakeholder participation that compels our input to this consultation the location of the WSIS Action Lines Forum. The WSIS action lines were an outcome of the Tunis session of the World Summit on the Information Society. The establishment of facilitators for the Action Lines resulted in the emergence of leadership from a variety of UN organizations. Originally, the Action Lines were spread over a multi week period, making it difficult for business from the high tech sector to attend actively. Following consultation, the Action Lines were consolidated into a single week, in Geneva. As a result, the collaboration among the UN facilitators has improved significantly, resulting in more effective and efficient organization. Organizing the Action Lines into a single forum has helped the forum evolve into a format that is useful and advances a visible role for the Action Lines to contribute to the Digital Millennium Goals. TechAmerica and other business entities engaged in the Action Lines Forum and facilitation process have called on the organizers to aim for informative sessions focused on examples of a range of stakeholders activities or initiatives to fulfil the action lines goals. In particular, the focus should include initiatives that are broader than UN funded or government initiatives. TechAmerica also notes that there are several lead facilitators -- ITU, UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD, and we continue to support their full collaboration and shared responsibility for planning and hosting the WSIS action lines Forum. Organizing the WSIS action lines Forum events in Geneva makes sense since many key organizations are located in Geneva. Other WSIS related events have typically been organized around the May date of the consolidated Action Lines Forum in May, and TechAmerica notes that it is more feasible to gain the participation of stakeholders, from civil society and business by hosting the week long forum in Geneva. There is limited time, financial and human resources across all stakeholders, including national governments, civil society, technical community and business. TechAmerica is concerned that moving the WSIS action lines Forum 2011 to New York will limit participation since it competes with other WSIS related events that are based in Geneva, and will also require more challenging travel procedures for those travelling from developing countries. Further, the cost and process of obtaining visas for the US presents challenges for many prospective participants from developing countries. TechAmerica proposes that the WSIS action lines Forum 2011 should be hosted in Geneva to retain and grow stakeholder participation. If an alternate location is necessary, it could be hosted by UNESCO, the next lead facilitator, in Paris. The selection of dates should also be undertaken with respect and reflecting the related WSIS activities that also take place in May – e.g. the IGF consultations and the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) meetings. TechAmerica has been able to organize participation in all these events because they are located in the</p>

					<p>same geographic area, and the access to the meeting space facilitates the ability of business to attend sessions with a simple accreditation. Like others, each year we work hard to ensure business participation, but it is always challenging. Moving the WSIS action line Forum to New York in 2011 would take away the ability to leverage other international events occurring at the same time, which would add to the challenges of getting business participation.</p>
21	Constance Bommelaer	Internet Society	CS	SWI	<p>The Internet Society (ISOC) strongly recommends that the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) action lines Forum 2011 continues to be hosted in Geneva or, by the next lead facilitator, UNESCO, in Paris. ISOC has had the privilege to contribute to all phases of the WSIS. We believe strong participation to the WSIS process is a condition to its success, and we have also supported participation of diverse groups of stakeholders through or “ISOC WSIS ambassadorships.” Over the years, we have found that Geneva is a practical location for building a fruitful and interactive WSIS dialogue. Geneva has proven to be a convenient location, capable of gathering an impressive number of organizations and individuals, and allowing Internet governance discussions to be truly multi-stakeholder. Geneva is now the centre for the WSIS follow-up work and that city has the immense advantage of being the location where those having the greatest expertise and experience of the process are based. Additionally, as the UN Commission on Sciences and Technology Development, as well as the majority of the Internet Governance Forum’s consultation and advisory group meetings are held in Geneva, it allows stakeholders to meet there on a regular basis. Finally, for most stakeholders, Geneva is a city well equipped with a variety of suitable accommodations and other facilities, and well served by transportation links. Although other cities, including Paris, can also offer acceptable facilities, they tend to be less convenient for many stakeholder groups.</p>
22	Neeta Shewraj (MICT)	Ministry of Information and Communication Technology	GOV	MAU	<p>The Administration of Mauritius is agreeable to the proposed change in venue from Geneva to New York</p>
