|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Document CWG-Internet-22/6** |
| **16 September 2025** |
| **English only** |
|  |  |
|  |
| REPORT OF THE TWENTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WORKING GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL INTERNET-RELATED PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES (CWG-INTERNET) |

**1. Introduction**

**1.1.** The twenty-second meeting of the CWG-Internet was held on 15 - 16 September 2025.

**1.2** Ms Doreen Bogdan Martin, Secretary-General, thanked the participants for their active commitment and support for the Group. She noted the important developments on international Internet related public policy issues that are taking place this year leading up to the WSIS+20 review process in December. Highlighting the important and related discussions ongoing within the CWG, the SG encouraged members to contribute to the WSIS+20 review process, leveraging the unique repository of stakeholder perspectives gathered through the open consultations. The SG also underscored that the ITU is following various international developments, including those related to AFRINIC, and emphasized the importance of safeguarding the integrity of critical Internet resources, while upholding the principles of openness, trust, and multistakeholder collaboration.

**1.3** The Chair thanked the SG for her presence and support for the meeting. He thanked members for their continued support and commitment to the CWG-Internet, noting also the diverse set of inputs received for the open consultation. The Chair urged members to consider the outcomes of the consultation in their work and invited them to engage in the discussions of the meeting with a spirit of consensus and collaboration.

**2.** **Agenda of the meeting:** [**CWG-Internet-22/1**](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLINTPOL22-C-0001/en)

 The Chair presented the Agenda (CWG-Internet-22/1(Rev.2)). A member requested the Chair to modify the Agenda under Agenda Item 7 to reflect a statement from them on the issue of AFRINIC to ensure a stable and inclusive digital future for Africa. The Agenda was adopted.

**3. Secretariat report on ITU Internet Activities: Resolutions 101, 102, 133, 180 and 206:** [**CWG-Internet-22/2**](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLINTPOL22-C-0002/en)**:**

**3.1** This report summarizes ITU’s activities related to Plenipotentiary Conference (PP) Resolution 101 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), “Internet Protocol-based networks”; Resolution 102 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), “ITU’s role with regard to international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet and the management of Internet resources, including domain names and addresses”; Resolution 133 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), “Roles of administrations of Member States in the management of Internationalized (multilingual) domain names”; Resolution 180 (Rev. Bucharest, 202), “Promoting deployment of Internet Protocol version 6” and Resolution 206 (Dubai, 2018), “OTTs”.

**3.2** A member expressed appreciation to the secretariat for presenting Document 2, the work reflected in this Report, and the WSIS+20 Open Consultation at the Internet Governance Forum in Norway.

**3.3** The Group noted the Internet Activities Report.

**4. Discussion of responses from the Open Consultation**

**4.1 Summary of the online open consultation and physical open consultation meeting (**[**OPCWGINT-13/3**](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-OPCWGINT13-C-0003/en)**):**

 The CWG examined the summary of the online open consultation and physical open consultation held on 12 September 2025.

**4.2 Discussion**

**4.2.1** The group noted [OPCWGINT-13/3](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-OPCWGINT13-C-0003/en).

**4.2.2** The group thanked all stakeholders for their active participation in the online and physical open consultation on “*Ensuring meaningful connectivity to the Internet for landlocked developing countries (LLDCs)”,* stressing the importance of the topic as noted by the valuable inputs, highlighting in particular the opportunities, challenges and multistakeholder solutions provided in the responses to the consultation. The group thanked the Vice Chair, Europe Region, Mr Lucien Castex, for managing the meeting efficiently and productively.

**4.2.3** Members expressed appreciation for the contributions received from stakeholders for the open consultation.

**4.2.4** Members appreciated Paraguay for its follow-up action on this topic for the open consultation as well as the inputs received. Members noted the challenges discussed during the consultation, which impact all countries, but specifically highlight the impact on LLDCs due to their unique geographical situation and dependence on transit countries. Members expressed appreciation for the solutions suggested by stakeholders, including improving internet infrastructure inside the country, such as internet exchange points in order to reduce costly, cross-border routing, cooperating with neighbouring countries on fiber interconnection, with a focus on redundancy, resilience and cost and in order to ensure affordability, the regulatory and administrative barriers that should be examined to promote private investment, public-private partnerships or community-led solutions, the importance of open standards, an inclusive bottom-up multi-stakeholder cooperation, and an exploration of how new technologies can also complement terrestrial infrastructure. Members emphasized the vital role that ITU can play in facilitating cooperation in this field.

