

Netizen Participation in Internet Governance

For ITU Workshop on Internet Governance, Geneva

February 27, 2004

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WSIS Civil Society Internet Governance Caucus

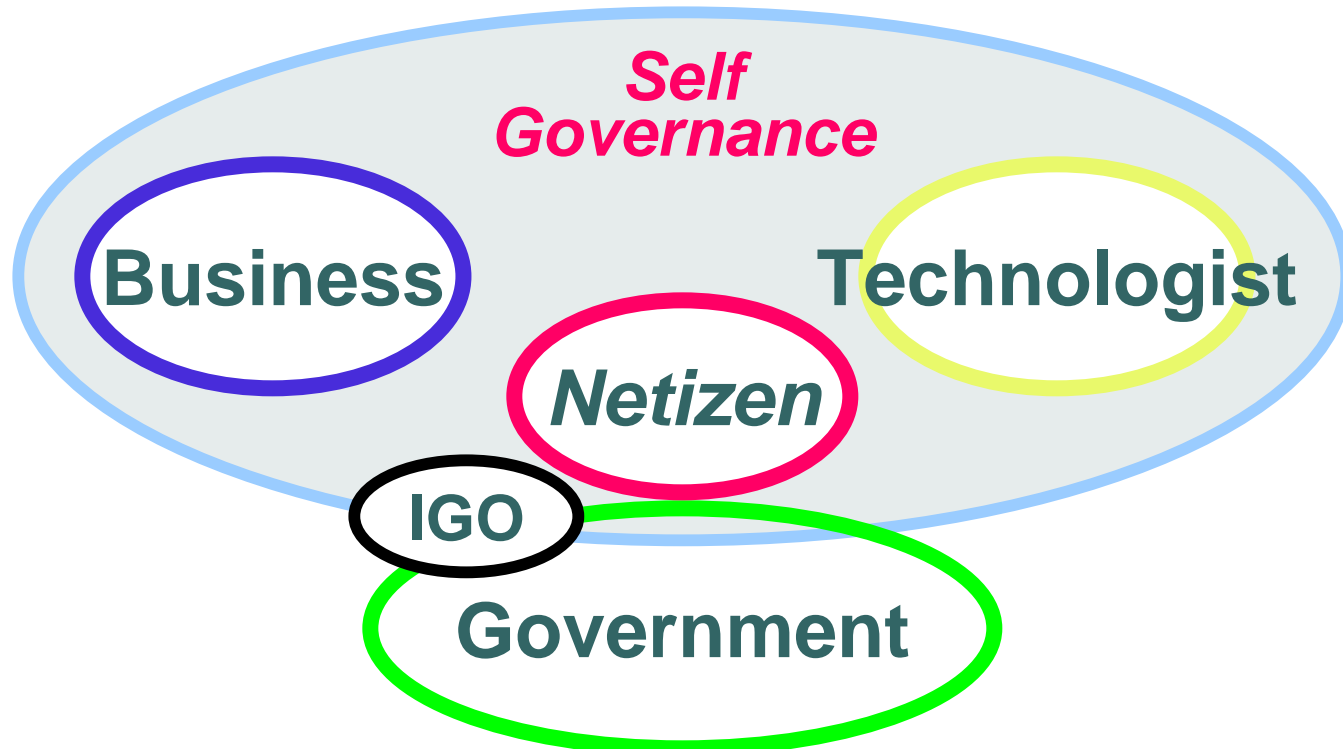
- 60+ individuals made contribution to Civil Society Declaration
- Chairs: Wolfgang Kleinwachter, YJ Park
- Coordinators: Jeanette Hoffman, Adam Peake
- Some members are here as speakers and participants

Governance as *global* challenge

- **Global Net posing trans-national challenges that are hard to solve by “nation” based approach:**
- **Current International, inter-governmental bodies are not designed to deal with these trans-national/global issues effectively**
 - They are made for “Industrial Age”
 - Slow, constrained by borders, not flexible enough
- **Need to establish new governance model**
 - **Netizens** from Civil Society play vital role

A Proposal: Self-governance with *Netizens*

- Self-governance with balanced participation by all stakeholders



The large number of users requires new governance model

- **Internet Users in Japan: 70M, 60% of population**
 - **Broadband users: 13.5M, 70% of subscription**
 - **High speed, always-on as commodity**
 - **Mobile Internet access: 67.8M, 53% of Population**
- **80M in China, 35M in Korea...**
- **Mobile, ubiquitous... more development to come**
- **They are empowered even as small individuals**
- **Emerging Social issues:**
 - **Online-crime (dating service, online fraud...)**
 - **P2P, digital copyright, privacy protection**
 - **Name & Address management has less problems, (may face more)**

Governance must fit with local/regional reality

- **Internet development status is so diverse: Asia Pacific ranges from Japan/Korea to Afghanistan, East Timor, Bhutan, Iraq...**
- **“Internet Community” – collaboration between engineers (mostly in university), private sector (entrepreneurs & Netizens) and government is the key**
- **In many developing countries government support has been essential for Internet deployment**