23	Babagana	KANURI DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION	CS	NGA	<p>The venue should be moved to New York, because that is the place where all CEO'S of relevant stake holders on the issues to be discussed could be available. Further more the Visa processing for participants should start in December 2010 in order to give more time for Embassies to process the Visas for participants.</p>
24	Monika KU NZOVA (Pochyla)	Ministry of Industry and Trade , Electronic Communications Department	GOV	CZE	<p>Thank you very much for your invitation to participate in the open consultation concerning the venue of the WSIS Forum 2011.</p> <p>I would like to submit a contribution on behalf of the Czech Republic. This contribution represents the view of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These ministries have been actively involved in the WSIS process from its very beginning and their representatives have also participated in the annual May WSIS meetings, the last WSIS Forum 2010 included.</p> <p>We have carefully evaluated all the advantages and disadvantages of the two suggested alternatives concerning the venue of the next WSIS Forum and we are of the view that the WSIS Forum 2011 should take place in Geneva, as did previous events of this kind.</p> <p>While we acknowledge that moving the WSIS Forum 2011 to New</p>

					<p>York would without any doubt bring some added value to the WSIS process, we also believe that it is necessary to preserve the continuity of the WSIS Forum. We are concerned that a one-time transfer of the WSIS Forum to New York might disturb this continuity and also lead to the absence of some long-term active WSIS process stakeholders. The ever-growing number of the WSIS Forum participants shows that Geneva as the venue of the WSIS Forum has still the potential to attract new WSIS stakeholders. In addition to that, we also agree with the arguments presented by the WSIS Team regarding the possible additional financial and logistics burden. The role of CSTD, which is based in Geneva, in the WSIS follow-up also has to be taken into account.</p> <p>We would like to thank you again for the possibility to express our views on this matter.</p> <p>We wish you all the best in your endeavour concerning the organization of the WSIS Forum 2011.</p>
25	El Saadany	Ministry of Communications & Technology	GOV	EGY	<p>There is no doubt that the WSIS with its two phases is important not only for the ICT sector but for the whole information society at large. The aim of convening the WSIS was to find the best solutions and ways to bridge the digital gap between all nations and connect the disconnected. The ITU is the main facilitator of the WSIS action lines. Since 2006, the ITU played the leading role in following up on the WSIS action lines and one of the key measures it took was organizing "WSIS cluster of meetings" in May of that year. These meetings gained momentum and importance year after year, leading to 2009 in which it evolved to become the one and only platform to enable all stakeholders to meet and follow up on what was achieved regarding the follow up of the action lines. This event is known today as the WSIS Forum; it managed to combine the various meetings that took place in the clusters spanning three month to a high level event held in one week aligned with the annual celebration of the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) held in the seat of the ITU in Geneva. Egypt believes that the ITU is successfully meeting its role as the main facilitator of the WSIS action lines. This success is based on several factors, the first of which is its capacity to organize such an important event that brings together all the relevant stakeholders; this is due to their accomplishment as the secretariat of both phases of the WSIS. The second reason is its proximity to most of the interested stakeholders to participate in this event. Most notably, the fact that most of the UN Specialized Agencies who are co- facilitators of the WSIS action lines are based in Europe, in addition to the CSTD based in Geneva. More importantly, this proximity was exercised by several stakeholders through organizing meetings back to back with the forum such as the annual CSTD meeting. It is unclear if the forum was held outside Europe, would it affect the level of participation by all relevant stakeholders. Moreover, it's also unclear if there would be logistical and financial implications (direct and indirect) to hosting it outside of Europe. It's noteworthy, that hosting it across seas in New York may affect the level of participation by many LDCs. In light of the above, Egypt prefers to keep holding the WSIS – Forum in Geneva. On the other hand, we are conscious of the added value in hosting the event in New York in terms of ICT visibility in the UN community based in New York. Hence, we are with hosting the WSIS – Forum for one year and not permanently in NY for that reason and its our view that it might as well be in 2014 before a third WSIS should there be one. We believe that this would bring maximum visibility to the ICT sector taking advantage of the momentum being built to the WSIS. However, in case there is a consensus from the different stakeholders on holding the next WSIS Forum (2011) in NY, Egypt would like to suggest that</p>

					there should be an assessment of the effects of moving the venue to N Y. and to determine whether the trial event has proven beneficial and of value added to the WSIS process or not as opposed to holding the event in Geneva.
