

German Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Internet Governance Forum

Hosts: eco – German Internet Industry Association,
United Nations Association of Germany (UNA Germany),
DENIC eG,
Internet Society German Chapter ISOC.de

Date: Tuesday, November 11, 2008

Website: <http://www.igf-d.de/>

Messages from Berlin: Core Statements as Contribution to the IGF Discussions

Panel 1 The future of broadband access and net neutrality

→ There was consensus that a "3 strikes" approach or filtering to fight criminal user activity like illegal copying of copyrighted works should not be acceptable in democratic societies.

→ No definite consensus was reached whether state funds are needed to close the "digital gap" and to make broadband access possible for everybody. On the one hand it is obviously a matter of competition and the market place, on the other hand participants from business and civil society see the state in charge to step up fundings for alternative access types like wireless broadband, if broadband access is not getting going as necessary.

→ Though there was consensus that network neutrality has to be ensured, participants had different opinions about how to do so. There doesn't seem to be a particular need for government intervention yet, if competition - like e.g. in Germany - is quite well developed. Anyway, other members partly called for laws protecting general principles of an open Internet.

Panel 2 Security, privacy and protecting personal data in the internet - in search of a new balance

→ The panel held a critical view towards data retention, which is a threat to privacy, and at the same time is of questionable value for combating terrorism and other serious crimes.

→ There were different views about the net-users' fitness to protect their own privacy and personal data (in internet communities such as facebook for example). Though all panelists agreed that privacy has to be protected there were different views about the extent to which detailed regulation is needed.

→ All panellists agreed that the awareness of privacy issues is growing. But new challenges will arise, for example when face recognition technologies will enable search engines to identify people from pictures or videos.

Panel 3 The Future of the IGF – towards an even better self-administration of the internet

→ There was a broad consensus among the participants that the multistakeholder design of the "Internet Governance Forum" is a unique innovation for dealing with global Internet policy issues which should be further developed and strengthened.

→ Participants encouraged ICANN to continue its transition process towards a post JPA phase by improving the procedures for interaction among the various stakeholders - including GAC and At Large - strengthening the accountability towards the global Internet community and keeping its status as a nonprofit public benefit corporation based on the multistakeholder model.

→ Participants called for a more differentiated process with regard to the introduction of new TLDs, taking into account the special nature of proposals coming from public authorities or non-commercial units.