THE DUALITY OF INFORMATION POLICY DEBATES:
THE CASE OF THE INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Cornell University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Dmitry Epstein

January 2012

THE DUALITY OF INFORMATION POLICY DEBATES:
THE CASE OF THE INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

Dmitry Epstein
Cornell University 2012

This project focuses on the dynamics of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) as a non-binding multistakeholder debate about information policymaking. Using the theory of structuration and critical discourse analysis, I explore how the nation-state-centric and the internet-community-centric perceptions of authority and approaches to decision-making manifest themselves in the forum and what political and cultural norms they reify.

This study is based on participatory observations, personal interviews, and analysis of documents and meeting transcripts. It explains the inner workings of the IGF as a space where the historical tensions between the traditional methods of global policymaking and the unorthodox approach to governance developed by the Internet community are played out. It explains how the IGF functions as a UN forum that aspires to bring practices of collaborative, meritocratic, and bottom-up decision-making into the nation-state-focused, hierarchical environment of the UN system. My analysis demonstrates how the two worldviews on Internet policymaking coexist and collide within the formalized bodies of the IGF, and how they are enacted through practices that evolved around the IGF fixtures. It explains how the IGF manages to draw legitimacy from both the intergovernmental and the Internet community environments by incorporating elements of both during its meetings. It also explains the pivotal

role of idea entrepreneurs at the nucleus of IGF as a group that deliberately engages in creation of IGF structures.

This study puts forward three main concluding arguments. First, it argues that the main contribution of the IGF to Internet governance is mainstreaming the Internet community values within the UN system. The IGF engages in governance to the degree that it produces systems of consultative and decision-making processes that have constitutive effects for Internet policymaking. Second, it questions the notion of multistakeholderism by viewing it as a set of practices that enact ideological principles. It highlights the importance of recognizing the multiplicity of practices of multistakeholderism in the analysis of Internet governance. Finally, this study argues for the importance of viewing Internet governance as a system where analysis of one policy discourse space cannot be complete without the understanding of other spaces where Internet governance is debated.

to my parents and my growing family

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ccNSO	Country Code Names Supporting Organization
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CIRA	Canadian Internet Registration Authority
CSTD	Commission on Science and Technology for Development
DNS	Domain Name System
DOC	Department of Commerce
DOTForce	Digital Opportunity Task Force
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
G7	Group of seven industrialized countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, and United States)
G77	Group of 77—a coalition of developing countries in the UN
GAC	Government Advisory Committee
GIC	Global Internet Council
GigaNet	Global Internet Governance Academic Network
IANA	Internet Assigned Numbers Authority
ICANN	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce
IETF	Internet Engineering Task Force
IGF	Internet Governance Forum
IIC	International Internet Council
ISOC	Internet Society
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
ITU-D	Telecommunication Development Sector of the ITU

ITU-R	Radiocommunication Sector of the ITU
ITU-T	Telecommunication Standardization Sector of the ITU
LACNIC	Latin America and Caribbean Internet Addresses Registry
MAG	Multistakeholder Advisory Group
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRO	Number Resource Organization
NTIA	National Telecommunications and Information Administration
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SWITCH	Swiss Education and Research Network
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNOG	United Nations Office at Geneva
WGIG	Working Group on Internet Governance
WICANN	World Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WSIS	World Summit on Information Society
WTO	World Trade Organization
YCIG	Youth Coalition on Internet Governance
IRP	Dynamic Coalition on Internet Rights and Principles
CONGO	UN Conference of NGOs
ETNO	European Telecommunications Network Operators

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Unresolved tension

David Clark, arguably one of the founding designers of Internet architecture, famously said:

"We reject kings, presidents, and voting. We believe in rough consensus and running code."[1]

Clearly, the pioneers of Internet architecture were designing not just a computer network. They

were also designing the means by which this network would be run, managed, and regulated—

and this governance was imbued with a set of powerful beliefs. Drissel (2006) explained that

"[i]n the years since the genesis of the Internet in the late 1960s, pioneers of digital technology

have described cyberspace as a unique electronic frontier, one that steadfastly resists all

attempts at governmental control or state-imposed regulation" (p. 105).

The governance structures informally developed during the design of the Internet were

substantially different from the typical mechanisms of public policy decision-making. Huston

(2002) observed a gulf that "exists between the typical method of constructing a public policy

framework for the communications industry and the exigencies of the Internet;" he referred to

it as an "unresolved tension (…) over the very nature of the Internet and its regulatory model."

The "Internet way" of policy formulation, reflective of the values of the academic community

that engineered the Internet against the backdrop of the counterculture movement of the

1960s and 1970s, was based on an ethos of collaboration and meritocracy. Traditional public

policymaking centered around hierarchical procedures with the institutions of the nation-state

---

[1] See: http://www.ietf.org/tao.html

as the ultimate decision-making nucleus, and with a focus on maintaining the status quo (Huston, 2002; Uimonen, 2003).

 This tension between different approaches to policymaking erupted with the commercialization of the Internet and emergence of the World Wide Web in the early to mid 1990s. The unexpectedly broad and rapidly growing demand for "webified" domain names required a system capable of managing the technical, the operational, and the legal aspects of voluminous domain name registration. This led to tensions between the US government and the Internet community's loose institutions, such as the Internet Society (ISOC) and the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), regarding the authority over the domain name system (DNS) hierarchy. These concerns were echoed by other, primarily intergovernmental, institutions with a stake in information policy, such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) or the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), regarding the authority of these emerging institutions of the Internet community to handle issues of public policy (see Mueller, 2002, chap. 6 for detailed discussion of these developments).

In this situation, neither the Internet community nor the nation-state apparatus could lead Internet-policy-setting unilaterally. On the one hand, by the time the governments entered the Internet policy debate, there were already well established governance institutions based in the private sector[2], the civil society, and to a degree academia, premised on principles of collaboration, meritocracy, and "rough consensus." Moreover, these non-government actors

---

[2] There is a growing body of literature arguing for the centrality of the private sector as the sphere where the governance of the Internet actually happens (DeNardis, 2010a; Mueller & van Eeten, 2011).

held the technical expertise, which is critical to the governance of the Internet. On the other hand all these actors worked, and continue to work, within government established legal frameworks. As citizens of particular countries, different members of the Internet community are subject to the laws of their sovereign states, and many draw their financial and political resources from their government systems.

The eruption of this tension between the traditional and Internet community approaches to policymaking highlights the gap between these distinct views on authority and decision-making; it also highlights the fundamentally global nature of Internet-related policymaking. For many in the Internet community, the growing interest of governments in issues of Internet governance, specifically the calls to implement a more nation-state focused and hierarchical decision-making process, was an assault on the very spirit of the Internet and its normative foundations. The majority of the Internet community at the time resided in the US and was appreciative of the US government hands-off approach to the Internet. The creation of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) —a private, US-based, not-for-profit corporation with authority over the critical Internet resources—was an institutional response of the Internet community and the US government to the international pressure. Mueller (2002) described ICANN as "a resource-based international regulatory regime" that is "a rough facsimile of an international treaty organization without a treaty" (p. 220). The clash between the two forms of policymaking has also fueled a series of global debates about Internet policy, which culminated in a UN-sponsored World Summit on Information Society (WSIS). The summit, which was held in two phases in 2003 and 2005, started as a meeting with purely

developmental agenda, but quickly morphed into a high-level international debate about Internet governance.

The WSIS made most apparent the global scope and the unorthodox notion of authority in informal Internet-related policymaking. Governments could not simply assert their authority through established intergovernmental channels, such as the ITU, because at that point most of the policy decision-making authority was already delegated to non-governmental institutions such as IETF and ICANN. Instead, the WSIS formalized the practice of "multistakeholderism," where "representatives of public interest advocacy groups, business associations, and other interested parties participate in intergovernmental policy deliberations alongside governments" (Mueller, 2010, pp. 7–8). Yet, the tensions surrounding the legitimacy of the emerging information regime, with ICANN as its pivotal institution, as well as the fundamental disagreements about how the Internet should be governed, proved irresolvable. The summit produced its own general framework for global information policy, with a strong emphasis on development, but made no concrete policy decisions. The main "tangible" outcome of the summit was a decision to create a non-binding forum for multistakeholder Internet policy discussion—the Internet Governance Forum (IGF).

Over the last six years, the IGF has since become a vessel for the unresolved tensions between the different cultures of authority and decision-making of the Internet community and the intergovernmental apparatus. It has also become a stage for enacting different normative schemes based on plurality of worldviews, as well as cultural, national, and institutional identities of the participants in the forum. Despite the presence of the phrase "Internet

governance" in its name, the IGF is not the only, nor the most central institution of Internet

governance. Yet it continues to attract participants and donors, and its mandate was extended

for an additional 5 years in December 2010. Most importantly, the forum continues to evolve

and interact with other institutions of Internet governance, which makes it a good space for the

study of the structuration of Internet governance.

1.2. Unanswered questions

When I was first exposed to Internet governance I could not help but wonder: *why* do people

participate in IGF? The forum does not lead to traditional policy outcomes in the form of

treaties, standards, policy statements or even recommendations. Unlike the IETF, which

produces standards—voluntary ones, but standards nonetheless—or the WIPO, which produces

treaties, the IGF produces only non-binding discourse. Streeter (1996), for example, claimed

that broadcast policy and law create the "fact of television (…) as a set of social activities" (p. 3).

Getting to "create" a medium as an act of policymaking would be a compelling opportunity for

interested individuals and organizations. But the same cannot be said for a non-binding policy

deliberation spaces such as the IGF—non-binding debates do not "create" tangible outcomes.

So, why do hundreds of government officials, industry executives, civil society activists, and

academics spend substantive time and financial resources to take part in the IGF? Can non-

binding policy discourse contribute to the "fact" of the Internet?

Beyond the question of why people participate is the question of whether the IGF matters and,

if so, how? Scholars examining the IGF have offered a range of analytical responses. Some view

it as one of the most important experiments in institutional innovation in the global

policymaking environments in recent history, because it emphasizes open participation and the involvement of non-state actors in policy debates (Mathiason, 2009). Others view it as a red herring in the Internet governance process, because it lacks any substantive decision-making authority, which renders the IGF little more than a talk shop (DeNardis, 2009, 2010b). Both perspectives make a valuable contribution to the study of Internet governance, and raise a series of important questions.

But, perhaps by focusing on the "tangible" deliverables of the IGF (or lack of thereof), they do not offer an in-depth analysis of the workings of the forum itself. A closer look at the people and practices of the IGF can help us better understand the complexity of bringing the nation-states and intergovernmental apparatus to have an open conversation in the same space with the Internet community, particularly the civil society. The cultures of decision making, the sources of authority and legitimacy, and the structures of power that evolved in the intergovernmental settings and within the Internet community result in different world views about the social, political, cultural, and economic roles of the Internet and the ways it should be governed. When forced to co-exist within the IGF, mundane and "obvious" practices of one community are looked upon as novel by another; argumentative structures acceptable by one group are completely rejected by another; at the same time, neither party can act in isolation and completely disregard the other. How and why do these two cultures of policymaking co-exist, even in a non-binding space? How exactly is any common ground reached – and at what cost for each of the participating parties? And what does this multistakeholder engagement mean for the broader Internet governance ecosystem?

My puzzle, thus, is to understand the dynamics of the IGF as non-binding, multistakeholder debate on information policymaking. What is happening "under the hood" of the IGF? How do the nation-state-centric and the Internet-community-centric perceptions of authority and approaches to decision-making manifest themselves? What normative and cultural schemas do they reify? What meaning (if any) may they have for the politics of Internet governance? To what end do IGF participants engage in a recurring political struggle over the agenda of the forum and their right to participate?

1.3. Goals and plan of the dissertation

The goals of this project are twofold. First, I aim to provide a detailed analysis of the inner workings of IGF as a space that shapes the discourse about Internet governance. Most of the research about the IGF focuses on the forum as an institution, without paying close attention to what actually goes on within it. The small number of studies that have addressed some aspects of Internet policymaking practices have focused on the WSIS process and on the texts produced during the summit (as opposed to the practices of their production). In this work I will focus on the "nuts and bolts" of the IGF as a way to ask questions about the constitutive significance of the forum in shaping how the policymakers talk and think about the Internet.

My second goal is to advance social-theory-driven research within the institutional analysis of Internet governance. Social science studies of Internet governance, particularly those focused on the IGF and the WSIS processes, tend to be driven by the substantive, as opposed to the theoretical or the methodological, domain (in terms of Brinberg & McGrath, 1982, 1985); in other words, the inquiry is driven by changes in the studied phenomenon and from a rather

applied perspective, but with limited theoretical insight. The developments are indeed important, so a lot of research focuses on the historical documentation of the process and its normative assessment (e.g. Berleur, 2008; Bygrave & Bing, 2009; Drake, 2004; Goldsmith & Wu, 2006; Mathiason, 2009). Some studies make instrumental use of international relations theories to explain interactions between the institutions of Internet governance, but they are still driven primarily by substantive concerns (e.g. Dunn, Krishna-Hensel, & Mauer, 2007; Singh, 2008). I will use the lens of structuration theory and critical discourse analysis as my starting point for questions about the practices of the IGF. Taken together, I anticipate this work to offer additional tools to analyze the IGF, and the Internet governance debates more broadly, as well as have new analytical insights about the IGF.

I start Chapter 2 with an analysis of the theoretical importance of Internet governance, and information policy more broadly, in the constitution of contemporary society. Then, I review the international relations theories commonly used in the analysis of the Internet governance process. While each one of the international relations approaches is useful in its own way, there are questions that cannot be adequately addressed by each one of them separately. Venturing beyond international relations theory requires viewing the policymaking process as itself a form of discourse. To do that I draw on the theory of structuration, in order to articulate the "duality" of the policymaking process. Then I turn to critical discourse analysis, which views discourse as social practice, as a conceptual bridge between the theoretical argument and empirical observation of the phenomenon. In Chapter 3, I document the methodological approach I used this in project and the peculiarities of the IGF as a research site.

Chapter 4 offers historical context for my analysis of the IGF practices. It describes the substantive and political changes that led to the establishment of the IGF. I begin with a description of the WSIS process, emphasizing how the two normative frameworks of authority and decision-making clashed over the questions of management of Internet names and numbers as well as questions of public policy concerned with the use of the Internet. I describe the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG) as a constitutive experiment in global policy deliberation, where the multistakeholder model later embraced in the IGF was first enacted. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the repercussions of the WSIS process for the IGF, its mandate, its people, and its practices.

Chapter 5, then, builds off this historical context to analyze the people, practices, and procedures of the IGF. I describe the path dependencies established through the WSIS process and the challenging position of the IGF as a forum that aspires to institute an unorthodox way of conducting policy discourse within the UN system. The first sections of this chapter review the structural properties that emerge from the attempts to balance the UN heritage and the Internet community norms. Then I describe the structural fixtures of the IGF, such as its secretariat, the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG), its meetings, and the dynamic coalitions. My goal here is to demonstrate how the structural elements of the IGF and the practices that emerged around them enact a mix of values and principles brought into the forum by its participants. Then I turn to the participants themselves. Specifically, I discuss two groups I observed during my field work—the IGF celebrities and the IGF nucleus. I explain how government and tech-celebrities reify the legitimacy of the IGF in the eyes of different stakeholder groups; and how the nucleus has solidified multistakeholderism as a vessel for

9

values such as openness, inclusivity, and individual freedoms, and made it a major organizing principle both for the forum and for the nucleus members' vision of the Internet governance regime. I conclude this chapter with an analytical reflection about the link between the practices of the IGF and the discourse it produces.

In Chapter 6 I conclude this dissertation with a discussion about the meaning of the observed practices for the constitution of the IGF, and more broadly for the constitution of governance in Internet-related policy discourse.

2. GOVERNANCE, DISCOURSE, AND INTERNET

The politics of the Internet are enacted through the numerous creative and disruptive ways this technology has and is being used. Some scholars argue that that the politics of the Internet are inherent in its design. Laura DeNardis (2009) explains how the engineering of the network embodied choices about civil liberties such as privacy and freedom of speech. She writes, "Internet architecture and virtual resources cannot be understood only through the lens of technical efficiency, scarcity, or economic competition but as an embodiment of human values with social and cultural effects" (p.96).Others focus on the enabling aspects of a network, which, based on libertarian ideas, trespassed traditional boundaries of state control of media and communication channels. The Internet allowed unprecedented political mobilization by realigning, the technical basis of what Braman (2009) labels "informational power"—the informational origins "of the materials, social structures, and symbols that are the stuff of power in its other forms" (p.26). The ability to innovate, whether politically, commercially or socially, on the edges of the network, shifted the balance of political power between the state and the individual.[3]

Governing the Internet is imposing politics on this complex sociotechnical system. Internet governance plays out as a politics of control, when it comes to management and distribution of domain names and IP addresses. As DeNardis (2009) described it, these politics stir "questions

---

[3] Mueller (2010) explains that the Internet, "*changes the polity*. By converging different media forms and facilitating fully interactive communication, the Internet dramatically alters the cost and capabilities of group action. As a result, radically new forms of collaboration, discourse, and organization are emerging. This makes it possible to mobilize new transnational policy networks and enables new forms of governance" (p.5).

about how access to resources and power over these resources are distributed or should be distributed among institutions, nation-states, cultures, regions, and among entities with a vested economic interest in the possession or control of these resources" (p. 16; see also Galloway, 2006). Internet governance also plays out as cultural politics in a debate about what values and core principles should be preserved as the network changes. Influencing the technical infrastructure of the Internet is influencing the civil liberties that are enacted through this technology. Yet, today Internet governance is referred to not only as governance of the technical infrastructure, but also as control of the online behaviors it facilitates, the very act of enactment of those liberties that the technology affords (Mueller, 2010). As such, Internet governance also plays out as global politics of domination. Nation-states, regional and international alliances are competing for the establishment of legal frameworks and public policy practices that preserve national interests and value systems of the parties involved. The long history of cultural, political, and economic tensions among nation-states are reinterpreted within the Internet governance debate thus making it also a debate about values of democratic participation, economic freedoms, and cultural hegemony (Hart, 2011).