26	Christoph Bruch	German Civil Liberties Union (Humanistische Union)	CS	GER	<p>Thank you very much for inquiring stances of the WSIS community on the suggestion to move next WSIS Forum to NY.</p> <p>The German Civil Liberties Union (Humanistische Union) supports the aim to broaden awareness for the post-WSIS process within the UN.</p> <p>However, from a civil liberties organizations point of view it is not advisable to bring an international event as the WSIS Forum to the US while the current immigration policy is in place. Participating in the WSIS Forum should not be preconditioned on accepting being fingerprinted by immigration authorities.</p>
27	Ayesha Hassan	International Chamber of Commerce	BUS	FRA	<p>On behalf of members of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and its BASIS initiative, Business Action to Support the Information Society, we are pleased to submit this statement to the WSIS action lines Forum 2011 consultation on 'Expressions of Views on the Venue for 2011'. ICC BASIS members include companies and business organizations from around the world and across sectors. ICC BASIS and its members have regularly participated in the WSIS action lines Forum events over the years.</p> <p>ICC BASIS has consistently encouraged the WSIS action lines Forum and facilitation process to build on sessions that provide concrete examples of initiatives being taken by a range of stakeholders to fulfil the action lines goals, which requires broad participation from across stakeholder groups and geographies. We have also consistently stressed the importance of multiple hosts for the WSIS action lines Forum and have recognized the efforts of the lead facilitators, ITU, UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD.</p> <p>The WSIS action lines Forum events in Geneva have drawn upon the fact that many key organizations are located in Geneva, and the participation of many stakeholders, business included, has been facilitated by the fact that other WSIS related activities take place around the same dates. This has enabled participation by many because it took into account the limited time, financial and human resources of many across stakeholder groups. Organizing the WSIS action lines Forum 2011 in New York risks decreasing participation because it would require extensive travel for those participating in the other WSIS related activities in May in Geneva. Feedback from ICC BASIS members and other stakeholders indicates that obtaining visas for the US is extremely difficult for many particularly from developing countries. This would in turn decrease the range of participants.</p> <p>ICC BASIS supports having the WSIS action lines Forum 2011 hosted in Geneva, or by the next lead facilitator, UNESCO in Paris. Either of these options would be more sensitive to the resource constraints of all stakeholders. We strongly encourage once again that efforts be made to select dates that allow stakeholders to participate in the other WSIS related activities that take place in May each year, namely the IGF consultations and the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) meetings. It has been noted in the past that business participation from across sectors and regions could be improved. We submit that organizing the event in New York next year will not further this objective.</p>
28	Nabil Eid	Studies Centre for Handicapped	CS	SYR	I agree to enlarge the geographic reach and improve the role of ICT and the role of UN in this initiative, it's better reflection for interesting

		Research			in MDGs in all developing countries
29	Rodah Masaviru	Pan African Postal Union	IO	TZA	<p>We welcome the idea to change the venue to New York for the reasons given by the organising committee.</p> <p>It would however be important to come up with a mechanism to facilitate visa issuance to participants.</p>
30	Pierre Petit	A HAUTEUR D'HOMME INTERNATIONAL	CS	FRA	<p>As requested in your e-mail dated 10 August 2010, I am expressing here my views about moving the venue of the WSIS Forum from Geneva to New York.</p> <p>After discussions with Mr Bernard Frautschi, President of the A HAUTEUR D'HOMME INTERNATIONAL association in Bordeaux, France, we have come to the following conclusion : if the venue of the next Forum was moved to New York, it is very likely that a small ONG like ours would not be able to finance the considerable expenses involved in a trip to the United States.</p> <p>For example, 2 days in Geneva this year cost us approximately 300 Euros(including a low cost Easyjet airfare) ; for the same duration in New York, we would have to budget for at least 1000 Euros, more than 3 times the Geneva expenses, which would be impossible to finance for us without receiving outside help.</p>
31	Roxana Dunnette	Worldspace Corporation	BUS		New York- more energy
32	Mzwandile R Mabuza	Swaziland Posts and Telecommunications Corporation	GOV	SWZ	We are of the opinion that the Americas should be given a chance since Africa and Europe hosted the 2003 and 2005 Summits respectively.