Strong voluntary coordination within Asia Pacific and with other regions

- **APNG** (Asia Pacific Networking Group)
- **APNIC** (Asia Pacific Network Information Center)
- **APRICOT** (Annual Summit Conference)
- **APTLD** (ccTLD group)
- **APAN** (Asia Pacific Advanced Networking)
- **APCAUCE** (Asia Pacific Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial Email)
- **AIII** (Asia Internet Infrastructure Initiative)
- **AP Cert** (Computer Emergency Response Team)
- **AP*** (joint organizational activity of all APs)
- **All have voluntary coordination, no central control**

Governance must fit with Internet architecture:

- Internet is **Autonomous, Distributed and Collaborative network of networks**
- Internet has **open, end-to-end** architecture
- Not central control, but ***voluntary coordination***, proven to be sources of success

Governance model should follow **layered** structure

- **Internet functions based on layers:**
 - Physical layer
 - Transport layer
 - Logical routing
 - Application/Services
- **Separation of functions by layers**
 - Each layer has different protocols and workings
 - Hence different governance model required
 - Coordination between layers also needed

Netizens meet global governance challenges

- “Net Citizen” → “*Netizen*”
 - First coined by late Michael Hauben
- Active users evolved from technical community, spread into Civil Society
- Main actor of Information Society
 - Social Game: From Economic forces to Intellectual forces (Prof. Kumon, GLOCOM)
- Online advocacy becoming social power
 - Slash-dot, 2-Channel (Japan)...
 - Political influence observed in Korea, China, US, Philippines...
 - The rise of “*Smart Mobs*” (Howard Rheingold)

Reasons why *Netizens* need to be involved:

- **Governance requires: Consent of the Governed**
- **As main actor of *innovation at the edge***
 - Internet developed by Netizens : WWW, Browsers, Yahoo, ICQ, Amazon
- **Decisions affect end-users directly:**
 - Spam, virus, crimes, copyright, P2P
 - ICANN: Domain Name Fee, Competition around DNS, gTLD introduction, ccTLD status, SiteFinder issues
- **For appropriate Checks and Balances**
 - Civil Society to counter interests of business and bureaucrats
- **For responsible activities**

Merits of *Netizen* Participation:

- **Netizens have direct knowledge and experience with the issues**
- **More flexible, efficient than incumbent institutions**
- **Global: crossing the national borders and making communities of interests freely, will add diversity**
- **Embody diverse values in the Information Society (senior citizens, women, people with disabilities, minority groups...)**
- **Not captured by economic interests**

Netizen participation as measures to ensure Diversity

- **Geographic diversity:**
 - Make it compulsory to have regional balance
- **Economic diversity:**
 - Take inclusive approach
- **Cultural diversity:**
 - Build Multilingual working environment:
English is not enough
- **Un-marginalize the minority:**
 - Affirmative efforts to listen and implement the needs of many minority groups

Netizens to keep Freedom at the edge

- “Freedom at the edge” is the core principle of Internet shared by both engineers and Netizens
 - **Technical freedom** – core for Internet development
 - **Freedom of use** – core user value
- It should be maintained and further developed
 - Mobile Internet, CATV Internet may modify this
 - Traditional operators tend to “close” the system; control the network from center
 - It will stifle the innovation and rapid development Internet has enjoyed so far

The Risk of excluding Netizens

- **Techno-centricism – lack the human viewpoints**
 - Technology can self-reproduce, “out of control”
 - May ignore human interests: Accessibility, cultural diversity, digital divide
- **Corporate-centricism – may lack the social justice**
 - Profit-drive may raise price, end with monopolistic dominance in market
 - May lead to violation of Human Rights (privacy, free speech...)
- **Bureaucracy - may lack accountability/transparency for public interests**
 - Government tends to make “top-down” decisions
 - Small number of closed circle making decisions – for their own interests to get unfair advantage
 - Need checks and balances

Conclusion: Netizen participation a must to keep **self-governance** work

- Approach A: Technologist/private sector can manage the public interest issues
- Approach B: Governments should handle public policy issues, not the technologist/ private sector
- **Balance: Self-governance with Netizens**
 - Government intervention under the name of public interest could be excessive
 - Netizens (demand side) participation adds balance – including from developing parts of the world

Netizens network as the base for participation

- **IETF** (Internet Engineering Task Force) as one model
- **ICANN AtLarge**, a valuable experiment
- **Main characters:**
 - Autonomous, distributed and collaborative network of networks
 - Bottom-up, open, vernacular, local optimum with global coordination
 - Based on “subsidiarity principle”
- Functions similar to unions or political parties in industrial society
- Need for self-certificate mechanism

The way forward

- **Be open and inclusive:**
 - **Involve more stakeholders from developing countries and non-Western regions**
- **Out Reach**
 - **Regional meetings are essential**
- **ICANN Rome WSIS Workshop**
 - **ALAC co-hosting with other groups**
 - **Mar 4, 11:00 – 12:30**
 - **Open to anyone**