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is a space where politics are imposed on technology that has politics. While in the more technical fora, such as the study groups of the International Telecommunication Union Standardization Sector (ITU-T) or the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), the debate focuses mostly on the technical aspects such as interpretability and scalability of solutions, in the IGF the participants also operate with normative concepts such as privacy and anonymity. Even the most technical debates in the IGF are linked to issues of development, civil liberties, and the role of the nation-state in Internet-related policymaking.

Through discussions of norms and principles of the Internet as a socio-technical practice the IGF participants engage in a debate about information-centric social systems and their governance.

For this project, I build on literature that views policymaking as a constitutive act and emphasizes the duality of social structures and human agency. In this project the notion of duality is an organizing principle tying together my views of the Internet governance, information governance, and constitution of society. This work also draws on discourse analysis literature that views discourse as social practice and thus policy-discourse as a space where actors consciously negotiate, reproduce, or challenge social structures.

2.1. Why studying Internet governance?

Law and policy[4] are constitutional social forces. They organize existing social categories and relationships, and they define new social categories within the context of already existing systems of rules and institutions. Thus the process of policymaking[5] is a continuous and conscious act of social construction or, in other words, "…a constant discursive struggle over the criteria of social classification, the boundaries of problem categories, the intersubjective interpretation of common experiences, the conceptual framing of problems, and the definition of ideas that guide the ways people create the shared meanings which motivate them to act"

---

[4] In this text, I use the terms "law" and "policy" somewhat interchangeably. For the purpose of the argument made here, both refer to codified or discursively formulated rules (Giddens, 1984a, pp. 22–24) and have been employed in a similar fashion by others (e.g. Braman, 2009). As the chapter progresses I turn to using the broader term "governance" as it is further explained below.

[5] I also use the term "policymaking" quite liberally throughout this text. The goal is to cast a wide net that captures not only processes of production of binding rules and regulations, which belong to the sphere of government, but also processes of policy deliberation, discussion or policy discourse, which belong to the sphere of governance. I try to make these distinctions clear throughout the text, but I may occasionally use these terms interchangeably among themselves or with the term "governance" as it is described in footnote 7.

(Fischer & Forester, 1993, pp. 1–2). Law and policy both trigger and react to social change, so "with a longer and wider view it is possible to see a specific law developing out of cultural practice, becoming a form of discourse, and ultimately being translated into technology" (Braman, 2009, p. 3).

Information policy, or more broadly governance of information, adds a layer of complexity to the dualistic relationship between policy and society. This complexity stems from the omnipresence of information—it is both, a constitutive social force and a fundamental component of governance.

Notions of information and communication as constitutive forces in society can be found already in the early writings on modernity. Durkheim, for example, conceptualized a causal chain of society formation that evolves from an effervescence moment, where social awareness and social cohesion emerge, to development of practices and believes, and their institutionalization (Rawls, 1996; Schmaus, 1998). For Durkheim, shared categories of knowledge and group cohesion, as the basis of society formation and change, are inherently informational; communication is also a pivotal mechanism through which these elements get institutionalized (Durkheim, 2003a, 2003b; Emirbayer, 2003). Other scholars conceptualized information and communication processes as being constitutive of the notions of bureaucracy (Beniger, 1986), nation-state (Braman, 2009), and culture (Adorno, 1991). Krippendorff (1996), as quoted in Braman (2009, pp. 19–20), also described the pivotal function of information as "superordinate to the economy," because "[i]t guides, controls and rearranges the economic activities and has, hence, the characteristics of a meta-economic quantity that cannot easily be

14

built into a system of analysis that is essentially flat and provides no opportunity for self-reference."

The notion of the "information society" brings the centrality of information to the forefront of the discussion about information and communication as constitutive forces in society. Giddens (1985) argued that:

> modern societies have been ... 'information societies' since their inception. There is a fundamental sense ... in which all states have been 'information societies', since the generation of state power presumes reflexively gathering, storage, and control of information, applied to administrative ends. But in the nation state, with its peculiarly high degree of administrative unity, this is brought to a much higher pitch than ever before (p.178)

Yet, the contemporary notion of information society is associated with the rapid change in technical abilities to store, manipulate, and retrieve information on the one hand, and cultural shifts that challenged the centrality of the nation-state in the hierarchy of power on the other. Castells (2004, 2010) labels this centrality of information and communication as "informationalism" and Silverstone (2007) refers to it as part of what he labels as "mediapolis," or a global discursive and judgmental space where politics, public life, and the relationships between the self and the others are constituted. Webster (2006) offers five different approaches to defining our information society in comparison with earlier forms of society. Each approach is centered on a different element of newness—technological, economic, occupational, spatial, and cultural—all of which share "the conviction that quantitative changes in information are bringing into being a qualitatively new sort of social system" (p.9).

Webster also mentions a sixth, qualitatively different, definition of the information society, which postulates that the character of information "is such as to have transformed how we live. The suggestion here is that *theoretical knowledge/information* is at the core of how we conduct ourselves these days" (p.10, emphasis in the original). To him, this is the substantive definition of the information society that captures the centrality of information in each aspect of social life. Similar systematic change, underpinned by the society's improved ability to handle growing volumes of information in an ever-expanding number of ways, is also present in Bell's (1999) notion of "post-industrial society," with growing reliance on informational means of production, and Castells's (2010) notion of "informational mode of development," in which information is an integral part of all human activity (p.17-18; also see Castells, 2007). Braman concludes that "[t]he height of attention to the informatization of society has passed with its normalization, and the more detailed work of figuring out just what is going on is now under way" (p.332). According to her, any aspect of social enquiry today invariably touches on the processes of informatization either through theorization, topic choices or application of an information-centric analytical lens[6].

Information and communication are also fundamental to the notion of governance.[7] Their prominence is rooted in the idea that the constitutive effects of decision-making processes (as well as their limits) are enacted through discourse. Giddens (1984a), who argued for the

---

[6] Braman (2009)provides an interesting example of historical studies that are "revisiting the history of military organizations, tactics and strategy, and weaponry from the perspective of information and information technologies" (p. 332).

[7] I use Braman's (2009, p. 3) distinction between: "*government* (formal institutions of the law); *governance* (decision-making with constitutive [structural] effect whether it takes place within the public or private sectors, and formally or informally); and *governmentality* (cultural predispositions and practices that produce and reproduce the conditions that make particular forms of governance and government possible)."

centrality of mundane, tacit, and taken for granted practices in constitution of social conduct, described law as a "formally codified" rule of social practice, which implies an interpretation that "may in and of itself alter the form of [the rule's] application" (p.22-23). Law and policy, thus, are framing mechanisms, that codify the mundane and the tacit through normative interpretation. Inherent to this notion are ideas of power and domination, because, as Giddens explains, "frames of meaning incorporate differentials of power," and domination "is the very condition of existence of codes of signification" (p.31). A fundamental function of the law is discursively defining normative behavior, even though laws as texts have limited capacity in determining it. As such, structures of domination are sustained and challenged through policy discourse, whether among the policymakers themselves or between the policymakers and their constituencies. To be empowered, thus, is to have the ability to reflect on the normative structures, to question the mundane, to participate in the process of codifying social practice, and to make the implicit explicit; communication systems in society can act to sustain or suppress this ability.

The growing informatization of the society and the changing modes of communication alter the power basis. The power to govern does not lie solely with the state as a single entity anymore. Instead the power to govern lies with those bureaucracies that can comprehend, navigate through, and coordinate a myriad of social, political, technical, and economic institutions[8], as well as make the division of power obvious and commonsensical to those who are being governed (Foucault, 1970, 1989). In other words, the process of governance becomes a

---

[8] Dean (2009) refers to such systems as an assemblages of elements of a regime of practice (p.22) and Law (1987)describes them in terms of "heterogeneous engineering" (p.95-100).

knowledge-focused process, dependent on how information about the governed system is collected, classified, and used[9]. Braman (2009) describes this type of power as the most fundamental to any other type of power. She labels it "informational power" and explains that it acts "by manipulating the informational bases of instrumental, structural, and symbolic power" (p.26). Informational power enacts normative mechanisms by drawing boundaries that define what is right or wrong and what can be discussed (as a policy matter) and what cannot.

Information governance, as a nexus of the constitutive and governance roles of information and communication, represents a fairly complex construct. "While other types of law deal with relations within and between entities in categories as already defined, issues involving information and communication define the categories themselves and the relations enabled or permitted within and between them" (Braman, 2009, p. 19). Information governance, thus, is a form of structural intervention that has a direct impact on constitution of the fabric of social-constructive processes. Yet, any decision-making process itself is situated within a given at that moment system of social structures, or, in Braman's terms, in a set of categories with entities and relationships defined within and between them. Dean (2009, p. 18) captured this duality of governance in the following way:

> On the one hand, we govern others and ourselves according to what we take to be true about who we are, what aspects of our existence should be worked upon, how, with what means and to what ends. We thus govern others and ourselves according to various truths about our existence and nature as human beings. On the other hand, the ways in which we govern and conduct ourselves give rise to different ways of producing truth.

---

[9] Statistics comes to mind as an example of an information-centric innovation that had profound impact on the way governance is arranged by enabling bureaucratic ways of knowing.

Applying such view to the realm of information governance draws a picture where people who are involved in this process are in fact regulating ways of producing 'truths', or governing the governmentality, not only through enacting it, but also through consciously making it the subject of their decision-making. Borrowing from Bourdieu (1991), governance of information is about setting the rules for re-charting the boundaries of the field of symbolic power; and this governance process, just as any other governance process, is essentially discursive and rooted in the very same processes and fields of power it is asking to regulate.

The Internet has come to mean more than just technical infrastructure (DeNardis, 2009). It is a sociotechnical basis for new forms of organizational structures, new forms of collective action, new forms of collecting and disseminating information, and new forms of polity. The Internet is commonly credited with challenging the established mentalities of government and redrawing the boundaries of governmentality. It offers communication capabilities of unprecedented scope and scale, while, at the same time, its decentralized architecture distributes control over the information flows in the network and does not necessarily align it with established nodes of power (Mueller, 2010). Taken together, practices that developed around the simplicity of the use of the network and the global and free communication that it offers are re-charting the boundaries of the field of symbolic power of the nation-state. The Internet, as a sociotechnical system, serves as an infrastructure for enabling forms of informational power that would not be possible otherwise (Braman, 2009).

Internet governance, which "refers generally to policy and technical coordination issues related to the exchange of information over the internet" (DeNardis, 2009, p. 14), is about regulating

this sociotechnical infrastructure of informational power. The Internet is not the only element

of this infrastructure, but in recent years it has become a very influential one. Initially, Internet

governance referred narrowly to the management of critical Internet resources, i.e. domain

names and IP addresses, but over time the definition expanded to also include the uses of the

Internet (DeNardis, 2009; Mueller, 2010). Thus, the debate is not merely about the technical

functioning of the network, but also about the structures of domination enacted through

differentiated use of the Internet. Muller (2010) explains that this is an "ongoing set of disputes

and deliberations over how the Internet is coordinated, managed, and shaped *to reflect*

policies" (p.9; emphasis added). Understanding Internet governance is revealing part of the

puzzle that is information policy and its role in contemporary society.

2.2. Theorizing the IGF

Studies of the WSIS/WGIG/IGF[10] process constitute one of the main areas of inquiry in Internet

governance research (DeNardis, 2010a). Although explicit references to social theory in this

area are scarce[11], when present, theories of international relations appear as useful apparatus

for analysis of the politics of the WSIS/WGIG/IGF process. Three schools of thought—realism,

rational choice institutionalism and constructivism—offer different explanations for the IGF's

trajectory, based on various sets of assumptions about the contexts and the actors involved.

---

[10] WGIG stands for the Working Group on Internet Governance, which I discuss in detail in Chapter 4.

[11] In Brinberg and McGrath's (1982, 1985) terms, institutional research in Internet governance is driven primarily by the substantive domain, as opposed to being driven by theoretical questions or methodological challenges. This tendency can be explained by the young age of this field, where most participating academics are also practicing activists.

2.2.1. Realism, rational choice institutionalism, and constructivism

Realism and rational choice institutionalism are both state-centric approaches that explain the

policymaking processes in terms of the self centered, rational behavior of states, based on their

material interests and power. *Realism* focuses on rational states as the main actors in

international relations. Those actors are primarily concerned with issues of security and

survival, building on military and economy as their main sources of power. Yet, realism is not a

single theory. For example, "classical" realists explain the behavior of states in terms of their

desire to dominate, just like individuals do, so diplomacy is considered as the primary vehicle

for international relations (Waltz, 1979). "Neorealists" focus on the international system, where

each state acts to survive on its own. This approach explains why the weaker states tend to

balance against the stronger instead of cooperating with them (Walt, 1998). The main criticism

of realism, relevant to the context of this project, is that it asks to predict outcomes by

assessing the capabilities of the players. Waltz (1979), for example, argued that the material

capabilities of the states create a global hierarchy, which in turn explains the interests and

motivation of the states. That logic fails to explain why states negotiate, when there are clear

discrepancies in power, as in the case of the WSIS[12] (Singh, 2008).

Rational choice institutionalism is part of what is considered the "new" wave of institutionalism

in political science. Hall and Taylor (1998) explain rational choice institutionalism as part of a

paradigm that also includes historical institutionalism and sociological institutionalism. All of

these approaches focus on the role of institutions in determining social and political outcomes,

---

[12] I discuss WSIS in detail in Chapter 4.

as opposed to the behaviorist approaches, which focus on individuals. Contrary to realism, however, institutionalism views the international system as including not only the states, but also the nongovernmental and international organizations (Rosenau & Czempiel, 1992). It views institutions as existing structures that not only constrain the behavior of the actors and their interests, but also serve as a domain through which interests are sustained over time[13] (Keohane, 1984).

According to Hall and Taylor (1998), there are four distinctive characteristics of rational choice institutionalism. First, it is based on a set of behavioral assumptions about human behavior: that people have fixed sets of wants, and that they at all times behave instrumentally and strategically in the pursuit of those wants. Second, rational choice institutionalism pictures politics as a series of collective action dilemmas, which means that while each individual pursues his or her personal wants, taken together their actions can produce a collectively suboptimal outcome. The "prisoner's dilemma" and the "tragedy of the commons" are two classic examples where actors do not make collectively optimal decisions, because there is uncertainty regarding compliance of other participants in the collective. Third, rational choice institutionalism emphasizes the role of strategic interaction in political processes and outcomes. In other words, the theory postulates that people make utility-maximizing decisions on the basis of their expectations about the behaviors of others. In this context, institutions act

---

[13] For example, in development literature, Przeworski and Limongi (1997) explain dependency theory in terms of exploitative institutions that were established in developing countries during colonialization, which have slowed the socioeconomic development of those places. Those institutions were established to expropriate resources from the colonies to the occupying state and they were used as a basis for establishment of governance institutions when those states received independence. As a result, the colonial interests are embedded in the governance structures of the developing world, to a degree that they hinder their development (for a complete debate see: Acemoglu, Johnson, & Robinson, 2001, 2005; Przeworski, 2004; Przeworski & Limongi, 1997).

as stabilizing factors that limit the range of possible behaviors of other actors and thus decrease uncertainty. Finally, rational choice institutionalism explains the creation of institutions in rational terms as well. According to this theory, people form institutions through voluntary agreements among the relevant actors, based on an assessment of the potential gain from cooperation; if another arrangement has a higher potential of assisting individuals in attaining their personal wants, institutions can change or be replaced.

The main criticism of rational choice institutionalism is aimed at the assumptions presented above. Particularly criticized is the view of fixed preference of the actors, which empties interactions between the actors from meaning. As Singh (2008) explained. "[i]f interests are specified by structure (systemic or issue-wise) and these interests never change, interactions cannot explain much beyond a few behavioral possibilities hoisted on top of these interests" (p.65). In other words, while the institutional approach helps understanding the process, it does not provide an explanation for how preferences that fuel that process form or change. Even when other approaches to institutionalism offer concepts such as "soft power", or the ability to persuade and to lead (Nye, 2004), or focus on negotiation (Moravcsik, 2003) the underlying interests of the actors are held as constant. This approach fails to explain situations where actors take action that has actual repercussions on the final outcome, such as the decision to include non-state actors in the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG) or the addition of the Government Advisory Committee (GAC) to ICANN.