33	Maurice Ghazal	Representative of Lebanon in ITU	GOV	LBN	Lebanon will agree on moving the venue of the WSIS Forum from Geneva to New-York. We hope that an important number of invitations to undeveloped countries will be proposed also.
34	Rajneesh Aggarwal	International Cooperation Division, Department of Information Technology	GOV	IND	<p>This refers to e-mail dated 10th August, 2010, from the WSIS team requesting the WSIS stakeholders to provide their views as to whether the venue for WSIS Forum 2011 should be shifted from Geneva to New York.</p> <p>After considering the reasons stated in the above e-mail, including particularly the interest expressed by several stakeholders to shift the venue for WSIS Forum 2011 from Geneva to New York, India also supports that the same may be held in New York</p>
35	Nicolas Koffi KOUDOUVO	Ecole Doctorale: Sciences-Environnement-Santé Faculté des Sciences/ Université de Lomé	CS	TGO	<p>Très cher,</p> <p>Voici ma suggestion à propos du Forum sur la société d'information (New-York, mai 2011). Le transfert de Genève à NY ne me pose pas de problème. Les raisons évoquées sont pertinentes. Entre autres raisons, rapprocher le lieu de la tenue du forum aux sièges des organisations du PNUD est selon moi une raison suffisante pour ce choix et j'adhère pleinement à cela. J'espère que ma suggestion peut contribuer à statuer sur le choix de la ville de NY et vous prie de retrouver mes cordiales salutations</p>
36	Kwaku Oforu-Adarkwa	Councilor for ITU	GOV	GHA	Personally I think WSIS Forum in NY apart from offering opportunity for the UN Family to all get involved in the evaluation at HQ level will also give ITU the visibility it deserves following the commitment exhibited in the monitoring of the implementation of the action lines.
37	Cosmas	Focal Point for	IO	GHA	The proposal to hold the next event in New York is a good one. As

	Zavazava	C2, ITU			this is a global issue, it is hoped that the next sessions will also be help in other regions on rotational basis. This way, participants from all the regions will have an opportunity to attend some sessions at low cost.
38	Juan Manuel Roldan Perea	Ministry of Communications, Colombia	GOV	COL	New York
39	Bertrand de La Chapelle	Ministre des Affaires Etrangres et Europeennes/ French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs	GOV	FRA	<p>Discussions regarding the proposal to hold WSIS Forum 2011 in New York should keep in mind several parallel and interrelated dimensions. France would like to congratulate the Secretariat for holding this consultation and is pleased to provide the following comments :</p> <p>1) The WSIS Forum is one of the two legs of the implementation process, focusing on development and the catalysis of projects (the other one being the IGF for public policy issues). The WSIS Forum should not become an overall WSIS review.</p> <p>The WSIS Forum has not been explicitly established by the Summit, but emerged from the spontaneous organization of the "cluster of WSIS-related events". The shift to the label WSIS Forum last year should not be considered as making it the annual review of the progress in implementation in all aspects, as an overall umbrella covering also the IGF and somehow pre-empting the review role of the CSTD. Rather, it makes sense to consider it as the second leg of the implementation process : the IGF dealing with policy issues and the WSIS Forum dealing more with actual projects and concrete actions, with various actors describing their programs, the difficulties encountered on the ground, and exchanging best practices that can be replicated. A catalytic role.</p> <p>Discussion on location should not forget this background. The Plan of Action is more than Internet Governance and the concrete projects dimension deserves to be fully addressed, otherwise, the development agenda of WSIS will be sidelined.</p> <p>2) Irrespective of the issue of the location, the positive trend towards multi-stakeholder preparation should be continued, through the formation for instance of a Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (similar to the IGF MAG).</p> <p>The WSIS Forum has adopted from the beginning an open door policy, which is a good thing. Furthermore, open consultations (however limited) have been introduced last year and this is a noteworthy progress. However, the Agenda, the format and the selection of panellists are still exclusively under the responsibility of the organizing Agencies.</p> <p>The creation of a Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) for the WSIS Forum, already discussed last year, would improve the preparatory process and guarantee equal representation and involvement of the different stakeholder groups. The modalities of preparation of the meeting are probably as important as its location.</p> <p>3) The choice of location could be initially linked to the lead agency in chairmanship of UNGIS in a given year.