**4.2.5** Some members encouraged the Group to consider its role in taking forward the results of the consultation through analysis and recommendations to Council so that they can inform the work of the ITU and its members. Some members noted that the meeting reports as well as the Chair’s reports to Council reflect the results of the consultation and urge the Bureaux to take them into account in their work, and that any other form of recommendations would be out of the scope of the mandate of the Group.

**4.2.6** Some members requested for more information on the methodologies used to gather responses and promote the consultation for inputs. The Chair noted that ITU uses its website and channels to promote the consultations, but requested the members to also use their networks actively to promote the consultations within their regions. Some members noted that while there were fewer responses to this consultation, the contributors were experts who engaged in a substantive and in-depth discussion, and highlighted the important role of multi-stakeholder collaboration in addressing challenges and devising solutions.

**4.2.7** Some members requested the Group to consider opening its membership for participation of all stakeholders. Some members suggested that such proposals could be brought to the next plenipotentiary conference.

**4.2.8** The Chair invited the Group to consider the output from the consultation in their work and future deliberations.

**5. Introduction/Discussion of contributions from Member States**

The Chair invited each of the contributors (in the order listed in the Agenda) to briefly present their proposals to the group. The CWG examined the various contributions, which were noted by the group. The summaries of the contributions (as submitted by the authors of the documents) and the corresponding discussions are provided below:

**5.1** [**CWG-Internet-22/3**](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLINTPOL22-C-0003/en) **(United Kingdom) - Topic for open consultation**

**5.1.1 Summary**

The United Kingdom proposed that the Council Working Group’s next open consultation should be on the topic of *“Policies to promote the participation of young people in international internet-related public policy and the development of the next generation of leaders*” with four consultation questions as follows:

* Q1 – What public policies are needed to support the development of the next generation of leaders in Internet governance?
* Q2 - What examples of best practice currently exist? What can we learn from them? What role can regional organisations play?
* Q3 – What technical issues and policies do young people need to understand in order to be prepared for future challenges and opportunities?
* Q4 – What barriers do young people from developing and least developed countries face and how can they be addressed?”

The United Kingdom welcomed the support there has been for this topic at the previous meetings and thanked those who had made suggestions to improve the proposal. There were a number of programmes aimed at promoting the participation of young people but there was a danger that these initiatives would take place in isolation and that young people in developing countries would not be aware of them or would face barriers to access them. A consultation on this topic would be an opportunity for the Council Working Group to:

* gather, identify and share best practice
* identify opportunities for more joined-up and more strategic approaches and
* raise awareness of the importance of this issue.

In particular, the consultation would also be an opportunity to promote the need for inclusion, outreach and support programmes, particularly to ensure that young people from developing countries are able to take part.

**5.1.2** **Discussion**

a) Members noted the proposal, expressing appreciation for the importance of promoting the participation of young people in international Internet-related public policy matters.

b) Some members expressed support for the contribution as a topic for an open consultation given its relevance and as meaningful participation of young people is crucial for the sustainable development of international Internet-related public policy, noting that the results of this open consultation would serve as a helpful resource and guidance for governments, international organizations, as well as other stakeholders. Some members were of the opinion that the proposal does not align with the international Internet-related public policy issues and extends into a broader social policy discussion which is beyond the Group’s mandate, lacks a clear policy link to pressing challenges that fall within the scope of the Group (meant to deliberate on technical and regulatory areas related to the Internet), and that it would also be duplicative of existing initiatives such as the Youth IGF.

c) Some members drew attention to the multi-country contribution that was presented at the Group’s last meeting on the role of stakeholders in combating misinformation and disinformation to strengthen digital trust, and aimed to tackle urgent global challenges and promote practical policy cooperation, initiatives and resilience. They further noted that this issue falls under the scope of international Internet-related public policy issues contained in Annex A of Council Resolution 1305 (Mod. 2019) and is consistent with the mandate of CWG-Internet. These members proposed that this should form the topic of the next open consultation.

 Some members were of the view that, while this topic was discussed at the last meeting, no consensus was reached, and as no proposal has been submitted on this topic for this meeting, it cannot be considered as a potential topic for the next consultation. Further, these members expressed that the matters discussed under this topic fall within the scope of other UN agencies such as UNESCO and that such a topic does not fall within ITU’s mandate.

d) Based on discussions, the Group engaged in a drafting exercise on the proposal on youth, but despite various suggestions and efforts to facilitate compromise, no consensus was reached.