Constructivism focuses "on the role of ideas, norms, knowledge, culture, and argument in politics, stressing in particular the role of collectively held or "intersubjective" ideas and

understandings on social life" (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 392). It views human interactions

motivated not only by material considerations, but also by ideology and shared beliefs that

construct the basis for purposive action. Constructivism is concerned with how 'social facts',

which are intangible (or social constructed) 'things' such as money, sovereignty, and rights,

change—and how they influence politics (Katzenstein, Keohane, & Krasner, 1998).

The constructivist approach focuses primarily on the agent with a number of underlying

assumptions. Finnermore and Sikkink (2001) explained those assumptions: "(a) human

interaction is shaped primarily by ideational factors, not simply material ones; (b) the most

important ideational factors are widely shared or "intersubjective" beliefs, which are not

reducible to individuals; and (c) these shared beliefs construct the interests and identities of

purposive actors" (p.392-393) (also see Wendt, 1995). In other words, this approach stresses

that the meaning of physical or political constructs is derived from their perceptions and

interpretations by the actors. Wendt provided an example of nuclear weapons, which may be

the ultimate material capability: yet their political meaning is derived from who possesses them

(e.g. North Korea or UK) and not from the artifact itself. Checkel (1998) claims also that nation-

states and human agents constantly interact, thus mutually constituting each other. In this

interaction "rule-governed action and logic of appropriateness prevail" (p.236) or in other

words, norms are at the basis of constructivist analysis.

Constructivist thinking has been criticized for overemphasizing structures and norms at the

expense of the agency of the actors (Checkel, 1998). Singh (2008) referred to this as an

emphasis on the epistemic, as opposed to distributional, influences. "However," he stated, "as

epistemic effect resides in structures, it is unclear if the agents can do much." This in turn

empties this approach of any practical applications, as it does not provide guidance as to how

"to trace agents that carry idea" (p.68). This lack of an empirical mechanism renders

constructivism a more normative theory, rather than one that supplies testable hypotheses, or

as Wendt (1999) wrote in his account of this approach: "Readers looking for detailed

propositions about international system, let alone empirical tests, will be disappointed" (p.6).

2.2.2. IGF through the lens of international relations

The boundaries between different schools of thought in international relations can be fuzzy and

as Walt (1998, p. 30) suggested, "a number of important works do not fit neatly into any of

them, but debates within and among them have largely defined the discipline". For example,

situating his theory of negotiated interest in the international relations discourse, Singh (2008)

explained that neither realism nor constructivism can explain entirely the role of negotiations in

the processes of economic globalization, with particular focus on information industries. He

wrote:

> "Material factors [usually highlighted in realism - DE] can specify actor capabilities but
> do not explain the process that translates these capabilities into outcomes. On the other
> hand, constructivist scholarship explains the world as shared ideas to explain the
> process by which actors 'construct' the world. However, beyond insights into alternative
> ways of constructing the world, constructivist scholarship still does not go far enough in
> explaining the process or the outcomes" (pp.63-64).

Alternatively, the different approaches can be viewed as complementary to each other, when

their respective strengths and weaknesses are acknowledged. For example, Finnermore and

Sikkink (2001) wrote:

"In a rational choice analysis, agents act rationally to maximize utilities, but the substantive specification of actors and utilities lies outside the analysis; it must be provided before analysis can begin. In a constructivist analysis, agents and structures are mutually constituted in ways that explain why the political world is so and not otherwise, but the substantive specification of agents and structures must come from some other source. Neither constructivism nor rational choice provides substantive explanations or predictions of political behavior until coupled with a more specific understanding of who the relevant actors are, what they want, and what the content of social structures might be" (p. 393)

How can, thus, theories of international relations explain the dynamics of IGF as a non-binding multistakeholder debate on Internet-related policymaking? Taken separately, each theoretical lens falls short of providing a comprehensive explanation, particularly to the tension between the two cultures of Internet policymaking—that of nation-states and that of the Internet community. Yet, each of the schools of thought presented above can be helpful in explaining part of the IGF puzzle.

The *realist approach*, for example, can help understand the position of the state actors when they first entered the Internet governance debate. If the Internet is viewed as a strategic resource in a continuously changing political environment, the rational desire of a state actor should be to build up that capacity and have it under its control. Thus, realism can explain the shift of the WSIS from discussing a broad set of issues dealing with information technology and development, to focusing on Internet governance. This approach resonates with the policy and academic discussions about the Internet as a strategic resource and the centrality of cyber-infrastructure for national security (e.g. A. H. Cordesman & Cordesman, 2002). Furthermore, the neorealist approach can explain the formation of blocks of states within the IGF, which opposed the US unilateral control over the Internet through ICANN. Within a paradigm where

each state is acting selfishly for its own survival, it is impossible to distinguish between Internet governance issues and the global balance of power among the states more broadly. This explains the opposition of the block of developing countries within the WSIS/WGIG/IGF process to what they perceive as US hegemony. The focus on material capabilities can also explain why states other than the US are willing to engage in policy dialogue with non-state actors—the latter, particularly the private sector and the technical community, possess substantive material Internet-related resources.

The realist approach, however, does not explain other aspects, such as the US position within the Internet governance debate. Singh's (2008) book raised the question about the concessions that the US had to make in the process of WSIS by entering in negotiations with other state- and non-state actors, eventually allowing greater flexibility in reforming ICANN. On the face of it, as an incumbent and as a superpower, the US did not have to take those steps, as they might have been counterproductive to its dominant global status. In other words, all these steps cannot be explained with the realist approach alone. More fundamentally, however, the tenets of the realist approach do not explain the participation of governments in the IGF. As a non-binding policy discussion forum, the IGF does not directly affect the material capabilities of the states and thus has no effect on their aspirations to dominate.

The lens of *rational choice institutionalism* helps explain the historical trajectory of the IGF and to a degree answers why states may choose to participate in a non-binding policy discussion forum. On the one hand, rational choice institutionalism suggests that the initial institutional settings, where states actually did not play a significant role as regulators, proved to be fruitful

as they enabled the Internet to flourish and become the dominant social, economic, and political factor it is today. Institutional arrangements that enable the global reach and the interconnectivity of the Internet offer enough collective value to the participating actors, so no single player can unilaterally replace these arrangements. On the other hand, the same institutional arrangements (bottom-up, private sector led) caused some actors (both states and intergovernmental organizations) to seek alternative institutions in order to adequately address their respective interests. The fundamental mistrust between the US and intergovernmental organizations such as the ITU, as well as the mutual mistrust between the various country blocks and the fundamental differences in policy logics of the nation-states and the Internet community, brought about instability in the Internet governance with a threat of fragmentation of the Internet itself. In other words, the institutional arrangements prior to the formation of the IGF lacked a stable equilibrium.

Rational choice institutionalism is helpful in explaining why an institutional arrangement such as the IGF was formed, but it falls short of explaining the dynamics that underline that development. Rational choice alone cannot explain how the disparities in perceptions of utility among the stakeholders evolved so that the initial system became unstable or how these perceptions changed to enable the IGF. Holding the preferences and the interests of the actors fixed and predetermined, limits the ability of rational choice institutionalism to describe organizational dynamics, especially young and constantly changing phenomena such as multistakeholderism. While rational choice institutionalism helps in understanding the IGF as an institution that accommodates the fundamental disagreement between the nation-state-

focused and the Internet communities, it does not account for the source and for the dynamics of the preferences fueling it.

The *constructivist approach* offers a more nuanced explanation of the dynamics of preferences and perceptions of people participating in the Internet governance debates. By focusing on situated practice and local meaning enacted in Internet policy discursive spaces, it goes beyond the idea of fixed preferences or purely material considerations, and thus it is better situated to explain the tensions that constitute the IGF as a discursive space. Constructivism helps link the ideas, norms, and cultures of participants in the Internet policy discourse with the institutional arrangements that emerged around it. Its ideological lens rationalizes the existence of a purely discourse space such as the IGF, where people actively and consciously engage in the act of "construction." It could be particularly useful in explaining the gap between the two cultures of authority and decision making that clashed during the WSIS process and led to the establishment of the IGF. Yet, in Internet governance research, constructivism is rarely used as a theoretical lens. For example, Mathiason (2009) and Kleinwächter (2008) refer to the sense of ownership that both the US government and the technical community had over the governance system of the Internet, but the question was never asked in terms of intersubjective ideas.

In a way, the constructivist approach requires the researcher to focus on individual level social interactions in order to explain macro processes of institutionalization. However, relying on the constructivist approach alone may be insufficient for explaining the dynamics of the IGF as non-binding multistakeholder debate on information policymaking. Constructivism tends to downplay the importance of material sources of power and material constraints for

participation in international policy debates. Moreover, the constructivist approach not only

dismisses the fruitful explanations offered by realism and rational choice institutionalism, it also

detaches one's work from a broader discussion about institutional analysis of Internet

governance.

2.2.3. Beyond international relations

The analysis above suggests that no single school of thought in international relations can

provide an adequate explanation of the WSIS/WGIG/IGF process, and that a comprehensive

theoretical explanation may lie in a constructive combination of a number of those approaches

(for example: Drezner, 2004; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001). While rational choice institutionalism

can be a useful lens to think about the purpose and rationale behind the IGF process, it does

not explain the mechanisms that put the Internet governance debates in motion. The realist

approach provides us with a theoretical explanation of how considerations of power and the

pursuit of 'survival' interests fuel the behavior of states in the WSIS/WGIG/IGF process,

however, it does not explain how these interests are defined, how material power is perceived,

and it does not account for the behavior of the non-state actors. Constructivist thinking helps

us consider potential answers to the qualitative questions of perceptions and ideologies, and

better explain multistakeholderism and the value of non-binding policy discussion. Yet, standing

alone, it may still draw an incomplete and relatively isolated picture that does not account fully

for material constraints and selfish political interests enacted in the IGF.

There has been a recent shift in the international relations theoretical thinking whereby, while

acknowledging the theoretical contributions of realism and liberalism, including that of rational

choice institutionalism, scholars are asking to add more reflective elements such as those presented in the constructivist school of thought (Keohane, 2002; Walt, 1998). Those shifts are fueled primarily by changes in the substantive domain, where observations of political behavior have seemed to contradict existing theoretical explanations. The constructivist argument has been credited with pushing the international relations thinking in new directions (Keohane, 2002) and Internet has been recognized as an excellent case to test those (Drezner, 2004; Singh, 2008).

One of the emerging questions from the discussion above concerns the link between individual actions and the structural arrangements that were developed around Internet governance. The history of the Internet and its governance is woven around names of specific individuals who shaped both the substance and the discourse surrounding this medium. One of the most iconic names in this regard is John Postel, who single-handedly managed names and numbers in the early days of the Internet. At the same time, those individuals often represented or had to confront veteran institutional structures such as nation-state governments, the UN system, or the private markets. Looking into this tension, between pivotal individuals and the changing governance structures, may hold a potentially valuable lesson not just for understanding of the WSIS/WGIG/IGF process.

Current discussion of constructivism in international relations research does not focus on the dynamics of this micro-macro link. There are no well established tools to reflexively study the relationship between individual action and institutionalization on the one hand, and maintain a conversation with other approaches, such as neo-realism or the "new" institutionalism, on the

other. This gap requires studying the 'mechanics' of the IGF process to complete the macro

institutional observations of other researchers of the forum. This gap also requires paying

closer attention to the individuals driving the IGF process, their institutional identities and

personal views on the Internet and its governance. I suggest drawing on tools and concepts

developed in interpretive policy analysis, structuration theory, and critical discourse analysis to

bridge that gap. Interpretative policy analysis approach allows viewing policymaking as a

discursive constructivist act, which is a product of human activity. The theory of structuration

offers a conceptual framework to link the practices of policymaking to processes of

institutionalization of Internet governance in what I label as duality of policymaking. Finally,

critical discourse analysis offers tools and frameworks for empirical analysis of this duality.

2.3. Policymaking as discourse

Law and policy, in any field, are products of human activity. As such, the process of creating

policy is subjected to historical and temporal macro, meso, and micro level influences, e.g.

social norms, group dynamics, rhetoric, and cognitive processing. This observation holds true

for governance in any substantive area; the level of focus will largely depend on one's

epistemological framework. Fischer (2003), for example, who draws on many of the same

theoretical constructs as I do here, emphasizes the role of ideas[14] as a set of organizing beliefs

that guide the decision-makers' rationalization process. For Fischer, introducing "ideational

prisms" into policy analysis allows going beyond materialistic explanation of policymaking and

---

[14] My reading of Fischer (2003) suggests that his use of the word "idea" comes to replace the word "ideology" in order to avoid the interpretive baggage that ideology carries as "propaganda and mystification" (p.24). At its core, however, his notion of idea is very close to that of ideology as a worldview.

to account for its subjectivity. He writes, "[t]he problems that political systems attempt to deal with are not seen, in this view, as having altogether objective foundations in the material or economic base of society; rather, they are in significant part constructed in the realm of political discourse" (p.23). In other words, policies, as products of human activity, are both influenced by and influencing the societies they regulate.

Similar to other members of their societies, policymakers are carriers of values, norms, and ideas they have acquired in particular social, cultural, and political settings, and at a specific point in history. However, unlike most members of their societies, policymakers belong to an elite, whose job is to reflect on, deliberate, and codify the very same values, norms, and ideas (Genieys & Smyrl, 2008). For example, DeNardis, arguing for technical standards being a form of policy, showed that the engineers, who set most of the basic standards for the Internet, came from similar backgrounds and how their libertarian ideas became encoded in the Internet's underlying protocols. Braman (2010), in her recent work, analyzed the documents produced by this group of engineers under the auspice of the IETF. She found the engineers getting engaged in public policy debates about notions of citizenship, civil liberties, democratic practice, and human rights. These debates produced not only normatively loaded technical standards, but also public policy discourse.

Public policy discourse as a constructivist practice is at the heart of this project. The "argumentative turn" in policy analysis recognizes the importance of discourse and issue definition as a strategic and constitutive processes (Fischer, 2003; Fischer & Forester, 1993; Parsons, 1995). Fischer and Forester (1993), in their, now seminal, work, explain why discourse

33

is a fundamental property of policy and should be considered as part of policy analysis. They

write:

> "...policymaking is a constant discursive struggle over the criteria of social classification, the boundaries of problem categories, the intersubjective interpretation of common experiences, the conceptual framing of problems, and the definition of ideas that guide the ways people create the shared meanings which motivate them to act" (pp. 1-2).

In this view, policy is about "meaning making" (Bacchi, 2000, p. 46) , because "decisions always

mark a choice between different opinions and meanings, decisions transform one argument to

another through specific operations, they decontextualize and recontextualize items" (Wodak,

2000, p. 74).

The overarching theme of this discursive take on policy analysis is that policymaking represents

a process of intentional construction of social reality and an appropriation of norms (Apthorpe,

Gasper, & Gasper, 1996; Gasper & Apthorpe, 1996; Rochefort & Cobb, 1994; Throgmorton,

1991). As such, this approach is particularly attentive to the contexts of policy discourse

production such as the underlying power structures, framing efforts, and negotiation of

authority (Bosso, 1994; Yanow, 1999). The stakeholders participating in policy debates bring

with them social structures that represent their individual perceptions of the topic at hand

(technology), institutional identities, and national and cultural perspectives, which get worked

into policy language[15] (Dutton & Peltu, 2009; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). In other words, the

discursive lens acknowledges the dual nature of the policymaking process—while exercising

their agency in deliberate creation of norms, the policymakers are constantly enacting social

---

[15] The differences in cultural and national identities are particularly evident in international settings such as the UN where those differences are both celebrated and leveraged for political purposes (e.g. Muehlebach, 2001; Rao, 1995).

structures that limit or enable that agency (for additional discussion see: Chouliaraki &

Fairclough, 2010; Leitch & Palmer, 2010).

At the basis of the discursive take on policymaking is the recognition of discourse as social

practice. It is not just the text itself that matters[16], but how it was created, and the social

structures enacted in the process and reified through the actions of those who participated in

the debate (Wodak, 2009). This approach requires taking a long view on formation of policy

discourse routines over time and calls for a thick description of the institutional settings where

those routines have formed.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA), particularly its historical orientation (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009),

offers both a theoretical approach and a methodological framework to unpack policymaking

discourse as social practice (Bacchi, 2000). First, it offers rich conceptual insight into the

workings of discourse as carrier of social structures and power. Second, over the years, critical

researchers of discourse assembled an arsenal of methodological tools that are helpful in

studying social structures through the practice of discourse. Wodak, Muntigl, and Weiss (2000),

for example, used CDA to analyze the European Union debates on employment. They used a

combination of observations, interviews, and text analysis to reveal tensions between what

they labeled "supranationalists" and "intergovernmentalists" within the Union and explain how

conflicts between interest groups and lobbies as well different institutional settings impacted

---

[16] I am relying on Fairclough's (2003) distinction between language, text, and discourse. Fairclough describes *language* in the most straightforward way as words, sentences, etc. He defines *text* as any use of language, as well as visuals or sound effects. Finally, *discourse* according to Faircough is a particular view of text "as an element of social life which is closely interconnected with other elements" (p. 3).

the emerging language of (un)employement. As a whole, CDA helps to link the structural properties of the policymaking environments and the agency of individual policymakers through an analysis of the policy discourse as social practice.