</p> <p>Initially, the Cluster of Action Lines meeting was organized by the ITU alone with the meeting taking place in ITU premises. More recently, organization has involved more generally the "lead facilitating Agencies" (ITU, Unesco, DESA and UNCTAD), even if the ITU maintains a prominent role and most of the meetings still take place in the ITU building.</p> <p>It would probably make sense to push the logic a bit further and consider that, as they rotate in their chairmanship of the UNGIS, the lead facilitators rotate accordingly in their responsibility to be the convenor/organizer of the WSIS Forum, with the location of the WSIS Forum rotating accordingly.</p> <p>In that context, if the WSIS Forum were to be held in New York, next year or later, it should not be envisaged as a permanent move, but as</p>

				<p>corresponding to DESA being in the rotating chairmanship. Is DESA or UNDP in the rotating chairmanship of UNGIS in 2011 ?</p> <p>4) A broader geographic rotation is probably desirable in a longer term perspective to avoid holding the meeting only in Europe or the US. There are potential benefits of holding the WSIS Forum in different parts of the world to facilitate outreach. The choice should not be limited to Europe and the United States because of the location of the lead agencies. In this respect, any holding of the WSIS Forum in New York in 2011 or later, should not be considered as a permanent move but at most as a step towards a geographical rotation to different regions of the world.</p> <p>5) Visa and cost issues (travel and accommodation) are not favourable in New York, and this would need to be addressed before it were retained this year or in the future, in order to ensure broad participation. Flexible meeting formats may also be harder to organize in New York, where space is at a premium.</p> <p>A clear objective should be maximizing multi-stakeholder participation in the WSIS Forum. The difficulty to obtain visas for the US (and costs) is probably the major objection regarding holding the WSIS Forum in New York in 2011. However, significant events have been organized in New York with appropriate participation from actors around the world, provided some specific measures are taken (fellowships in particular). Likewise, New York may help attract organizations from North and Latin America that have cost problems flying to Europe (this is the reason why geographical rotation is suggested). In any case, a special effort in terms of visa obtention for all participants and financial support is a prerequisite for the WSIS Forum to go to New York next year or later.</p> <p>Moreover, one of the benefits of the open Multi-stakeholder format is to go beyond mere panel sessions to facilitate side meetings in a flexible format. New York during the period of renovation of the ECOSOC facilities may make it difficult to accommodate this requirement, as space is always at a premium.</p> <p>6) A decoupling in time of the WSIS Forum and the May meetings in Geneva could be beneficial in the future.</p> <p>The WSIS Forum has traditionally been co-located with the IGF consultations and the CSTD meeting in May in Geneva. This indeed facilitated participation and reduced some costs. However, a compact period of two to three weeks is difficult to manage in heavy agendas and schedules. Furthermore, if (as mentioned in point 1 above) the WSIS Forum is mostly about practical implementation rather than covering everything including Internet Governance, then the overlap in terms of participants is more limited.</p> <p>Decoupling the WSIS Forum in time from the IGF consultations and CSTD meetings could even diversify the participation and help focus the WSIS Forum on the development agenda rather than a rehash of Internet Governance issues. Finally, leaving some time between the WSIS Forum and the CSTD meeting would allow the CSTD to receive a formal input from the WSIS Forum, something that is not possible when the two meetings are only days apart, as it is today.</p> <p>7) Discussion on the WSIS Forum and its future should keep in mind its desirable articulation with the IGF and the possible contribution of both to the preparation of the general WSIS review in 2015.</p> <p>A general review of the WSIS implementation will take place in 2015 (as per paragraph 111 of the Tunis Agenda). However, if the multi-stakeholder approach consecrated in Tunis is to be respected, an event in 2015 (whatever its name, including WSIS III as some actors seem to propose) should not be held along the same format as in Geneva or Tunis, but rather follow a truly multi-stakeholder format, building upon the experience of both the IGF and the WSIS Forum.</p> <p>In such a context, the WSIS Forum and the IGF in the next five years could be the two natural preparatory spaces for the two dimensions of</p>
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