**5.2** [CWG-Internet-22/4](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLINTPOL22-C-0004/en) **Contribution by the Russian Federation - Proposal to improve the work of the Council Working Group on international Internet-related public policy issues and** [CWG-Internet-22/5](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLINTPOL22-C-0005/en) **Contribution by the Russian Federation - Questionnaire on international Internet-related public policy issues**

**5.2.1** **Summary of** [CWG-Internet-22/4](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLINTPOL22-C-0004/en) **Contribution by the Russian Federation - Proposal to improve the work of the Council Working Group on international Internet-related public policy issues**

The Russian Federation proposed to facilitate discussions within the Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues (CWG-Internet) regarding international Internet governance. The contribution emphasized CWG-Internet stands as the suitable political and intergovernmental platform for the exchange of States` opinions, best practices, and preparation for work on other specialized platforms, ensuring the international community can work collectively on these challenges.

The Russian Federation noted that the CWG-Internet does not have a work plan, and its meetings are limited mainly to approving the topics of open consultations. The Russian Federation proposes to prepare draft roadmap/work plan for the CWG-Internet and formulate a thematic issue on international internet-related public policy issues for each of the sessions for the next four years (starting from the Plenipotentiary Conference 2026).

**5.2.2 Summary of** [CWG-Internet-22/5](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLINTPOL22-C-0005/en) **Contribution by the Russian Federation - Questionnaire on international Internet-related public policy issues**

The Russian Federation considered that it is appropriate to strengthen the discussion within the Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues through an online questionnaire regarding international Internet governance.

Such a survey would be able to clarify the positions of the Member States and the subsequent discussion would help to better understand the need for international cooperation and the forms and tools of such cooperation on international Internet governance.

Thus, the work of CWG-Internet would gain practical benefits, and it would help to prepare a work plan of CWG-Internet.

**5.2.3 Discussion on Contributions** [**CWG-Internet-22/4**](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLINTPOL22-C-0004/en) **and** [**CWG-Internet-22/5**](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLINTPOL22-C-0005/en)

a) Members thanked the contributors for their presentation and proposals.

b) Some members expressed support for this proposal noting that the CWG-Internet does not have a work plan and roadmap, and its meetings have been limited to approving topics for open consultations. They proposed to enrich the outcomes of this Group, and some members also proposed to study ways to improve the mandate of the Group, including on new and emerging issues, and present a proposal to Council on a potentially expanded scope of the Group based on [Resolution 1305 (Mod. 2019)](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0136/en).

Some members were of the view that many issues related to internet governance are being discussed in a wide range of fora, including this Group, the IGF and the WSIS+20 review. These members suggested that Member States are also able to bring contributions to this Group on any topic they see fit within its mandate, and it is not necessary to set leading questions for them as set out in this proposal. They suggested that with regard to the idea of a road map, given that next meeting would be the last meeting of this cycle of the CWG-Internet prior to PP-26, it may not be an appropriate time to create a new roadmap that may prejudge the outcomes of PP26. It could be a better opportunity to consider the role of the Group.

c) In response to this proposal, a member requested their statement to be attached in the Annex to this Report ([Annex 1](#Annex1)).

d) The delegate from South Africa reflected on the developments in AFRINIC and requested their statement to also be attached in [Annex 2](#Annex2). Some members expressed support for this statement that draws attention to the AFRINIC matter which has the potential to hinder the stability of the internet on the African continent, and urged constructive dialogue to lead to a positive resolution that strengthens global internet resilience.

e) The contributions were noted.

**6 Presentation of Chair’s Report**

The report of the twenty-second meeting of the CWG-Internet was approved by the CWG-Internet and was posted on the CWG-Internet website (<http://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-internet>).

**7 Any other business**

The group thanked the Chair and secretariat for their effective organization and management of the group.

**8 Closing of the Meeting**

In closing, the Chair thanked all the ITU Member States who made contributions and participated in the work of the group (including those who participated remotely), the Vice-Chairs, the ITU Elected Officials and the secretariat for their efficient assistance during the meeting.

 **Mr Wojciech BEREZOWSKI (Poland),
 Chair, CWG-Internet**

*Annexes:* ***2***

**Annex 1**

**STATEMENT BY CANADA**

Canada strongly disagrees with the assertion that the Internet governance landscape lacks a platform for governments to meaningfully participate to advance global Internet governance policy priorities.

Firstly, while the IGF is not a decision-making body, it plays a critical role in shaping the global Internet governance agenda. The IGF’s annual themes reflect pressing public policy concerns, like Internet and data governance, cybersecurity, and digital inclusion, **clearly demonstrating its responsiveness to global public policy priorities.** Secondly, it is evident that governments concretely and substantively contribute to the outcomes of national and regional IGFs, which are a critical component to the IGF ecosystem

With regards to the statement that the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) within ICANN is only limited to operational matters, this is simply not the case. At its core, the GAC provides advice on public policy issues, especially where ICANN’s activities intersect with national laws or international agreements. GAC’s role has evolved to reflect the growing importance of public interest considerations in domain name system management, which will be crucial as we enter the launch of the New Round of generic Top Level Domain Names next year.