Policy discourse spaces, such as the law making and law deliberating bodies, are designed explicitly for the purposes of reifying and challenging social structures through discourse, and systematizing them in codified rules. As social institutions, these spaces are expected to be publically accountable and adhere to certain principles of representativeness, openness, and inclusivity. Yet, policy is also de facto shaped through the actions of the governed, sometime as individuals, groups or institutions. In the context of Internet governance, for example, technical standards-setting spaces are considered by many as spaces where public policy is being made through the development of protocols and standards (Braman, 2010; DeNardis, 2009). Similarly, corporate decision-making can be viewed as a space that shapes Internet governance through implementation of proprietary standards, terms of service, peering agreements, network and security management, etc. (DeNardis, 2010a). Unlike spaces designed explicitly for public policy deliberation, standards-setting bodies and the corporate world are not held to the same standard in terms of accountability and transparency. While this work focuses on a space designed explicitly for public policy deliberation, it is important to keep the broader context of Internet-related policymaking in mind. The IGF is primarily discursive space, but it should be analyzed in relation to those, external to the forum, developments.

2.4. The duality of policymaking

A key element of policymaking discourse as social practice is the relationship it encapsulates between the agency of the policy-makers and the social structures that both limit and enable that agency. This is the duality of the policymaking process. Structuration theory (Giddens, 1984a) helps conceptualize a link between the agency of individual actors and the social structures that the actors, many times unconsciously, are reifying or altering through their mundane actions. It offers a language to describe the kind of messy constructs that come under the umbrella of information and Internet governance as constitutive processes. It also has conceptual links to CDA, which makes it possible to use the latter as a methodological lens for unpacking the duality of political decision making imposed on the Internet as a technology that itself has politics.

Two of the core elements of the theory of structuration are structures and systems. Contrary to the traditional view of structure as an external factor constraining the agency of individuals (constructivism), here the *structure* is at least partially an internal attribute of the agent, which represents possibilities depicted in human practice and in the agents' memory. Giddens (1984a) refers to it as the "structural order of transformative relations", which exhibits "structural properties", i.e. rules and resources that allow the "binding of time-space in social systems" (p.17). He describes structural properties as consisting of rules and procedures of action that are deeply rooted in our tacit, practical consciousness, and of resources as power, or the ability of the agents to exercise their "transformative capacity" (Kaspersen, 2000, pp. 42–43). Structures can be observed primarily through practice, such as adoption of information technology in organizations (Orlikowski, 2000).

Unlike structures, *social systems* can be viewed as more explicit manifestations of structural relations (Giddens, 1984a). They refer to the actual relations and activities of the agents in various contexts, or more specifically: "relations between actors or collectives that are organized as regularized social practices and continually produced and reproduced" (Kaspersen, 2000, p. 45). Thus, we can consider law and policy as examples of social systems, as well as a system of public transportation, or any other explicitly organized relationship within a society. Social systems can be viewed as formalized or institutionalized versions of the actual or desired routines of social practice. This conceptualization, for example, supports DeNardis's argument about technical protocols being a form of public policy insofar as they encapsulate ideas about freedom of expression, privacy, etc.

Interacting with structures and systems are knowledgeable *agents*, who are purposeful and intentional in their actions; and are capable of reflexively monitoring their behavior and rationalizing their action (Giddens, 1984a). In the context of policymaking, discursive reflexivity—the ability of the agents to reflect on their and others' behavior and explicitly express their knowledge—is particularly interesting. Policymaking is a process of discursive reflexivity deliberately aimed at altering the behavior of actors in society. Through discourse, the policymakers affect the public, but doing so, they also affect the policymaking process itself. Policymaking is a system of making decisions that impact the public; by employing this system, the policymakers reify its structural base regardless of the content of each decision. In an emerging field of Internet governance, this aspect is particularly salient, as developing policy for the Internet also reifies the emerging structures of Internet governance in the process.

The different elements of the theory of structuration—primarily structures, agents, and

systems—are inherently tied together and mutually influential. This leads to the central

concept in Giddens's theory – the *duality of structure* – which suggests that the structure is

both the medium and the outcome. As such, contrary to the traditional notion of structure, it is

not a steady, external factor that limits the agency, but a constantly changing component that

can limit as well as enable agency and is continuously challenged through practice.

Giddens (1979, 1984a) describes the groups of structures that explain the constitution of

society. McLennan (1997) summarized them as:

(1) *Structures of signification* – They operate through framing or through interpretative
   schemes and also involve the taken-for-granted knowledge, which is assumed to be
   possessed by the 'competent' members of the society. These structures are used to
   identify typical acts, situations, and motives in a sustainable interaction. Through this
   interactional skill, which is essentially communicative, agents also recognize the
   intended and unintended meanings of acts.

(2) *Structures of legitimation* – They operate through the modality of norms (or rules in
   regulatory sense), which are based on rights and obligations. If frames are used to
   identify acts, norms are used to assess how appropriate those acts are. This in turn
   constitutes the duality of normative structures, because agents have room for
   interpretation of normative structures and each normative assessment has an array of
   behaviors it can evoke. As such, acceptance of norms is based on pragmatic assessment
   of normative and institutional alternatives or, in other words, the agents have room "to
   produce a normative order as an ongoing practical accomplishment" (p. 355).

(3) *Structures of domination (power resources)* – This is the third structure used in praxis.
   The social life is produced through frames and norms, as well as through mobilization of
   power resources that allow the agents to secure their interpretation and normative
   claims, in light of potential opposition from others. Such resources would include
   interactional skills "involving high degrees of discursive penetration into the structures
   of signification and legitimation (such as the ability to argue successfully through the use
   of superior rhetorical skills or skills at normatively justifying one's position), forms of
   technical expertise, the authority accompanying one's institutional position, and the
   ability to use force" (p. 356).

The process of policymaking works through enactment of these three types of structures across time and space. At the same time, policymaking is an explicit attempt to systemize a relationship between the three structures as applied to a particular domain. This relationship is manifested in policy discourse as a form of social practice. For Internet governance, it is not only the substantive topics, such as management of Internet names and numbers, that matter, but also the way decisions regarding these resources are made and the way the 'correct' or the 'fair' way of making these decisions is portrayed. A policy, or a policy arrangement, offers a "rhetorical closure" in Pinch and Bijker's terms, as in "whether the relevant social groups *see* the problem as being solved (Pinch & Bijker, 1987, p. 44).

However, policy and the process of policymaking are never static. Building of Orlikowski's (2000) argument about duality of technology, policy, as well as the process of policymaking, is enacted through practice. As Giddens (1989), explained, "[h]uman actors are not only able to monitor their activities and those of others in the regularity of day-to-day conduct; they are also able to 'monitor that monitoring' in discursive consciousness" (p.29). The policymaking process, thus, is an exercise in discursive reflexivity, as it is a conscious attempt to encode norms and values in texts, an attempt to reflect, debate, and decide what is normative and what is not so it could be made explicit. In this context, policymaking and policy-debating spaces are where agency is explicitly exercised and where structures of decision-making are crafted (for example see Genieys & Smyrl, 2008 for discussion of the role of elites in policymaking).

As a discursive space, a forum that is explicitly dedicated to policy deliberation is an institutionalized form of these modalities of structuration (Macintosh & Scapens, 1997, p. 362). "Actors," according to Giddens (1989), "draw upon the modalities of structuration in the reproduction of systems of interaction, by the same token reconstituting their structural properties" (p.28). Figure 1 offers a graphic representation of the duality of structure taken from Giddens's (1989) discussion of forms of institutions. The main point of this conceptualization is the interconnectedness between the structures and their practice. A non-binding policy deliberation forum formally focuses on structures of signification, but those "always have to be grasped in connection with domination and legitimation" (p.31). A policy discursive space, as primarily a modality of interpretive scheme, exists as a reification of structures of domination and legitimation and at the same time it reproduces and reconstructs these structures through policy discourse as a social structure. More generally, "[w]hen social systems are conceived of primarily from the point of view of the 'social object', the emphasis is placed on the pervasive influence of a normatively coordinated legitimate order as an overall determinant of or 'programmer' of social conduct" (p.30).

```
structure      [ signification ] <---> [ domination ] <--------> [ legitimation ]
                      ⇕                      ⇕                         ⇕
(modality)     [ Interpretative ]     [  facility  ]          [    norm    ]
               [    scheme     ]           ⇕                         ⇕
                      ⇕                      ⇕                         ⇕
interaction    [ communication ] <---> [   power    ] <---------> [  sanction  ]
```
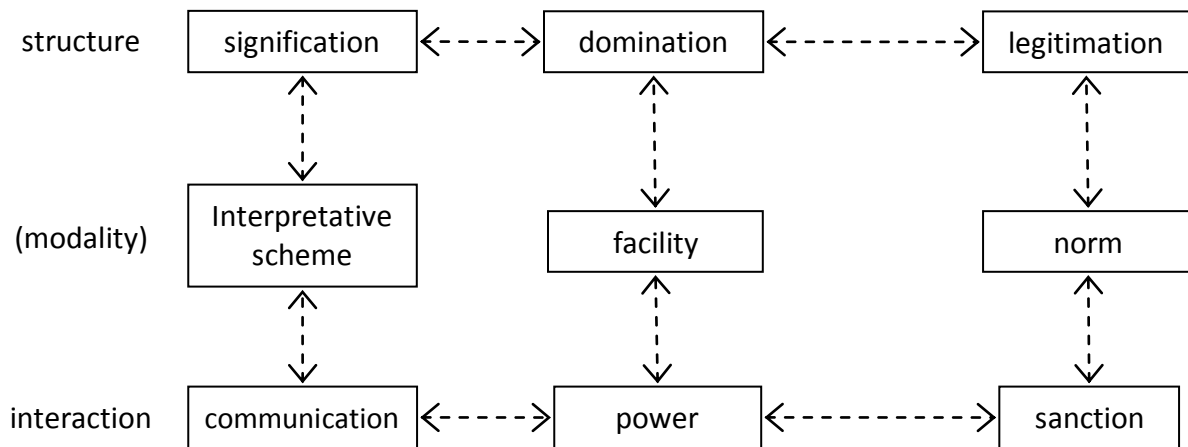
Figure 1: Dimensions of the duality of structure

Figure 2 represents a conceptual framework for explaining the relationship between the process of policymaking and its outcome.[17] The four types of links in the diagram represent influences between policymakers as agents, policy as a social system, and the context of policymaking, which includes other social structures where the policymakers operate and the policy is being implemented. More specifically, the four types are:

(a) Policy as an outcome of human activity, such as international policy debates and negotiation.

(b) Policy as a factor that facilitates and constrains policymaking activity through the existing structures of signification, legitimation, and domination.

(c) Influences of implementation of policy on other social structures.

(d) Structural conditions of policymaking, such as national and institutional identities, perception of technology, organizational settings of the debate, etc.

Viewing policymaking or, more broadly, governance, through the lens of the structuration theory, highlights the role of policy discourse, or the structures of signification, in shaping the way we, as a society, come to think about information and communication technologies and

---

[17] For this style of representing this framework I am in debt to the work of Orlikowski (1992).

their social role. In this view, policy debates constitute instances of deliberative attempts to

produce social systems through discursive reflection on competing social structures as those

are manifested by the various stakeholders. As discussed before. in the case of information and

communication policy, the social systems in question deal with socially constitutive powers,

which are central to the processes of challenging and reproducing social structures (for example

see: Banks & Riley, 1993; Braman, 2009; Leeuwis, 1993).
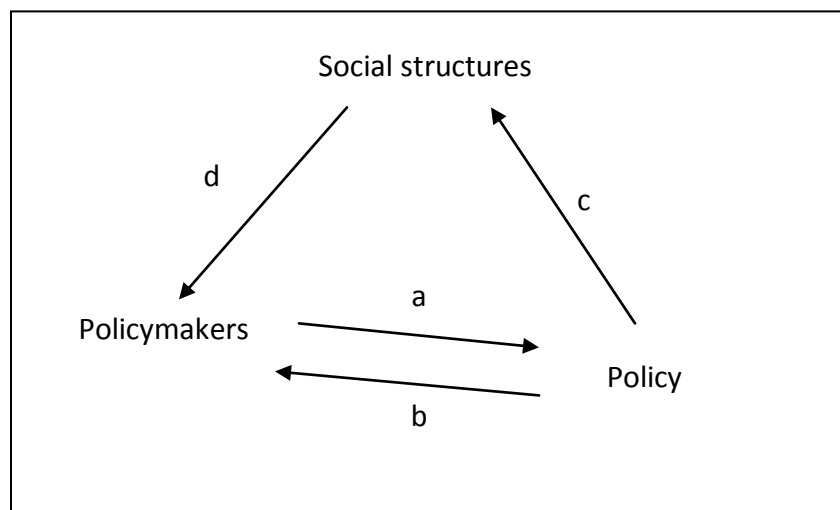
**Figure 2: The structurational model of technological
policymaking**

The work of Orlikowski (1992) and others (such as: Borg, 1999; Leeuwis, 1993) helps to see how

the argument about the duality of the policymaking process, applies to information and

communication technology policy. Similar to the creation of technology itself, technological

policy is deliberately and consciously constructed by actors (policymakers) working in a given

social context. However, the policy is also socially constructed outside of that particular context

through the different meanings other actors (i.e., the public) attach to the technology and the

various interpretations of the technological policy they emphasize and utilize for their daily life. In the field of communication technology this process of construction involves both the designers who build the technology and the users who utilize it in their daily routines—all of them translate policy into practice. Specifically for Internet governance, this speaks to the notion that policy deliberation spaces are only one layer of Internet governance decision-making; decisions pertaining to the governance of the Internet are also made in other settings, such as the corporate world or communities of tech-activists. It is also the case that once developed and made public, the policy discourse tends to become reified and institutionalized (as laws, regulations, standards, programs, etc.), losing its connection with the human agents that constructed it or gave it meaning, and it can come to appear part of the objective, structural properties of the society.

The proposed structurational view of policymaking is a step towards a comprehensive, conceptual framework of information governance through the regulation of technologies that mange its flow. It is not a predictive model in the positivist sense and it is not a critical theory that offers a normative judgment, but rather a prism that helps to ask questions about the dynamics of the policymaking process itself and the way that process may alter social structures pertaining to communication. For example, we can ask: How does policy establish the meanings and norms of technology and at the same time reify assumptions about technology? How are previously non-normative views made normative in the process of policy deliberation? What forces lead to the systematic obfuscation of what may have been considered normative? Alternatively, viewing policymaking as a duality allows us to ask questions about the actual agency of the policymakers: How do policymakers act as carriers of normative structures across

44

different fora, geographic location, and institutional settings? How often do public policymakers

actually reflect on and rationalize activities and meanings that have already become

commonplace, or do they accept and embrace meanings offered to them by private actors?

What role do the structural properties of the policymaking process itself play, compared to the

individual attributes of the agents in terms of their interpretation of priorities, opportunities,

and constraints? Moreover, having conceptualized the duality of policymaking process, we can

now discuss the role of policy discourse in constitution of social structures.

The IGF is an interesting space to explore the duality of policymaking. It is an institution

designed explicitly and exclusively for Internet policy deliberation. Interpretive schemes are the

key modality enacted in the forum, which draws its legitimacy from a variety of sometimes

competing normative bases. Yet, as a discursive nexus for Internet-policy debates it attracts a

variety of actors who, in turn, bring with them a variety of structural elements from other

organizations, policy settings, cultural environments, and national identities. It is an institution

in the making, and as such offers a space where one can observe constitution of a governance

systems and structures 'in real time."

2.5. Critical discourse analysis and the study of duality

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) offers a framework for the study of duality of Internet

governance as it unfolds in the IGF. In a recent volume Wodak and Meyer (2009a) described

CDA as having a "constitutive problem-oriented approach" and being interested "in studying

social phenomena which are necessarily complex and thus require a multidisciplinary and multi-

methodical approach" (p.2). Although the roots of CDA are in linguistics, this approach focuses

on large units of analysis (e.g. texts, speech acts, communicative events, etc., as opposed to

single sentences or words) and on language use occurring naturally (as opposed, for example,

to the study of invented hypothetical examples). As such, scholars working in the CDA approach

pay special attention to the social, cultural, situative, and cognitive contexts of language use

(Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2009a).

