|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Document CWG-Internet-19/5** |
| **19 January 2024** |
| **English only** |
|  |  |
| Contribution from Saudi Arabia (Kingdom of), United Arab Emirates, China (People’s Republic of), Kuwait (State of), Russian Federation, Algeria (People's Democratic Republic of), Egypt (Arab Republic of), South Africa (Republic of), Uganda (Republic of) Morocco (Kingdom of), Bahrain (Kingdom of), Tunisia (Republic of), and Cuba (Republic of)  |
| TOPIC FOR NEXT OPEN CONSULTATION\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Purpose (Objective)**This document is addressing Internet developmental issues so that it further promotes inclusivity.**Action required**The Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy issues is invited to **consider and approve** the proposal from multi-country contribution in this document.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

**Context:**

During the Eighteenth meeting: Wednesday,18 October 2023, for the CWG-Internet, diverse perspectives and ideas were brought forth during discussions. However, due to the several proposals submitted by Member States, a consensus on the next open consultation topic could not be reached. Recognizing the need to streamline our efforts and capitalize on the insights gained from our previous discussions, we have generated a combined contribution to cover most suggested topics under the umbrella of “**The developmental aspects of the internet to strengthen the resilience of the Internet**”, with details provided under each developmental aspect.

**Introduction**

The developmental aspects of the Internet have played a major role in the development of societies and economies around the world. It is important to note that the developmental aspects of the Internet, such as Internet resources and capabilities in supporting Internet connection are not evenly distributed. Developing countries often face challenges in accessing and using the Internet due to, among other factors, limited technical infrastructure, poor connectivity, weak security, lack of corresponding knowledge and capabilities, and International public policy issues. However, efforts are underway to address these challenges and to make the Internet more accessible to everyone.

**Discussion**

The development aspects of the internet have been driven by a number of factors, including technological Infrastructure, connectivity, security and International Public Policy Issues.

* **Internet resources:** A well-developed, accessible, and affordable information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and applications, tailored to regional, national, and local needs, can accelerate social and economic progress and improve the well-being of all. Providing internationalized domain names (IDNs) and promoting the universal acceptance of IDNs will enable users to access the Internet with scripts and identifiers that meet their linguistic habits to the best possible extent. Another aspect of technical infrastructure that may provide opportunities for the sustained growth of telecommunications/ICT infrastructure is IPv6 deployment. However, there are several challenges related to this field, such as investment, skills shortages, governance, security, and sustainability**.**
* **Connectivity:** Although progress in ICT connectivity, digital divides persist between and within countries, and between men and women. According to [ITU’s Measuring digital development: Facts and Figures 2023](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/facts/default.aspx) as the world reaches 8 billion people, 5.4 billion people (67%) are using the internet. However, 2.6 billion people worldwide are still offline, and universal internet access is still a long way off in least developed and landlocked developing countries, where only 39% of the population is online. Enabling affordable access is one of the major obstacles to the generalization of sustainable connectivity. Another aspect of Internet development is that satellite communication should be given consideration as a complementary solution for next-generation broadband network deployment. Satellite systems can be deployed relatively quickly compared to the time required for laying terrestrial infrastructure. This makes satellite communication an effective solution for providing immediate connectivity in disaster-stricken areas or regions with urgent connectivity needs. In addition, access to telecommunication/ICT facilities, services, and applications to the public is necessary to ensure full achievement of economic and social development for the population of countries.

**- Security:** As the cyber threat landscape expands, exploring new attack vectors becomes crucial, especially with the proliferation of emerging technologies. Security is often linked to costly countermeasures and resilience plans. Developing countries encounter challenges in adopting affordable tools and infrastructure for securing Internet access and digital services. A secure, stable, resilient, and trustworthy Internet is important for the overall health of the global economy and society because it provides a platform for trust and confidence. In this matter, cybercrime is a significant and growing problem for users, networks, and the Internet as a whole and should be dealt with at appropriate national and international levels. When people can trust that their data is safe and that their online transactions are secure, they are more likely to engage in economic and social activities online. To further enhance cybersecurity, it is imperative to strengthen regulatory framework on matters in the field of security and use of Telecommunications / ICTs. In that sense, the International Telecommunication Regulations (ITRs) can accommodate the need for “high-level guiding principles” on cybersecurity in today’s telecommunication / ICTs environment.

* **Capacity building**: Knowledge and capability are crucial in the process of bridging the divide of Internet resource management. Particularly, the know-how of workforce is essential for the sustainable development of an ecosystem that fits in the local circumstances. Effective capacity building requires strategic planning and long-term investment of both financial and human resources, and desirably, regular inter-state and/or inter-regional exchanges.
* **International Public Policy Issues:** International public policy has a significant impact on internet development and resilience, both positive and negative. It can shape the governance frameworks and regulations that govern the internet, impacting issues such as privacy, cybersecurity, and access to information. International public policies can also influence internet innovation and the development and deployment of internet infrastructure, as well as the regulation of cross-border data flows and increase the gap between developed countries and the rest of the world. International public policies can also address the vast linguistic divide, which exists in cyberspace today thereby making the internet accessible to larger community.

**Proposal:**

Based on the above discussion, the following topic is suggested to the Council Working Group Internet next open consultation: "**The developmental aspects of the Internet to strengthen the resilience of the Internet**”

* **How to utilize the WSIS+20 review process and the ongoing global digital compact (GDC) negotiations to address aspects related to Internet development, particularly in the areas of Internet resources, connectivity, security, and international public policy issues?**
* What are the good practices to **incentivize governments and other stakeholders to invest more in internet infrastructure, including IPv6, IDNs, and satellite communication,** towards improving the affordability and accessibility of the Internet**?**
* **What are the key challenges and opportunities in building a resilient and secure internet? And what will be the ways and tools that can be used to mitigate cybercrime risks?**
* What could governments and other stakeholders do more to ensure that the Internet becomes more multilingual in nature and thus accessible for more of the global population?
* How can governments and policymakers in developing countries create a more favorable policy environment for sustainable development of internet resources, in order to strengthen cooperation? Additionally, how can we promote international cooperation on public policy issues that are focused on promoting the developmental aspects of the internet, such as capacity building?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_