

IGF LEADERSHIP PANEL  
CONTRIBUTION TO CONSULTATION ON THE  
GLOBAL DIGITAL COMPACT

Introduction

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## Introduction

In line with the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and as recommended in the Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, the United Nations Secretary-General has established the IGF Leadership Panel as a strategic, empowered, and multistakeholder body.

Among the key functions of the IGF Leadership Panel are the responsibility to provide strategic inputs and advice on the IGF; promote the IGF and its outputs; and exchange IGF outputs from the Forum with other stakeholders and relevant fora, and facilitate the feeding of input of these decision-makers and fora to the IGF's agenda-setting process, leveraging relevant MAG expertise.

In this context and based on existing IGF outputs, the Leadership Panel is pleased to make the following contribution to the ongoing consultation of the United Nations on the **Global Digital Compact**. This contribution is based on the IGF 2022 messages, as agreed by the participants to the IGF in Addis Ababa. IGF messages are a summary prepared by the IGF secretariat after each annual IGF meeting, which are commented on and agreed by the multistakeholder community.

## Support for the Global Digital Compact

The Leadership Panel strongly welcomes the initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General to propose a **Global Digital Compact** in the report on *Our Common Agenda*. We welcome the focal value the Global Digital Compact, and by extension the digital transformation, the internet and new technologies have in the *Summit of the Future*, scheduled to be held in September 2024.

The Global Digital Compact should represent important steps towards achieving the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**. Beyond this, the Global Digital Compact should not only recommend **guiding principles** for the internet of the future, but should identify **clear and concrete actions** to achieve its objectives, including metrics to **measure progress towards achieving these goals**.

The GDC should reaffirm the MSH model of Internet Governance, all while following a multi-stakeholder approach in its' genesis. The Leadership Panel would urge the Global Digital Compact facilitators to explore possibilities for the **whole multistakeholder community to be involved** in the Global Digital Compact process, **beyond the consultation phase**. We therefore call for a dedicated **Multistakeholder Drafting Group** to

not touch upon the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum, which is to

## Connecting All People and Safeguarding Human Rights

IGF recognises that the digital divides within and between countries and regions remain powerful actors affecting national and international development, including progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Meaningful access extends well beyond issues of connectivity and includes aspects of divide that cur across various parameters, including issues of accessibility, affordability, content, services, digital literacy and other capabilities as well(v)-5.6 (i.n8-4.3 (-)-5.50.5 (anh)2.2 (a)10.7 (

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## Key commitments:

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# Governing Data and Protecting Privacy

IGF recognises the centrality of data in today's economy and society, and the fundamental role of data in the future. Data are a critical resource, and data flows can be a vital element for international cooperation (e.g. scientific research, law enforcement, and national and global security), and can support with management of transversal crises such as pandemics and climate change. IGF recognises that data can generate both profit and social value, but that issues of data poverty and the protection of the right to privacy and personal data can cause populations to be left behind economically, and erode trust in the digital economy.

## PROTECT PRIVACY

### Core Principles:

Privacy is not only an individual right but also a social value and should be considered with a whole-of-society approach and not restricted to governments. **Privacy laws should be substantial, evidence-based and subject to clear enforcement, accountability and remedy.** Laws should ensure that data flows and data exchange can take place without compromising on security and data privacy, and that internet access and use should not be dependent on data-tracking. Furthermore, personal data should not be exported into jurisdictions which do not provide adequate guarantees.

### Key commitments:

- € **Policies, developed through meaningful multistakeholder input, must ensure the protection of personal data.** Independent oversight bodies should be established and enabled with adequate resources.
- € The private sector must endeavour to adopt a privacy-by-design approach in its innovations and developments to safeguard the rights of users.

## ESTABLISH GOOD DATA GOVERNANCE

### Core Principles:

- Policies should ensure that individuals have agency over their personal data and that privacy protections contribute to a safer and more prosperous global digital economy. Interoperability and compatibility of approaches to data governance would help achieve a balanced approach in which data work for people and the planet.
- **Transparency, participation and accountability are important aspects of good data governance.** This includes consideration of standards, sharing, interoperability, security, privacy, infrastructure, fairness, transparency and explicability, data minimization, and quality and accuracy.
- Current multilateral, regional and bilateral trade agreements are insufficient to enable current and future cross-border data flows: there is thus a growing need to develop and harmonise measures to manage cross-border data flows with trust and in full respect of personal data protection.

### Key commitments:

- Policies for good data governance should be **designed with the full input of the multistakeholder community**, including regulators, researchers, standards development organisations, consumer organisations, end

- Policy frameworks should enable the free-flow of data across borders with trust, underpinned by the highest standards of personal data protection, in order to allow for the full benefits of e-commerce and digital trade to be realised, in addition to the realisation of development goals.



## **Enabling Safety, Security and Accountability**

IGF recognises the multifaceted nature of the threats on the internet, including cybersecurity (protection of networks and data), misinformation and disinformation, and other safety





such technologies, which can be particularly detrimental in times of conflict or crisis, should be avoided.

- **Technical standards play an important role** in enabling the development and enhancing the value of digital technologies and related infrastructures, services, protocols, applications and devices. Effort should be made to ensure that such standards are set in transparent and clear processes, to take human rights concerns fully into consideration and **encourage full participation from all stakeholders, including financial support** for expert participants from governments, academia, private sector, technical community and civil society.

## Other issues

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

#### Core Principles:

- Digitalisation provides opportunities, tools and devices to combat and adapt to climate change, including the use of environmental data to mitigate climate change, data to manage food and water systems, support the circular economy, and reduce e-waste

#### Key commitments:

- The enabling role of digital technologies and the ICT ecosystem should be recognised and harnessed in public policy, to allow for the development of impactful new applications to combat the effects of climate change
- A more extensive use of new technologies, in the appropriate legal framework, should be encouraged, as a way to achieve sustainability and drive digital inclusion.

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