CDA has an ambitious claim related to the study of structures. One of the basic promises of this

approach is that through the study of semiotic data it is possible to "de-mystify ideology and

power" (Wodak & Meyer, 2009a, p. 3). CDA views language as a social practice and pays

particular attention to the context of language use—the two are viewed as complimentary

parts of the yin and yang symbol; it is impossible to understand one without studying the other

and at the same time, studying one will necessarily teach you about other. Fairclough and

Wodak (1997) offered the following definition of discourse as it implies in CDA:

> CDA sees discourse—language use in speech and writing—as a form of ' social practice'.
> Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a
> particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s),
> which frame it: The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. That is,
> discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned—it constitutes situations,
> objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and
> groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and
> reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it.
> Since discourse is so socially consequential, it gives rise to important issues of power.
> Discursive practices may have major ideological effects—that is, they can help produce
> and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women
> and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they
> represent things and position people (p.258).

There are apparent similarities between what CDA describes as the social practice of discourse

and what the theory of structuration describes as duality. The dynamics of the two processes

are similar, but the difference lies in the components. There is no explicit reference to agency in the description of discourse, although it is implied in the notion of practice. At the same time, practice of discourse can itself constitute a structure in Giddens's terms; structures of signification for example. CDA also employs a limited view of social structure, one that Giddens (1979, 1984a) has criticized for its focus on limiting human agency, while neglecting its enabling powers. At the same time, by focusing on discourse as the mechanism of interaction between structures and practice, CDA offers a very specific lens on the dynamics of duality.

CDA, especially its historical arm, has been used for the study of policymaking as a lens on the dynamics of reproduction and transformation of the social status quo (Wodak et al., 2000). Muntigle (2000) explains:

> (…) emphasis on policy-making implies that in order to understand the workings of a polity, it is not sufficient to merely examine policy as an outcome. Of more importance is to examine the (organizational) practices involved in how polities come to produce policies. These organizational practices involve the use of discursive resources and technologies by organizational member to produce and reproduce the organization (p.1; emphasis in the original).

He further clarifies:

> Policies are (…) rhetorical in that they, through they naturalness and completeness, achieve a common ground with their addressees. Policies, however, do not solely perpetuate control over their subjects. Policies may also enable. They do not act deterministically, producing a single set of outcomes (p.2; emphasis in the original)

One conclusion relevant to this project is that CDA and structuration can be compatible in terms of conceptual view of enactment of duality in the context of policymaking, with CDA offering a focused perspective on unpacking it.

Building on the notion of discourse presented above, scholars of CDA typically take a normative stand, with the purpose of changing social practices through their scholarship. Wodak and Meyer (2009a) state that the goal of CDA as a critical theory is "to produce and convey critical knowledge that enables human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection" (p.7). In other words, the way CDA scholars enact social change is through discursive reflexivity or through making implicit aspects of social life explicit. "[R]evealing structures of power and unmasking ideologies" (Wodak & Meyer, 2009a, p. 8) has traditionally been the 'bread and butter' of the critical theorists. CDA as a school is not different in this sense, but the way CDA scholars ask to achieve this goal is by focusing on "the more hidden and latent type of everyday beliefs" (Ibid). It is also through the discussion of structure that the CDA scholars are able to debate power, which, inspired by Foucault (e.g. 1970), they view as a derivative of structures that constitute our daily lives. CDA highlights the substantively linguistic and discursive nature of social relations of power in contemporary societies. This is partly a matter of how power relations are exercised and negotiated in discourse. It is fruitful to look at both 'power in discourse' and 'power over discourse' in these dynamic terms (Wodak, 1996). It is by focusing on the mundane and the 'obvious' that CDA scholars are able to expose social systems (referred to as structures) and social structures (referred to as practice) in the very same sense meant in structuration theory.

In addition to conceptual compatibility, CDA offers a well developed set of methodological tools and approaches for the study of discourse, with the focus on practice and its various contexts. Since the meaning of discourse is created and interpreted through practice, studying discourse implies studying both the text and the ways in which it created and interpreted (Fairclough,

2003). As such, CDA calls for a multidisciplinary approach to research, for mixed methods research design, and for attention to genres and intertextuality (Wodak, 2008; Wodak & Meyer, 2009a). It has been used to study institutional history, political discourse, as well as more broadly ideology (for discussion of CDA and DA use for specific purposes see the collection of essays in Wodak & Krzyzanowski, 2008). More specific to the goals for this project, CDA, particularly its historical arm, has been used to study processes of policymaking (Wodak et al., 2000).

The theory of structuration has been criticized for its limited empirical applicability for two main reasons. First, social researchers are part of the social realities they are asking to analyze (an issue that Giddens (1993) himself referred to in length as "double hermeneutics"). Second, translating the concept of duality into methodological terms requires abandoning it in favor of the dualism of the method (Craib, 1992). To answer this criticism, Giddens highlights the reflexive nature of the research practice and offers two methodological brackets, or moments where the researcher intercepts the process of structuration in order to analyze its components. One way to approach this challenge, or the first methodological bracket, is to focus on the institutionalized properties of the systems; the other, or the second bracket, is to focus on the strategic conduct of actors to identify their social practices that enact the institutionalized properties of systems thus regenerating or altering them (Cohen, 1989).

CDA offer s a methodological approach that is systematic, but broad and versatile, which should be helpful in establishing a methodological bracket. For example, it can be used to study ethnographic data collected in a particular field (Abell & Myers, 2008; Oberhuber &

Krzyzanowski, 2008), such as Internet policy discussion space, or texts collected across distinct

substantive domains, various media, and with different methods (Reisigl, 2008; Reisigl &

Wodak, 2009). In the Internet governance research, however, CDA has so far had a limited

application. Some scholars, such as Pickard (2007), used critical approaches to discuss the neo-

liberal bias of the debates arising around information governance primarily in the context of

WSIS.[18] Padovani and Tuzzi (2004) conducted a textual analysis of WSIS output documents to

explain conceptual gaps between the different stakeholder groups' visions of information

society. Yet combining the focus on discourse and a critical perspective are lacking from

analysis of Internet governance, particularly from analysis of the IGF.

2.6. Conclusion: IGF as a policy discourse space

The aim of this project is to explain IGF as a space where politics are imposed on the Internet,

as a technology that has politics. Approaches from international relations theory while useful,

provide limited explanation to the trajectory that the IGF process took in the past six years,

specifically when it comes to the practices of the forum. Focusing on states and organizations,

realism and rational choice institutionalism offer explanations of the external dynamics of the

IGF. Based on a valid premise that "any complex sociotechnical system, especially one that

touches as many people as the Internet, control takes the form of institutions, not commands"

(Mueller, 2002, p. 11), these approaches explain how the forum can be understood in terms of

inter-institutional dynamics. The explanations provided by these approaches are lacking insofar

---

[18] Others, who explicitly employed critical discourse analysis procedures, had similar observations when analyzing the discourse about information technology and development in settings such as the World Bank and Egyptian government policy (Avgerou, 2010; Stahl, 2008; Thompson, 2004a, 2004b).

as they do not account for the intra-institution dynamics. The constructivist approach in international relations focuses on the internal dynamics of institutions by placing the individual actor in the center of the scholarly inquiry. Yet doing so, it neglects the institutional and extra-institutional settings of one's behavior. As a result, the analyses of the dynamics of the IGF process that rely solely on an international relations theoretical basis run into the traditional tension of agency-structure dualism. To bridge this tension, I argue for applicability of the structuration theory with an emphasis on the duality of policymaking.

The IGF is particularly suitable space to study the duality of policymaking. Although it has no formal "policy-making authority or traditional powers such as taxation, judicial recourse, or enforcement mechanisms" (DeNardis, 2010a, p. 3), the IGF can be regarded as a nexus of practice in the Internet governance discourse (see Figure 3). Oberhuber and Krzyzanowski (2008) described the nexus of practice as a social and political locus "where different discursive practices meet to create practice-bound networks" (p. 192). For the IGF this means that the forum serves as a space where actors from various policy fora, such as ICANN, ITU, national governments, civil society, the private sector, etc. engage in discourse production. Observing such interactions allows one "to see how the individual agency (..) may influence the production of discourse within particular social and political conditions" and "it furthermore allows one to see how the individual experience of social (or political) actors may influence the form of such a practice in general, and its constitutive discourses in particular" (Oberhuber & Krzyzanowski, 2008, p. 192).

IGF: The 'nexus of
practice of internet
governance
discourse

IETF

ISOC

UNESCO

ITU

ICANN

**Govern-
ments**

**Civil
society**

**Private
sector**

Institutional and
other practices
and cycles of
discourse
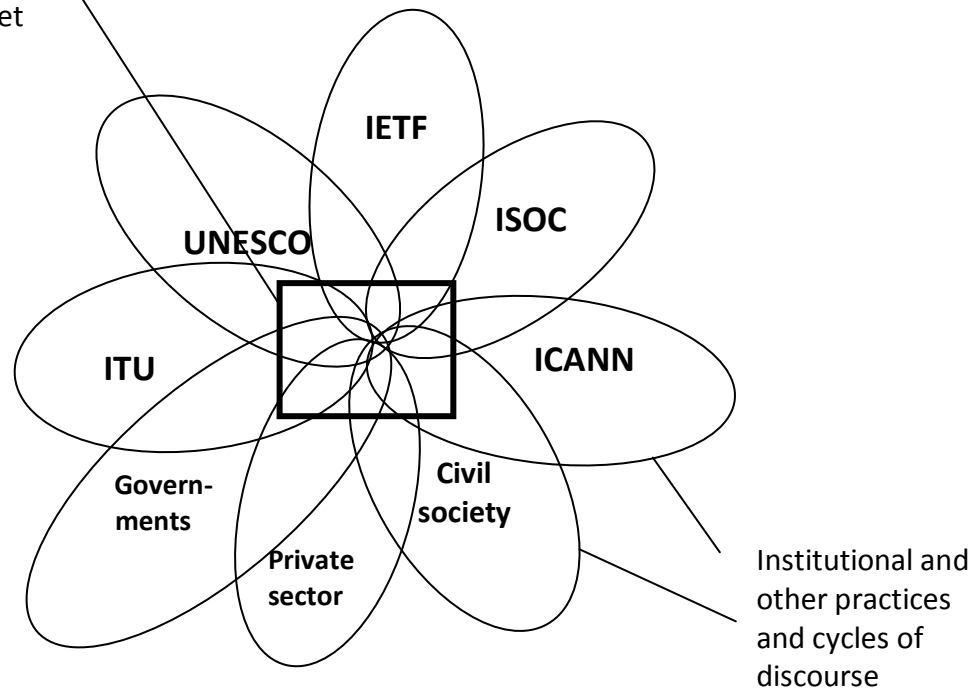
Figure 3: The 'nexus of practice' of internet governance discourse

The discourse of the IGF, in the broad sense of discourse as a social practice, is the medium

through which the politics of Internet governance are enacted. Macro institutional analysis

alone is inadequate to capture the internal dynamics that both challenge and reproduce of

structures of signification, legitimation, and signification as those are reified in this

conceptualization of Internet governance and the processes of Internet-policy-related decision

making. It requires an in-depth analysis of the practices that are emerging in the IGF as the

forum matures (and as those practices are exported into national and regional settings through

the participating actors and, more recently, through local IGF events). Unpacking those

practices will help us better understand the politics that are imposed on the Internet as well as

the political significance of the medium itself.

3. STUDYING THE IGF: DESIGN, DATA, AND ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

The decisions about the design of the study, the data collected, and the analytical strategy were driven by a pragmatic approach, which suggests that all of the above should be a function of the research questions and the context of the study (Patton, 2002; Yardley & Bishop, 2008). Neither structuration theory nor critical discourse analysis offer a theoretical apparatus that lends itself to testing pre-defined hypotheses. Instead, both theoretical approaches offer a framework for asking questions about complex and tacit phenomena. As such, both approaches rely primarily on in-depth, qualitative, iterative, and semi-inductive inquiry (e.g. Bryant & Jary, 1991, 2001; Fairclough, 2003; Orlikowski, 1992; Wodak, 2009; Wodak & Meyer, 2009b; Wodak et al., 2000). Similarly, the research that makes up the argumentative turn in policy analysis as well as institutional and discursive analyses of Internet governance, all of which deal with hard to quantify, messy political issues, all draw primarily on qualitative methods (e.g. Braman, 2010; DeNardis, 2009; Fischer & Forester, 1993; Genieys & Smyrl, 2008; Kleinwächter, 2007; Padovani & Tuzzi, 2004). In this project I used the case study as an analytical approach that captures variability in the observed phenomenon. In the service of this case study I employed participatory observations, collected and examined historical documents and transcripts, and conducted personal interviews, all of which were inductively analyzed in light of the research questions guiding this study.

3.1. The case study framework

I followed the single-case embedded design approach as described by Yin (1994).[19] The rationale for analyzing the structuration processes in IGF as a *single* case is two-fold. On the one hand, the IGF serves as a discursive nexus in international Internet-policy debates and is unique in terms of its institutional arrangements, compared not only to actual policymaking spaces but also other policy deliberation spaces. On the other hand, in the Internet governance discourse, the IGF process is many times equated with Internet governance itself, which makes it representative of a rather typical way of thinking about this domain. Moreover, the IGF is an ongoing process continuously impacted by its historical trajectory; as such, studying the IGF requires a longitudinal approach.

The rationale for conceptualizing my analysis of the IGF as a single-case *embedded* study[20] is the need to pay attention to the sub-units that constitute the IGF as a policy discourse space. Specifically, my analysis focused on the IGF secretariat, Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG), preparatory and annual meetings, dynamic coalitions, and groups of people active in the IGF. From an analytical perspective each of these sub-units has a systemic impact on the IGF as a whole. It is through the analysis of practices that developed around these sub-units that I was able to identify the variety of structures of legitimation and domination.

---

[19] As opposed to multiple-case design, which is based on the logic of replication over multiple independent cases where the phenomenon in question occurs, a single case design is applicable when the case is extreme, unique or typical for the phenomenon in question; furthermore, single-case design is applicable when the case is revelatory of the phenomenon and when the study of the phenomenon can benefit from a longitudinal analysis of the same case (Yin, 1994).

[20] According to Yin (1994), whenever we focus on a number of units in a single case, we employ an embedded design, as opposed to a holistic design, which refers to examining "the global nature of the program or of an organization" (p.42) or in other words, one, generally defined unit.

In the process of identifying the boundaries of the case, I observed other fora where Internet governance discussions, both binding and non-binding take place. I observed deliberations of the World Telecommunication Policy Forum (WTPF) and the World Summit on Information Society Forum (WSIS Forum), both organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and a meeting of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). These observations helped contextualizing the IGF processes as a bounded set of practices shaped by the developments in these external fora and, in way, shaping them as well.

3.2. Participatory observations

I started participatory observations as part of a summer internship in June-August 2008 with a small consulting boutique in Washington, DC. My motivation for this work was known to the management of the company and they agreed that my work could also be part of my research. During this internship I participated in the preparatory processes of the US industry for international Internet and telecom policy deliberations in a number of different fora. Although the non-disclosure agreement prevents me from using any of the observational or other data obtained during the internship in my analysis, this was an important experience in terms of entering the field and establishing rapport with some of the key actors in the Internet governance debate. This experience was also an opportunity to learn the language of the international telecom policy community, which is rich with acronyms, professional jargon, and nomenclature. Finally, this experience helped me better understand the institutional and individual actors involved in the Internet governance debate, and the relationships between them.

The decisions to attend particular meetings were guided by the need to engage with IGF in a

meaningful manner on the one hand, and to develop good understanding of the context in

which IGF functions on the other. Box 1 lists the meetings I observed as part of this study,

chosen based on these two principles and subject to logistical constraints (i.e. funding and

academic schedule). Meetings that are directly related to the *global* IGF are marked in bold. [21]

Box 1: Meetings observed in this study

- World Telecommunication Policy Forum (April 21-24, 2009; Lisbon, Portugal)
- **Internet Governance Forum (Nov. 15-18, 2009; Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt)**
- World Summit on Information Society Forum (May 10-14, 2010; Geneva, Switzerland)
- **Internet Governance Forum Open Consultations (May 10-11, 2010; Geneva, Switzerland)**
- ICANN meeting 38 (Jun. 20-25, 2010; Brussels, Belgium)
- **Internet Governance Forum – USA (July 21, 2010; Washington, DC)**
- **Internet Governance Forum (Sept. 14-17, 2010; Vilnius, Lithuania)**

The first formal meeting I observed was the WTPF in April 2009, which is a non-binding, policy

agenda-setting session of the ITU, in preparation to the plenipotentiary conference of the

Union.[22] Although formally focused on telecom, the meeting had Internet governance as the

pivotal theme of the debate (see Epstein, 2010 for an analysis of that meeting). For the current

project, this was a pilot observation, which allowed me to further develop my interview

protocol and observation practices. The meeting offered an opportunity to observe the formal

and informal practices of an ITU-hosted meeting; I attended the sessions of the forum and

participated in social events organized by the host country, as well as by individual participants.

---

[21] Internet Governance Forum – USA is a national, primarily Washington, DC-based, meeting. Although its discussions are US-focused, they tend to address global issues, and the outcomes of the meeting are presented at the global IGF.