The multistakeholder model of Internet governance has been exceptionally successful precisely because all stakeholders, including governments, are central to its decision-making. On the other hand, we adamantly caution against the push for a state centric, top-down model of Internet Governance that aims at excluding, if not at drastically lessening the participation of Civil Society, Academia, and the Internet technical community in the governance of the Internet.

Which by the way, begs the question, once again, when will this WG be open to all stakeholders?

Lastly, we kindly requests that this statement, that we are sending to the secretariat, be included in the official report of your meeting.

**Annex 2**

**STATEMENT BY SOUTH AFRICA**

Distinguished Chair, Colleagues,

Let me start by expressing our appreciation to the ITU SG for monitoring closely the developments with regard to the challenges currently facing AFRINIC.

The stability and security of the internet’s infrastructure are fundamental to the global digital economy. Every online transaction, every cross-border service, every digital connection relies on the smooth functioning of critical resources such as IP addresses. These unique identifiers are the lifeblood of connectivity.

If they are compromised, the ripple effects are felt far beyond any one region. Instability in the internet’s core infrastructure is not a local matter; it is a systemic risk that affects us all.

This global reality is underscored in current international discussions. As South Africa, the G20 Presidency for 2025 —the first time the G20 is hosted on African soil—has placed digital issues high on the agenda.

Within the G20 Digital Economy Working Group, the message is clear: a stable, secure, open, and interoperable internet infrastructure is fundamental to inclusive growth, innovation, and sustainable development.

This is also precisely why the work of this Council Working Group is so important. It provides a valuable forum to exchange views on international public policy issues related to the internet, helping us keep stability, security, and trust at the center of our collective discussions.

The issue before us today connects directly to that vision.

It is in this broader context that I raise the situation of AFRINIC, the African Network Information Centre. AFRINIC is one of only five Regional Internet Registries worldwide.

Based in Mauritius, it is responsible for distributing and managing IP addresses across 54 African countries. It is not just a regional body—it is a critical pillar of global internet infrastructure.

When one of these pillars weakens, the whole system is put at risk.

Unfortunately, AFRINIC has for several years been paralyzed by severe governance disputes and protracted litigation. This crisis has had far-reaching consequences:

* **Financial instability**, threatening its ability to perform core functions.
* **Erosion of trust** in the fair and transparent management of internet resources.
* **Increased security risks**, with heightened potential for IP address hijacking and fraud—activities that undermine networks worldwide.

The seriousness of this situation was also recognized at the political level. In their recent Ministerial Declaration on 27 July on Sustaining AFRINIC’s Operations and Africa’s Internet Stability, African ICT and Digital Economy Ministers reaffirmed AFRINIC’s vital role in regional internet governance and called for inclusive, constructive solutions that protect Africa’s collective interests.

That declaration underscores that this crisis is not a narrow dispute, but a matter of stability, governance, and sustainable development for the continent as a whole.

This situation directly contradicts our shared goals of digital inclusion and sustainable development. It also raises profound questions about digital sovereignty and multistakeholderism.

At its core, this is about the right of developing regions to govern their own critical internet resources effectively.

AFRINIC’s crisis illustrates the challenges the multistakeholder model faces when legal and governance disputes threaten to paralyze collaboration among governments, the private sector, civil society, and the technical community.

The urgency is clear. Africa is one of the fastest-growing digital markets, home to the world’s youngest population. A weakened internet infrastructure risks slowing this momentum, undermining progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, and leaving 1.4 billion people behind in the digital economy.

We are not here to assign blame. We are here to call for constructive, collaborative action. We urge the international community, and all stakeholders, to:

* **Acknowledge the systemic risk**: instability in a Regional Internet Registry is a matter of global concern.
* **Support an African-led, multistakeholder solution**: encourage resolution through dialogue and mediation, not prolonged litigation.
* **Offer technical and diplomatic assistance**: neutral facilitation by trusted international bodies can help restore stability and trust.
* **Uphold the principle of digital sovereignty**: empower African nations and communities to steward their internet resources transparently and effectively.

Colleagues, the AFRINIC crisis is more than an internal dispute. It is a benchmark for our collective ability to safeguard the internet as a global public good.

By helping Africa resolve this challenge, we not only secure the digital future of a continent—we reinforce the stability, openness, and inclusiveness of the internet for everyone, everywhere.

Let us stand together to ensure that Africa’s digital transformation is supported by the stable and secure foundations it deserves.

Thank you.

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