INTERVENTIONS OF THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY AGENCY (UMIC) PRESIDENT AT THE IGF – INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM, HYDERABAD, INDIA, 3-6 DECEMBER 2008

In the Open Dialogue about "Reaching the Next Billion" in the 1st day (3 December 2008), after a discussion on if and how to reach "the next billion" or the "last billion" of Internet users:

"Luis Magalhães, Knowledge Society Agency, Portugal.

I feel a bit uncomfortable about the way we are talking about the next billion and the last billion of Internet users. By the next billion people are referring to the billion that can be reached by markets in their general operation, and by the last billion people talk about those who have to be reached by public policy because otherwise they would be excluded. And that is not really a separation we should do.

The chairman already pointed out that in terms of using infrastructure it is the same for those that the market can reach and for the others.

Indeed, what we should aim at is that the next billion of Internet users be a mix of the two groups.

In fact, public policy has to do with both parts: one part has to do with better market regulation and, in fact, on how to make the market forces work well, but public policy also has to do with the other part of including those who have not been included.

So, I propose that when we talk about the next billion, we include both the excluded or in risk of exclusion and also the ones who will be reached by just better market operation."

In the "Improving Institutional Confidence in ICANN: Public Consultation" session in the 2nd day (4 December 2008), after a presentation on strategic issues for ICANN – The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers by its President's Strategic Committee:

"Luis Magalhães, from Portugal.

I think it is important to pursue the evolution of the membership and the way of operation of the GAC – Governmental Advisory Committee, in order to improve transparency, its advisory function, working methods and participation. But what are the scenarios for the evolution of the institutional framework of ICANN following the end of the current JPA (Joint Project Agreement with the USA Department of Commerce), in September 2009?

(...)

We have a very good appreciation of the excellent work ICANN has been performing and the innovative way it has opened to a very wide and intensive interaction of global scale, but now that the present arrangement, under the JPA, is approaching the end, ICANN must propose a vision for this transition period. It has to put on the table the different possible scenarios and provide objective analytical work for their consequences to be visible and understood by everybody."

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In the Open Forum organized by OECD: "Outcomes of the OECD Ministerial Meeting on The Future of the Internet Economy" in the 2nd day (4 December 2008):

"Luis Magalhães, Knowledge Society Agency, Portugal.

Given the orientations expressed in the Seoul Declaration regarding indicators, I would like to ask to the panellists what developments are to be expected regarding the use of indicators appropriate to the current situation of ICT use after the major changes of recent years, as for instance in e-commerce and mobile broadband.

Indicators for e-commerce continue to be only based in the part done through Internet browsers (ordering, receiving orders and paying through the Internet) while presently the vast majority of e-commerce transactions are done through other channels like mobile phones, sensor-based networks as those based on RFID but also others, and other ICT networks such as those of ATMs which are extensively used for e-commerce in several countries as is the case of Portugal.

Indicators of broadband penetration only consider fixed broadband, when mobile broadband is gaining a major importance.

In both cases, we are looking at a small part of the reality and ignoring its major and novel components which are even expected to play an increased role. So, an information on the developments in the adoption of new metrics and indicators in these and other areas of ICT is much welcome."

In the "Taking Stock and the Way Forward" session in the last day (6 December 2008):

"Luis Magalhães, from Portugal.

I first would like to point out that I think IGF is better today than ever.

In fact, it improved along this week to reach a very special level in this morning "Emerging Issues" session.

The IGF, I think, should maintain its approach of an "evolving model" of interaction, a continuously learning venture.

I think this Forum is unique as providing a "conscience" to the Internet community, like the network of neurons in the human brain provides a conscience to us as individual human beings.

I believe this role is not fulfilled by any other existing organization, and that it cannot be contained in more traditional organizations of a hierarchical nature.

This conscience and intelligence is essential for the economy and for societal improvement in all the areas of the globe.

The reason for this is that we need an organization that matches the network structure of the Internet itself:

- Openness to participation and interaction;

- Evolving boundaries with time;

- Fractality (in the sense that when we look at a small part of the network, the pattern we see is equal to the whole network itself, and therefore very different from the networks with hierarchical structures).

It is the robustness of the interaction of diverse and independent actors that allows the sustainability of widely shared values, convictions, and principles.

The issues of the Internet are not exhausted in technicalities. Actually, technicalities are only a minor part of the issues that have to be brought to consideration in the whole picture of the Internet.

As a matter of fact, in the informational or knowledge society, we need social organizations with the flexibility and interactivity which are characteristic of human beings. A new kind of organizations. And IGF is actually pursuing from this point of view organizational innovation of a very special kind.

For the future, I think that we certainly need to work better on a point that was already mentioned by another participant regarding to reach out to wider audiences in a more efficient manner. To bring whatever has been constructed here and is part of our conscience as individuals who have participated in this network to create a common sense and feeling, so that it can be communicated to the outside world.

Actually, we need to reach out with other forms of participation, to improve on better remote participation, and, for instance, to actually involve younger cohorts in this discussion, who I think are eager to do it if we provide the right channels and the right local support for this to happen.

In terms of themes, I cannot do better than what the session on "Emerging Issues" did. I strongly commend the adoption of the proposals that we heard during this morning and their exploitation for the future steps of IGF."

In the "EU Coordination Sessions" organised every day by the EU French Presidency (3- 6 December 2008):

Regular active participation on the issues brought up to discussion, and contributions to EU positions in the IGF sessions.

In informal institutional contacts:

Several, among which:

- Internet Governance Project

- WSIS civil society Internet Governance Caucus

- ICANN Vice President, Global and Strategic Partnerships

- ICC – International Chamber of Commerce, Senior Policy Manager.