[22] See WTPF website at: http://www.itu.int/osg/csd/wtpf/wtpf2009/about.html.

Conducting observations in such a meeting is an around-the-clock immersion into the field; I made an effort to take notes periodically throughout the day (mostly hand-written notes) and especially at the end of each day (typed up syntheses of the notes from the day)—a practice I kept for all of the observations I made during this study (J. Lofland & Lofland, 2006). In addition to providing rich observational data, this experience has further sharpened my understanding of the issues and the language of Internet policymaking. I was able to continue building rapport with government and private sector participants, and to conduct my first personal interviews (both formal and informal) with a number of participants.

In November 2009 I attended my first IGF[23] meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.[24] A day before the IGF started, I presented a paper based on my WTPF research in the annual symposium of the Global Internet Governance Academic Network (GigaNet), which takes place annually before the meeting of the IGF. Many of the GigaNet participants are also academics active in the IGF and other Internet governance fora. My presentation was a trigger for a number of informal conversations about this dissertation project, and the fact that I presented at the symposium helped me later in building rapport with my interviewees. None of my interviewees during IGF 2009, however, were present during my talk.

During the four days of the forum I collected observational data, conducted formal interviews with IGF participants, and interacted with them in more informal settings. I attended main sessions of the forum, workshops, and a variety of social events organized by the IGF

---

[23] See Chapter 4 for a detailed description of the IGF.

[24] See IGF 2009 website at: http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/2009-igf-sharm-el-sheikh.

Secretariat and the host country, as well as other entities taking part in the IGF.[25] The strong

rapport I established with some of the participants[26] helped me initiate contact with forum

participants for the purposes of formal and informal interviews. However, as I started

identifying the nucleus of active IGF participants, continuous rapport building became more

challenging—the fact that I had numerous conversations with participants from a variety of

stakeholder groups confused some IGFers, who could not pin me down as belonging to a single

stakeholder group. I was open about research being the main purpose of my participation and

overall it worked to my advantage—the interviewees felt less threatened and more open to

voice critical comments about other stakeholder groups, which normally they might refrain

from. On a number of occasions I was approached with offers for greater involvement with the

activities of one group or another; in all those cases I explained that for I prefer not to do that

for the duration of my research.

At the same time, not being an insider of either group probably precluded me from access to

some of the intra-group dynamics, particularly when it came to the business and the

government sectors (the civil society tend to be more transparent by working through publically

available mailing lists and open meetings). Most of the academics who attend the IGF are also

active in the forum, but they do not necessarily treat it as a site for primary data collection the

way I did. There was an expectation that a researcher studying the IGF would also be actively

---

[25] Social events are an important component of the IGF experience as Kieren McCarthy wittily described in his reflections to the first IGF: http://www.theregister.co.uk/2006/11/08/igf_in_pictures/.

[26] During 2009 I also participated in an online capacity building program ran by the Diplo Foundation. In addition to learning another perspective on the history and the substance of the Internet governance debate, this was a rapport building activity as well, because Diplo Foundation is very active in a number of Internet governance fora, particularly in the IGF.

involved in the forum. Being actively involved in the IGF is a rite of passage, so that you and

your research would be taken seriously by other participants in the IGF. This insight led me to

submit a workshop proposal for the following IGF in 2010[27], which helped me to build rapport

with potential interviewees and also exposed me to the aspects of inner workings of the IGF,

which are not immediately apparent when one only participates in the annual event as a

spectator.

In addition, national identity appeared to be very important in the IGF community. Thus, being

a Russia-born Israeli studying in the US has further complicated my perceived identity by some

of the forum participants. Similarly to my position in relation to the various stakeholder groups,

the hybrid national identity worked mostly to my advantage. It made initial contact with some

of the IGF participants easier, as speaking the same language or being able to relate to one's

experiences in Russia, Israel, or the US, was an important ice-breaker. It also allowed some of

the participants with whom I interacted, to choose a national identity to relate to, especially

since Russia and USA symbolize two extremes in terms of nation-states' attitudes towards

Internet regulation and more broadly in global politics. Although it was not the most significant

factor in most of my interaction, in some cases, having no strong association with a single

nation-state or culture helped my interviewees to be more open and critical.

---

[27] I also volunteered to serve on the program committee of the annual symposium of GigaNet for the following
year, but I don't think this had impact on my data collection efforts.

In May 2010 I attended two events running in parallel. First, I attended an ITU-organized WSIS Forum[28]; second, I participated in the IGF Open Consultations[29]; both held in Geneva. Attending the WSIS Forum provided me with an opportunity to observe a different ITU event, formatted after the IGF in terms of nominal practices and procedures. Attending the Open Consultations was pivotal to my understanding of the practices of the IGF. As before, I took notes during and after my observations, and I conducted another series of formal and informal interviews. Being present in Geneva was an opportunity to interview a number of ITU officials, who were unable to talk to me otherwise; it also exposed me to actors in the Internet governance field who do not take an active role in the IGF process, but prefer the intergovernmental route in policymaking.

In the summer of 2010 I attended an ICANN meeting[30] which, in addition to providing me access to another segment of actors in the IGF for interviews, was an opportunity to observe the practices of an organization that is more representative, in a way, of the Internet community's normative structures. Comparing notes from my observations of the ITU-hosted meetings with observations during the ICANN meeting helped me better situate the practices of the IGF as a function of two competing cultures within the Internet governance debate. Later in the summer of 2010 I attended the IGF-USA event held in Washington DC.[31] There I observed a translation of the IGF practices for the needs of the local organizers. As with other non-main-IGF meetings I

---

[28] See WSIS Forum 2010 website: http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2010/forum/geneva/.

[29] Some additional information is available at: http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/2010-igf-vilnius/the-preparatory-process.

[30] See ICANN no.38 meeting website: http://brussels38.icann.org/.

[31] See IGF-USA 2010 website: http://www.igf-usa.us/page/2010-igfusa.

observed, participating in IGF-USA helped me contextualize my observations of the annual IGF event and its preparatory process. During this one day event I was also able to conduct two informal interviews.

In September 2010 I attended my second annual IGF event in Vilnius, Lithuania.[32] My participation in this meeting was funded through a fellowship from the Internet Society (ISOC), which required me to identify myself as part of the ISOC's delegation. I did not observe this label causing me difficulties during my observations and interviews, but carrying an ISOC-affiliated name-tag had two implications. On the one hand, it potentially placed me more clearly within the "Internet community" stakeholder group in the eyes of some IGF participants. On the other hand, being affiliated with a fellowship program known for its selectivity and appreciation of Internet-governance-related activism improved my IGF credentials. As with the Sharm el-Sheikh event, I again participated in the annual symposium of the GigaNet, thus strengthening my identity as a researcher within the IGF. In addition, I led a workshop discussing core Internet values and principles of Internet governance[33] and was also invited to be part of a panel in a workshop on youth and Internet governance[34]. Actively participating in workshops and their organization gave me first-hand, intimate experience with the practices of the IGF. This strengthened my presence in the IGF and enabled me conducting additional

---

[32] See IGF 2010 website: http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/2010-igf-vilnius.

[33] Additional information about the workshop is available at: http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/component/chronocontact/?chronoformname=WSProposals2010View&wspid=119; transcript of the workshop is available at: http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/component/content/article/102-transcripts2010/723-119.

[34] Additional information about the workshop is available at: http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/component/chronocontact/?chronoformname=WSProposals2010View&wspid=69; transcript of the workshop is available at: http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/component/content/article/102-transcripts2010/719-69.

formal and informal interviews with IGF participants. In other words, my active participation exposed me to observations that I would not have been able to get exposed to otherwise (J. Lofland & Lofland, 2006).

In sum, my participatory observations covered seven meetings where Internet-related policy was discussed, which amount to a total of 24 days or about 300 hours of observations, and constituted a pivotal component in data collection for this project. Today, I continue to maintain a level of activity within the IGF community through assistance with workshops in the annual event and serving on the steering committee of the IGF-USA. This involvement should help me conducting future research in this domain.

3.3. Documents, transcripts, and video recordings

Attending the meetings and actively participating in them was invaluable for documenting and analyzing the practices of the IGF, gaining exposure to the informal aspects of the forum dynamics, as well as accessing the interviewees. In addition, this experience allowed me to better utilize the documentation of those meetings I was not able to attend in person. I relied on available video recordings and live transcripts of the annual meetings prior to 2009 and the Open Consultations other than the one that I attended. Table 1 lists all the documents, video recordings, and transcripts reviewed during this project; they constitute the entire population of publically available documents of the IGF process. All the materials are available through the IGF website; some of them were retrieved using the Internet Archive's "Wayback Machine"[35] to

---

[35] Available at: http://wayback.archive.org/web/.

access earlier versions of the IGF website[36]. Not every document and transcript is cited in the

final manuscript, but review of the entire body of materials was essential for the analytical

process.

Table 1: Transcripts, video recordings, and documents analyzed for this project

Meeting	Transcripts	Video	Documents
OC-2006/02	Entire meeting	None	Preliminary questionnaire Responses to questionnaire Written contributions
OC-2006/05	Entire meeting	None	Comments on the establishment of MAG Comments on agenda Written contributions
IGF-2006/10	Main sessions only	None	Secretariat's summary Synthesis of contributions Written contributions
OC-2007/02	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	Written contributions
OC-2007/05	Entire meeting	None	Written contributions
OC-2007/09	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	Written contributions
MAG-2007/09	None	None	Summary report Draft IGF agenda
IGF-2007/11	Main sessions only	None	Secretariat's summary Written contributions Event reports
OC-2008/02	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	Written contributions Synthesis of contributions
MAG-2008/02	None	None	Summary report
OC-2008/05	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	Draft Agenda and revised Program Paper
MAG-2008/05	None	None	Summary report
OC-2008/09	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	Written Contributions Final program
MAG-2008/09	None	None	Summary report
IGF-2008/12	Main sessions only	None	Synthesis of contributions Chairman's summary Event reports

---

[36] The IGF website does not use a systematic organization of information. In fact, the information has been piling up since the beginning of the forum and material related to each annual event and its preparatory process are organized differently each year. Also, as one can observe in Table 1, over time, the IGF processes became more transparent and better documented. I discuss these processes in greater depth in Chapter 4.

Meeting	Transcripts	Video	Documents
OC-2009/02	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	Written Contributions Synthesis of contributions
MAG-2009/02	None	None	Summary report
OC-2009/05	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	None
MAG-2009/05	None	None	Summary report
OC-2009/09	Entire meeting	Audio only	None
IGF-2009/11	Main sessions only	Entire meeting	Written contributions Synthesis of contributions Background paper Chairman's summary Event reports
OC-2010/02	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	None
MAG-2010/05	None	None	Summary report
OC-2010/06	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	None
IGF-2010/09	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	Program paper Background paper Chairman's summary Report on discussion about continuation of the IGF mandate Event reports
OC-2010/11	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	None
MAG-2010/11	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	Summary report Questionnaire
OC-2011/02	Entire meeting	Entire meeting	Draft program paper Synthesis of contributions
MAG-2011/02	Entire meeting	Partial	Summary report

The combination of participatory observations with document analysis allowed me to use each

to contextualize the other—on the one hand, having observed the meetings in person, I was

able to better interpret the video recordings and the transcripts of other meetings; on the other

hand, having read the input documents and reviewed previous meetings, I was able to

understand better the events I observed during meetings I attended in person. The verbatim

transcripts provided by the secretariat are mostly unedited[37] and not all the speakers are clearly

identified. Thus, I had to review the transcripts together with the available video recordings, in

order to establish who exactly spoke on behalf of each entity; spending time in the field and

getting familiar with the active participants in the IGF was invaluable for that purpose as well.

Since 2008, the IGF secretariat has been also releasing proceedings of the forum. The first book,

presented at the at the annual IGF event in Hyderabad, summarized the first two annual IGF

events (Doria & Kleinwächter, 2008). The book included brief essays from the UN Department

of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), ITU, UNESCO, the IGF secretariat, and the host

governments' officials; a series of short essays from representatives of the different

stakeholder groups; basic statistics about participation in the IGF events in Athens and in Rio de

Janeiro; and edited verbatim transcripts of the main sessions of the two events. The second

book was presented in Sharm el-Sheikh (MacLean, 2009) and included primarily the verbatim

transcripts of the main sessions and summaries of all the workshops. The third book was

presented during the annual event in Vilnius (Drake, 2010). It followed closely the format of the

first volume, with fewer endorsements from the government and UN officials. These books

serve as the official record of the IGF.

Over the course of the study, I collected the transcripts and the video recordings in a

chronological order for later analysis (see section 3.5 below); I used the proceedings of the IGF

primarily to historically contextualize my analysis.

---

[37] The transcripts of the main sessions of the annual event do undergo some editing process, but the transcripts of the Open Consultations are not edited at all. Transcripts of the workshops during the annual IGF event are sporadically edited by the workshop organizers, but largely remain in their raw form.

3.4. Interviews

Interviews were an important component of data collection for this research. Over the course of the study I conducted 26 formal and 12 informal interviews. The formal interviews were scheduled in advance, took place in a secluded and quiet place and each lasted for about an hour, during which I had the undivided attention of the interviewee. These interviews were recorded and later transcribed. Informal interviews happened mostly during social events or as corridor conversations triggered by attending a panel or an introduction by another participant; alternatively, informal interviews happened when a potential interviewee asked to talk off-record. For emergent interviews, I would emphasize that my questions are related to my research and I would always obtain the interviewee's consent. Informal interviews were not recorded, but I took notes based on them as soon as possible after the encounter.

I started by employing a reputational snowball sampling in order to identify the key IGF actors (Farquharson, 2005). I asked each interviewee to list 5 people whom they considered the most authoritative and pivotal individuals within the IGF. Unexpectedly, this proved to be a harder task for my interviewees than I anticipated and the resulting pool of potential interviewees was relatively small. Starting from the ICANN meeting in 2010, I also relied on my observations in order to "obtain instances of all the important dissimilar forms in the larger population" (R. S. Weiss, 1994, p. 23) or to maximize the variation of the stakeholder groups I interacted with and, to a lesser degree, the levels of activity of the interviewed participants (e.g.: Fairclough, 2003; Huberman & Miles, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002; R. S. Weiss, 1994).

Among my interviewees, ten came from the technical community, eight from the business

sector, eight from the civil society, five from the government, four from intergovernmental

organizations, two from academia, and one from the IGF secretariat. Most of the interviewees

played an active role in the IGF and could be considered members of the IGF nucleus. Yet I

made an explicit effort to interview a number of participants whom I perceived as not

belonging to the nucleus, and who did not come up in the reputation snowball sampling.

Moreover, by participating in meetings other than IGF, I was able to interview a number of

people who were critical of the forum, including one interviewee who had participated actively

in the early days of IGF but then scaled down his own participation and that of his institution. In

the interview process I reached saturation in terms of the variety of opinions about the IGF.

Three people whom I approached with a request for an interview refused to participate. One of

these people explained that as a general policy her agency does not allow staff participating in

academic research; the other two did not want to participate in the study formally, but offered

an informal conversation instead.

All formal interviews but two were conducted face to face during the meetings; two interviews

were conducted later over Skype. On average, interviews lasted about an hour, and typically

throughout the meetings the interviewees would approach me to share information they

recalled after our session or to introduce me to one of the people they had suggested I should

interview next. All the interviews were conducted in English. Unlike some other UN fora, English

is clearly the dominant language in the IGF. In one case, however, this posed a difficulty, when I

interviewed a French-speaking person. This interview took longer and required more exchange

for each question and more rephrasing and restating of both my questions and the

68

interviewee's answers. The interviews followed a semi structured protocol based on prompts

aimed to elicit rich information about the practices and the dynamic tensions of the IGF

(APPENDIX A). The interviews were recorded using a digital recorder (or Call Graph software[38] if

the interview was conducted via Skype) and later transcribed with the help of undergraduate

research assistants at Cornell.

I used an IRB approved procedure to obtain consent of the interviewees. In most cases they

opted for verbal consent, but some preferred to have it in a written from (APPENDIX B).

Although anonymity was not promised to the interviewees, I decided not to use their names

other than in places where it is absolutely necessary.

3.5. Data analysis

In my data analysis I relied on my field notes, transcripts of the main sessions of the annual IGF

events, transcripts of the open consultations, and interview transcripts. Phillips and Hardy

(2002) explain that there is no single recipe for data analysis in discourse analysis studies.

Instead, they argue, "researchers need to develop an approach that makes sense in light of

their study and to establish a set of arguments to justify the particular approach they adopt" (p.

74). In discourse analysis, social linguists and critical linguists focus on the text and have a set of

procedures focused on individual parts of speech and phrases, but critical discourse analysis

focuses on the critical assessment of the context in which discourse happens (p.19-29). Viewing

---

[38] See: http://scribie.com/free-skype-recorder.

discourse as social practice, critical discourse analysis lends itself to ethnographic work and

inductive approaches to data analysis (Oberhuber & Krzyzanowski, 2008).

Focused on the context and practice of discourse production in the IGF, this project is

dominated by ethnographic research. In other words, my data analysis started from the day I

entered the field in the summer of 2008 and continued in an iterative fashion until the summer

of 2011. I continuously worked with my field notes and analyzed transcripts and documents to

reflect on my conduct in the field and to revise the emphases in my observations and interviews

(Abell & Myers, 2008; Oberhuber & Krzyzanowski, 2008). In working with the data, I drew on

the practices of critical discourse analysis and the constant comparative method, borrowed

from the grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This strategy implies iterative,

inductive reading of the documents, transcripts, and field notes in order to identify emerging,

mutually reinforcing patterns that demonstrate the structural elements of the IGF. I utilized

Atlas.ti to implement this strategy across the large body of documents and transcripts (di

Gregorio & Davidson, 2008). The first pass included open coding of the interview and Open

Consultations transcripts to develop categories of information in light of my theoretical lens of

the duality of policymaking. Next, I applied axial coding whereby I reviewed links between the

categories in the context of my field notes from participatory observations. Finally, I applied

selective coding as part of constructing the narrative presented in this manuscript.

I also turned to quantitative techniques to identify simple patterns in the meetings transcripts.

Fairclough (2003) noted that essentially quantitative approaches can be useful at initial stages

of discourse analysis, but more on the technical level. I used a Perl script to count the number

of interventions made by each participant in a single meeting as well as the volume of each participant's interventions in each meeting, measured as the number of words. The rationale behind applying this quantitative lens is to map the levels of activity of the various actors. In a setting where meetings are limited by time and other resources, such as captioning or interpretation, participation is a zero sum game—if a single participant is taking the floor more often or speaks for longer periods of time, he or she is necessarily taking away from other people's opportunities to participate. In other words, those who take the floor more often or speak more during their intervention are dominating the discussion. In this analysis, I focused on what I viewed as "substantive" contributions, meaning interventions about the subject matter as opposed to coordinating exchanges focused on the immediate logistics (such as malfunctioning microphones or minor clarifications such the number of the workshop discussed at the moment). To eliminate the noise, only interventions longer than 15 words were counted towards one's participation. Preliminary analysis of a sample of transcripts showed that the vast majority of coordinating interventions fell below the 20 words limit, while substantive contributions were longer than that.

Taken together, prolonged participatory observations, formal and informal interviews, and review of extensive set of documents allowed me to draw and interpret a complex picture of the IGF practices. Using the case study analytical approach helped me to capture the variability of IGF practices across different types of meetings (e.g. Open Consultations, annual IGF), within each meeting (e.g. workshops, main sessions), as well as to contextualize IGF practices in comparison to other Internet governance meetings. Relying on multiple methods of data collection I was able to compare, contrast, and question my own interpretation of the data. The

71

inductive approach to data analysis was well suited for the goals of this study and for the

research questions in hand.

4. THE HISTORY OF THE INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

In his analysis of the IGF Mueller (2010) describes it as a space shaped by three kinds of politics: the politics of agenda setting (what should be talked about and who should speak), the politics of representation (stakeholder groups pushing to maximize their presence in the decision-making bodies of the IGF), and the politics of principles (or the outcome of the other two political struggles in terms of a dominant set of norms and values within the IGF). This typology is particularly useful for viewing the IGF as a policy-discourse space where the political struggle focuses on shaping the discourse (the politics of participation and agenda setting) that embodies a particular set of power structures in relation to the question of Internet governance (the politics of principles). Unpacking these politics, using the concepts of structuration and the tools of critical discourse analysis, is at the heart of this project.

Understanding the IGF as shaped by and as shaping these three kinds of politics described by Mueller (2010) requires historical context. These forces and their particular shapes are a result of a lengthy and highly politicized process that brought together two very different cultures of authority and decision-making—that of the nation-state-oriented UN system and that of the Internet community. As an institution, the IGF carries markers of this political process and any analysis of its discursive practices should take its historical context into account (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009).

The purpose of this chapter is to review the historical trajectory that led to the establishment of the IGF and the dowry that this process left for the forum to carry on, in the form of unresolved

tensions between different stakeholder groups. It starts with a discussion of WSIS as a process

that established the IGF. The WSIS was not only a stage where tensions between the traditional

and Internet community approaches to policymaking played out; it was also an outlet for

political tensions within the UN system and among the member states. This review tracks the

internal tensions and exogenous influences that impacted the two phases of the WSIS and the

practices that developed over the course of the summit. It pays special attention to the

Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG), which developed the general formal

framework for the IGF and played a pivotal role in establishing practices that later shaped the

way the IGF conducts itself.

4.1. First, there was change…

The growth of the Internet and realization of its cultural, social, political, and economic roles

altered the international balance of power around the governance of information and

communication technologies (ICTs). There were three trends underlying this change: the

growing prominence of non-state actors such as the private sector and the technical

community in the de-facto governance of ICTs, global connectivity of the Internet that

challenged the territorial sovereignty of the states in governance of the ICTs, and the

dominance of the US in potential control over the technical hierarchy of the Internet (Braman,

2009; DeNardis, 2010b; Dutton & Peltu, 2007; Kleinwächter, 2008; Mathiason, 2009; Mueller,

1999, 2002, 2007, 2010; Shahin, 2007).

The WSIS emerged as a response to those trends. It represented a clash of two models of global

governance: a traditional model based on agreements between states and non-traditional one,

based on private contracts between non-state actors. The first model was based on principles

of territoriality, while the second was inherently transnational, but dependent on the de facto

control of the US over the technical aspects of the implementation of the private agreements

(Mueller, 2010); the first model was based on traditional, state-focused decision-making

mechanisms, while the second was a relatively new set of informal practices of decision-making

that evolved in the technical community that engineered the Internet (Uimonen, 2003).

Summits like the WSIS are a tool occasionally deployed by the UN to address global and broadly

defined issues. Death (2011) explains that such summits play "symbolic, performative and

theatrical roles (…) in persuading global audiences that political elites are serious about issues

such as sustainable development or climate change" and they have "a number of political

implications, including the reinforcement of dominant hierarchical, state-centric, elitist and

rationalist models of politics, as well as for shifting relationships between the rulers and the

ruled" (.2). In the context of challenges posed by the Internet and its evolving institutions to the

traditional policymaking mechanisms, the WSIS was supposed to serve a similar role. It was

initiated by a UN specialized agency—the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)—and it

served a number of overlapping interests of those who supported the traditional, state-centric

model of global governance.

Mathiason (2009) explains that the WSIS emerged as part of the process of the ITU trying to re-

discover its identity and re-establish its role in the new and rapidly changing telecommunication

environment.[39] On the one hand, this process was fueled by a foresight of the ITU leadership

about a threat stemming from the new institutions of Internet governance to its bureaucracy,

even though up to that point the ITU was involved in Internet-related issues only on the

margins, primarily through the Union's work on standards. On the other hand were the

member states, the primary driving force behind the ITU and its Counsel, who considered the

Union as a suitable vehicle for ensuring their decisive role in the emerging 'multistakeholder'

environment of Internet governance (Mathiason, 2009).

In forming the WSIS the ITU had to react not only to developments taking place externally to

the UN and threatening the authority of the Union[40], but also to pressures from within the UN

system and even from within the Union itself. In the process leading up to the summit, the ITU

faced three main challenges. First, it had to consider internal UN politics and account for the

interests of other UN agencies, which claimed some jurisdiction over information and

communication technology (ICT)[41] "business," particularly in the areas of development and

---

[39] The ITU has a history of dealing with changes in technological and institutional environments through reinventing itself as an organization. George Codding dedicated a significant part of his career following the evolution of the ITU (1991a; 1982), and changes in its structure (1991b; 1991) and in its governing bodies (1983). In other words, addressing external threats to its authority and legitimacy, or the sphere of its political influence, is not new to the ITU. Over its long history the Union has demonstrated a notable ability to adapt to the ever-changing techno-political realities (Codding, 1995).

[40] The principle decision to hold the WSIS was made during the Plenipotentiary Conference of the ITU in October-November 1998, just about a month after the incorporation of the Internet Corporation for Assignment Names and Numbers (ICANN)—an organization the authority of which many of the proponents of the summit, including the ITU, wanted to challenge.

[41] I decided to use the term ICT, for Information and Communication Technology, throughout this manuscript, but this was not an automatic choice. Part of the complexity that constituted Internet governance as a political issue was extension of the debate beyond the questions of telecommunication infrastructure into the realm of norms, rights, and the meaning of information transferred via communication networks (Mueller, 2010). Boczkowski and Lievrouw (2007) coined the term media and information technology (MIT) to reflect the changing nature of ICTs with a particular emphasis on centrality of the content (as opposed to technical components) in the mediated communication processes. I see this as an important distinction, particularly relevant to the Internet governance

bridging the digital divide. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO), for example, emerged as an important contender for authority over some of the

public policy issues surrounding the Internet, such as access to knowledge, content, and

linguistic diversity.[42] The second challenge of the ITU was the growing involvement of non-state

actors in relevant UN activities. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), for example, has

experimented with participation of the civil society in its discussions, since the early 1990s,

albeit primarily in a consultative capacity.[43] This practice was particularly relevant for the WSIS

in light of the ITU's third challenge—it had to consider shifts in power among the Union's own

membership, where the prominence of corporate members, vis-a-vis the state actors,

constantly grew, primarily due to privatization of previously government-owned telecom

companies worldwide (Kleinwächter, 2008; Mathiason, 2009).

The ITU succeeded in creating the WSIS, but it had only partial success in addressing the

internal challenges and asserting the leadership role it desired. Resolution 56/183, adopted by

the General Assembly in December 2001[44], placed the summit under the patronage of the UN

Secretary General; the ITU was granted primarily an organizational role, without the decision-

---

debates. Yet, most of the academic and professional discourses in the field use the traditional term—ICT.
Originally, I planned on using the term media, information, and communication technologies (MICT) as an umbrella
term trying to encompass both the technical and the content aspects, but I opted out to the use of ICT in order to
maintain focus. I would like to use this opportunity to highlight that I am using this term in its broad, MICT,
meaning and not in the narrow sense of reference to telecommunication infrastructure.

[42] UNESCO has a rich history of hosting debates about media, communication, and globalization. It is most famous
for hosting the New World Information and Communication Order debates, which tackled the question of cultural
imperialism, and the Mac Bride report, which led to the US and UK withdrawal from UNESCO on the grounds that
the report endangered free speech (Mansell & Nordenstreng, 2007; Padovani & Nordenstreng, 2005).

[43] Kleinwächter (2008) refers to the "Earth Summit" in 1992, which addressed environmental issues, as the starting
point of non-stat actor participation in the UN debates.

[44] The resolution can be found at: http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs/background/resolutions/56_183_unga_2002.pdf

making authority it desired. Kleinwächter (2008) explains that the final agenda of WSIS turned

out to be broader than the initial proposal to discuss the digital divide. The broad approach

"went beyond the mandate, competence, and expertise of the ITU" (p.545). In addition, the

resolution acknowledged the multi-stakeholder fashion of the envisioned Summit as well as

openness of the consultations to include actors other than the nation-states. Kleinwächter

(2008) explains this as a UN response to parallel initiatives that were undertaken at the time by

the OECD and G7, which opened their doors to participation of both the private sector and the

civil society in discussions of information policy.[45]

Resolution 56/183 endorsed the Summit to be conducted in two phases in Geneva (2003) and

in Tunis (2005)—a decision atypical for UN summits of this nature, but reflective of some of the

internal tensions that had emerged around the Internet between the global North and the

global South. On the face of it, the WSIS was given a mandate to discuss the potential links

between the diffusion of ICTs and socioeconomic development. However, the debate quickly

turned to addressing issues of Internet governance (Mathiason, 2009). As such, the first phase

of the WSIS focused primarily on delineating the substantive domain to be addressed during

the summit and on working out discursive settings that could accommodate participation of

both state and non-state actors. This phase also produced a particular social configuration with

---

[45] Kleinwächter (2008, p. 544) writes:

> The debate on the relationship between state and non state actors in the information age was broadened when an OECD ministerial conference in Bonn in 1997 invited not only governments and industry leaders but also representatives of users and consumers. (…) This new "trilateralism" was reflected later when the G7 launched in 2000 the Digital Opportunity Task Force (DOTForce) which got a mandate to turn the digital divide into digital opportunities and was constituted by a membership representing governments, the private sector, and civil society.

individual leaders, interest groups, and power hubs that had a profound impact on the WSIS

discourse and practices.

This phase resulted in the establishment of the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG),

which was a surprisingly successful experiment in collaboration between the state and the non-

state actors, who drafted a consensual text through a rather open and transparent process.

Tasked with defining Internet governance and suggesting potential models of governance, the

proscriptive power of the WGIG was not as much in its document as it was in the practices

developed in the process of writing it.

The second phase of the WSIS was a scene for political drama where the advocates of the

different worldviews on Internet governance clashed. The disagreements were so fierce that

the only recommendation of the WGIG report that survived was that of establishing a non-

binding Internet Governance Forum (IGF) to continue deliberations started during the WSIS. In

a way the WSIS passed on to the IGF all the unresolved tensions surrounding Internet

governance; but it also passed on a genesis of new structures of legitimation and domination,

which are pivotal to the discussion of political significance of the forum.

4.2. The clash of two cultures

Traditionally, international intergovernmental organizations have been reluctant to allow

participation of non-state actors; the most they typically agree to is participation of non-state

actors in a limited, consultative capacity. Mathiason (2009, p. 103) explains this reluctance as

the governments' concern that some of those actors may be hostile to them. Yet, in the case of

WSIS intergovernmental bodies had limited choice, because governments were the latecomers

in the Internet arena (Shahin, 2007).[46] By the time the ITU had identified Internet governance

as a strategically important area, the debate was already in fairly advanced stages and the non-

state actors already played a pivotal role in it (Mueller, 1999).[47] Taken together, the historical

reluctance to include non-state actors in the UN deliberations and the necessity to reckon with

already existing, non-governmental institutions of Internet governance, explain why the

primary focus of the preparatory debates for the first phase of WSIS was on the rules of

participation for the non-state actors (Kleinwächter, 2008).

To accommodate the voices of the non-state participants, the Bureau of the Summit held an

informal intersession and made special arrangements during the preparatory process. Such

amendments were possible only after a number of clashes between the private sector and the

civil society representatives with the government delegations which were slow to adjust to the

new arrangements (see Kleinwächter, 2008, pp. 548–551 for a specific example). The fact that

---

[46] Markus Kummer (2005) voiced a similar sentiment, albeit in a more diplomatic voice, in his explanation of the emergence of the multistakeholder approach in relation to Internet governance:

> In the context of discussions on global governance, Governments have been confronted with other stakeholders requesting to be allowed to participate in decision-making arrangements. The debate on Internet governance, however, followed a different pattern. Here, Governments wanted to obtain a say in the running of the Internet, which has developed outside a classical intergovernmental framework (p.1).

[47] Singh (2008) explains the accommodation of non-state actors as a function of the incumbency status of the US, which "gives countries, companies or groups, which already benefit from rules designed to maintain their market share, an enhanced ability to set agendas or choose to exit negotiations" (p.234). As such, the US was in a position to lay the foundations of Internet governance according to philosophies of deregulation, private sector leadership, and self-regulation (Mueller, 2010 makes a similar argument). Singh goes as far as accrediting the foundational principles of Internet governance to the personal philosophy of Jon Postel and a community of technical people he was a part of and who built IANA around three principles: "consensus, private sector involvement, and interoperability" and "always looked to the Internet community as a whole, even when the Internet was primarily a government project" (p.235). In other words, by the time the UN "family" and the rest of the international community joined the debate, there was a set of rules, procedures, and institutions of Internet governance already in place, and the latecomers had to pick up the discussion from that advanced point.

the summit was a UN meeting imposed additional difficulties for bridging the ideological

divides. Although by the time the WSIS preparations took place, there was a growing tendency

for civil society participation in UN meetings, there was no agreement on the extent to which

non-state actors could participate in negotiations, which was considered a prerogative of the

sovereign states. The strategy employed by numerous NGOs at the time was influencing their

country delegations to support their positions or to place active people on their country

delegations. However, during the third PrepCom an even more liberal model of NGO

participation in WSIS was adopted. The non-state actors were not only invited to the plenary as

observers, but were also invited to make brief interventions (Mathiason, 2009).

However, not only the government delegations had to adjust. To make their voice heard and

taken seriously in the WSIS, the non-state actors, particularly the civil society, had to go

through a rapid process of institutionalization.[48] The structures that emerged were reflective of

the decision-making cultures and perceptions of authority characteristic to each stakeholder

group: some of them were reflective of the bottom-up and inclusive approaches of the Internet

community, while others were reflective of the top-down and selective practices of the

intergovernmental settings. Yet all these structures were forced to co-exist in a single discursive

space, thus shaping and being shaped by this interaction.

---

[48] For example, during PrepComm 2, hundreds of civil society delegates had to figure ways to get organized and produce interventions and contributions according to the UN meetings protocol. This resulted in establishing of structures such as the WSIS Civil Society Content and Themes Group, which was responsible for coordinating content-related issues, the Civil Society Plenary, which was the de facto civil society authority in the WSIS settings, and WSIS Civil Society Bureau, which was coordinating the procedural issues (Kleinwächter, 2008; Mueller, 2010). While the first two bodies have evolved in a 'bottom-up' fashion out of the practice of the civil society organization within the WSIS setting, the last one was a 'top-down' structure created by the UN bureaucracy (Mueller, 2010).

In terms of substance, during the preparatory stages the outlines of the conflict around Internet governance started to emerge with a particular focus on the management of critical resources (e.g. the root server system). On the one hand, the governments (with a notable exception of the US) demonstrated an apparent consensus about a need for an intergovernmental organization to manage the root server system, domain names, and the Internet Protocol address assignment. On the other hand, the civil society and the private sector could not reach a consensus, though numerous actors (e.g. ISOC) voiced their support of the ICANN regime or advocated for variations of thereof, but not for an intergovernmental organization taking over the management of critical resources. To a degree, at this stage, the civil society took on a blocking role, guarding the private sector from government intervention (Mathiason, 2009). This division demarcated what I view as the main tension of the WSIS and later the IGF debates—the tension between two cultures of Internet policymaking. The intergovernmental solution symbolized a centralized, state-centered, exclusive antithesis to the ethos of distributed, meritocratic, and open policymaking mechanisms of the Internet community.

In addition to debates about participation of the non-state actors and discussions of the substance of the WSIS, another important process evolved during the preparatory process— institutional and personal hubs started to form within the WSIS community. Mueller (2010) presents a number of social network analyses, two of which are particularly relevant in the context of this discussion. In the first analysis, Mueller mapped organizations of the civil society as nodes and actors as links, which allowed him to identify the Association of Progressive Communication (APC) as a hub of the civil society transnational advocacy network (p.91-94). In another analysis, Mueller mapped individuals in terms of their centrality and their function as

an intermediary in the civil society network; this analysis allowed him to identify Karen Banks of

APC as the single most central and most influential individual in terms of mediating the flow of

information (p.93-95; for a more detailed report on these data also see Mueller, Kuerbis, &

Page, 2007).[49] These findings, particularly the second analysis, illustrate the genesis of the WSIS

core—a collective of idea entrepreneurs who became passionate and committed to the WSIS,

and later the IGF.

When the first phase of the Summit actually took place, there was already a clearly emerging

set of conflicts regarding governance of the Internet. First, while there was a consensus about

the need for multilateral and transparent Internet governance, there was no agreement

whether it should be a multi-stakeholder or government driven process. Second, there was a

broad recognition that Internet governance involves more than just technical management and

that it has broad social implications. However, while the civil society stakeholders pushed for

defining the Internet as a "public good", they faced opposition. The final compromise was to

define the Internet as a "global facility". This compromise was driven by governments and the

private sector alike, who tried to avoid defining the Internet as inherently public and thus

subject to policy regulation or shift the financial responsibility for infrastructure development

from the private to the public sector. Third, the role of the non-governmental sector in Internet

governance itself was up for discussion. The main question was whether Internet governance

should be limited to the technical and/or commercial aspects of the network, or if it extended

---

[49] While no other study attempted to map out the other networks that constituted the WSIS community (i.e. business, government, and intergovernmental organizations) or the WSIS network as whole, my observations of spaces of this nature suggest that the dynamics would be roughly similar in terms of the presence of a limited number of central organizational and individual hubs.

into other spheres, which governments considered their prerogative. The former framing of

Internet governance would picture the Internet as primarily a technical and economic resource,

while the latter would acknowledge the network as a cultural and political tool as well. Finally,

and perhaps most importantly, the "nature" of Internet governance was not defined. Instead,

there was a decision to establish a Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG), which

would take on the responsibility of drafting the framework for Internet governance

(Kleinwächter, 2008; Mathiason, 2009; Mueller, 2010).

The first phase of the WSIS passed two main tasks on to the next phase: discussions of Internet

governance and financing of ICT for development. Establishment of the WGIG was the initial

step towards addressing the first question and in itself constituted an institutional innovation

within the UN system. The revolutionary aspects of this decision were: (1) the working group

was set up to be multistakeholder and include non-state actors together with governments as

equals and (2) the group was organized by the Secretary General, which gave it the legitimacy

of the UN, despite the formal status disparities between the state and the non-state actors

(Kleinwächter, 2008; Mathiason, 2009). These two principles will later prove to be pivotal for

the establishment of the IGF and for the shaping of its practice.

4.3. The political laboratory of the WGIG

There is a broad agreement among the analysts of the WSIS process that the WGIG was unique.

Substantively, it aimed to address the gaps in knowledge and perceptions of Internet

governance and the resulting political conflicts.[50] Symbolically, it embodied and enacted the

idea of multistakeholderism both through the composition of the group and the operating

principles it adopted, including extensive use of open, public consultations and the application

of Chatham House Rules[51] for the internal workings of the group (e.g. Mathiason, 2009;

Mueller, 2010).

The WGIG was tasked with developing a working definition of Internet governance, identifying

policy issues that should come under its umbrella, and mapping the roles of various

stakeholders (*Geneva plan of action*, 2003, para. 13b) (see Box 2). The task turned out to be so

complex and controversial that WGIG participants ended up with a "creative compromise"

(Dutton, Palfrey, & Peltu, 2007, p. 5) in terms of defining the domain of Internet governance

and even more so, the processes necessary to develop global policy in this domain. To a degree,

the discussion of the Internet governance topics became the mechanism for Internet

governance itself; the discussion became both the process and the goal of decision-making.

---

[50] In a preface to William Drake (2005) edited volume of recollections from people who were part of the WGIG, Nitin Desai explained:

The first challenge was to ensure a genuine dialogue in the group. When a group with very divergent views converses, the biggest hurdle is to get people to listen rather than just talk. Ideally, one wants a good faith dialogue that each person joins not to convert, but to be converted. The WGIG's discussions did not quite meet this standard. But the conversation definitely moved beyond a dogmatic statement of set views. Everyone made an effort to explain the logic behind their view and put their argument in terms that could convince others. To do that they had to listen and respond to the doubts and questions raised. Instead of talking at one another, the members started talking with one another (Desai, 2005, p. vii).

[51] According to MacLean (2005), "[u]nder Chatham House rules, reports of meetings do not attribute statements or positions to individuals in order to preserve the freedom of participants to speak their minds on the subject under discussion" (p.12).

Box 2: The mandate of the Working Group on Internet Governance

13.b) We ask the Secretary General of the United Nations to set up a working group on Internet governance, in an open and inclusive process that ensures a mechanism for the full and active participation of governments, the private sector and civil society from both developing and developed countries, involving relevant intergovernmental and international organizations and forums, to investigate and make proposals for action, as appropriate, on the governance of the Internet by 2005. The group should, inter alia:
   i)   develop a working definition of Internet governance;
   ii)   identify the public policy issues that are relevant to Internet governance;
   iii)   develop a common understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of governments, existing intergovernmental and international organizations and other forums as well as the private sector and civil society from both developing and developed countries;
   iv)   prepare a report on the results of this activity to be presented for consideration and appropriate action for the second phase of WSIS in Tunis in 2005.

WGIG reports and records of its consultation process suggest that the group did not shy away from the political complexity of bringing the nation-states and intergovernmental organizations to have a policy dialogue with the Internet community, particularly the civil society.[52] On the one hand, the cultures of decision making, the acceptable sources of authority and legitimacy, as well as the structures of power, all of which were fundamental to the identity of each camp, were noticeably different.

On the other hand, neither party could act in isolation and completely disregard the other camp, because they depended on each other. Members of the Internet community, and the institutions they created, lived and worked within systems of rules and norms set by their respective nation-states. As such, not only they enacted state-centric norms and values, including perceptions of legitimate authority and acceptable policy decision-making, but many

---

[52] The WGIG process took place primarily between September 2004 and July 2005, when the final report of the working group was presented. The process included a meeting for consultation on establishment of WGIG, four meetings of the group, and presentation of the final report. The documentation of the WGIG process can shed additional light on the path of emergence of IGF institutions, at this point I will accept them as a given point of departure, so that I could focus on the current processes, leaving this historical investigation for future research.

of the members and institutions of the Internet community drew their formal authority and resources from the same state-centric systems. For the states, the distributed architecture of the Internet and its reliance on cooperation in order to function—the procrastination and the trust-your-neighbor principles described by Zittrain (2009)—made them dependent on the cooperation of the Internet community, if they meant to continue deriving value from the Internet as a global communication network.

In addition, the US played an important role in forming this complexity. The US national interests mostly aligned with those of the Internet community, primarily US based at the time. This US position gave an important governmental support to the Internet community within the UN system, but at the same time enacted numerous global North-South tensions. Yet another facet of the complexity stemmed from the group being housed in the UN and acting based on a Secretary General sanctioned mandate, which implied a certain compliance to the intergovernmental way of doing things.

This complexity required the WGIG to come up with creative compromise solutions that set a path towards the current practices of the IGF discourse. The WGIG working definition of Internet governance, as it is stated in its final report (*Report of the working group on Internet Governance*, 2005, para. 10) and has been widely cited since then, states:

> Internet governance is the development and application by Governments, the private sector and civil society, in their respective roles, of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programmes that shape the evolution and use of the Internet.

On the face of it, this definition may sound like boiler plate policy talk, but it is reflective of important conceptual shifts that impacted the institutionalization of Internet governance on a

number of fronts. First, it acknowledged the role of the non-sate actors in Internet governance, which was one of the cornerstones of the disagreement during the first phase of the WSIS. This acknowledgement, however, came at the cost of implicit recognition of the nation-states' claim for exclusive authority over public policy making.[53] Second, this definition extended the scope of Internet governance beyond questions of management and control over critical Internet resources. As Mueller (2010) described it, "[t]he overall effect was to make it possible to define practically any communication-information policy issues as Internet governance" (p.67).

While broad in terms of the issues it covers[54], the WGIG definition of Internet governance is rather specific about the functional role of the "governance," which is "development and application" of systems of governance, i.e. principles, norms, and decision-making procedures. To this end, the report offered a number of mechanisms. First, it suggested creation of "a space for dialogue among all stakeholders" (p.10) with an emphasis on including participants from the developing countries. Then, it offered four models for implementing systems of governance, tackling some of the core political tensions in this debate. The models were built around the

---

[53] Following a traditional UN division, the WGIG report focused primarily on the roles of the governments, the private sector and the civil society. The governments were described as possessing the ultimate binding decision-making such as national, regional, and international policymaking and implementation as well as development and adoption of laws, regulations, and standards, among a set of other activities. The private sector was charged, among others, with self-regulation and development of best practices. The list of responsibilities of the civil society included, inter alia, capacity-building, bringing perspectives of marginalized groups, and engaging in policy processes. The report also recognizes the academic and the technical communities as having "a permanent and valuable contribution to the stability, security, functioning and evolution of the Internet," but it does not go in depth defining their roles in potential future Internet governance arrangements (see *Report of the working group on Internet Governance*, 2005, para. 29-34).

[54] WGIG report identified four areas that constitute the Internet governance domain. These are: issues of infrastructure and management of critical Internet resources (e.g. management of the Domain Name System), issues related to the use of the Internet (e.g. spam), issues that go beyond the Internet and have existing institutions addressing them (e.g. copyright), and the link between Internet governance and development. The format of the IGF is built very much around the same clusters of topics, although many of the specific issues are in a continuous flux, because of the changing "realities" of the Internet.

creation of new governance bodies, such as a UN-anchored and national-governments-led

Global Internet Council (GIC), as a vehicle to set global Internet public policy and hold the

Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) accountable; enhancing the

Government Advisory Committee (GAC) or replacing it by an International Internet Council (IIC),

both of which would give national governments an oversight authority over ICANN; or a

combination of the above to result in establishment of Global Internet Policy Council (GIPC) and

replacing ICANN with WICANN (World Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers)

anchored at the UN. Each of the mechanisms was a response to interests represented by the

diverse group of participants in the working group, yet all of them acknowledged that neither

an exclusively nation-state-centric or and exclusively non-state-actors-led approach was a

feasible political solution.

Substantively, none of the concrete proposals for decision-making mechanisms in WGIG report

were enacted. The only actionable recommendation that survived the second phase of the

WSIS was the establishment of a "global multistakeholder forum" with no binding decision-

making authority (*Report of the working group on Internet Governance*, 2005, para. 40-47). The

WGIG, however, in its own conduct, had developed a blueprint for such a forum, with an

emphasis on multistakeholder participation and inter-sector dialogue as a vehicle for bridging

gaps in the understanding and perception of contested political issues. While participants in the

group came from a diversity of backgrounds and represented an array of often competing

interests, both the report and the public conduct of the group were a front stage performance

in Goffman's (1963) sense. Just as scientific reports "dramatize their own authority" (Hilgartner,

2000, p. 42) the WGIG celebrated a new kind of authority within the information policy

space—an authority drown from multiplicity of institutional identities of the participants.

Symbolically, in the absence of US representatives in the group, the WGIG agreed that, "[n]o

single Government should have a pre-eminent role in relation to international Internet

governance" (*Report of the working group on Internet Governance*, 2005, para. 48). This

agreement would later become an important rhetorical device in the politics of Internet

governance, as those are manifested not only in the IGF but also in other fora including the ITU

and ICANN; yet, it preserved the top-down approach to Internet governance with the nation-

state as a pivotal decision-maker. More importantly, "there was no agreement on the basic

principles and norms that [specific organizational arrangements for Internet governance put

forward by the WGIG] should reflect and implement" (Mueller, 2010, p. 68; see also Mueller,

Mathiason, & Klein, 2007).

In addition to establishing the conceptual and thematic bases for what will later grow into the

IGF, the WGIG also brought to light a number of important features of the Internet governance

debate as a political space. First, the WGIG process was built around 40 individuals, who were

chosen from across the stakeholder groups, and supported by a small secretariat. Without

observing the selection process, it is difficult to make claims of why these particular individuals

were chosen to represent their particular sectors[55] (see Mueller, 2010, chap. 5 for a partial

---

[55] Based on my time in the field and interviews with some of the participants, there was a mixture of luck, personal
ambition, and initiative. Many of the participants entered the WSIS process without a clear vision as to where it
was heading; in fact the focus of WSIS has shifted as the summit progressed (Mueller, 2010, chap. 5 shares similar
observations in relation to the participation of the civil society in WSIS). As such, the selection was based on WSIS-
specific merit, which was developed over a rather short span of the first phase of the summit and its preparatory

discussion), but their personalities were an important factor in what shaped the WGIG

dynamics and its outcomes. Nitin Desai, the chair of WGIG, Markus Kummer, the WGIG

executive coordinator, and other group members, have repeatedly highlighted the fact that

these were the participating individuals who created WGIG from scratch and gave the process

its particular shape (see Drake, 2005).[56] Many of the members of this group of enthusiasts,

which started forming during the first phase of WSIS, would later continue on to form the IGF.

Second, the WGIG process created a series of practices for multistakeholder discussion, which

would later become the operating principles of the IGF; in fact, the group spent a substantive

amount of time on developing its own working practices (e.g. MacLean, 2005). For example, the

multistakeholder ethos put a great emphasis on the openness of the process. One of the main

critiques of a national-state-centric decision-making process was (and still is) the lack of

transparency. Numerous accounts of the WSIS process have highlighted the fact that the civil

society participants in particular found it difficult to insert themselves into the state-centric UN

processes (e.g. Kleinwächter, 2008; Mathiason, 2009; Mueller, 2010). As a reaction to this, the

WGIG adopted a model of periodic open consultations, which provided input to the working

group and, at the same time, helped it develop its own identity (MacLean, 2005). As Nitin Desai

(2005), reflected on this:

---

process. To a degree, people who joined the group had to buy into the validity of a multistakeholder approach to policy debate.

[56] For example, Nitin Desai emphasized that, "[t]he members of the group were there as individuals. But they had been chosen to reflect a balance across regions and interest groups" (p.vii); Markus Kummer, referred to the group as "people from different geographic, cultural and professional backgrounds. Individuals gathered with their different outlooks on life, different ideas and different ways of interacting, and in the process became a group with a common purpose" (p.1).

The open consultations had the paradoxical effect of reinforcing the WGIG's sense of self-identity. Group members did refer to the views presented at the open consultations. They were influenced by the weight behind different positions as evidenced in these open meetings. But they became increasingly conscious that their job was to write their report, not a report on the views expressed in the consultations (p.ix).

In other words, the WGIG was a consensual interpretation of the bottom-up input through the individual lenses of the members of the WGIG. While accepting input from open consultations, the drafting of the final documents was conducted in closed sessions. At one point, the group went into a two-day retreat using the Chatham House Rule, which allowed the members to discuss issues in private settings, speaking as individuals. These discussions could then be used later in the process, but without attribution in order to promote a more open debate. Within the UN system that was the first time this rule was applied with a group that included not only state, but also non-state actors (Desai, 2005). The WGIG participants assembled a new set of practices that drew on the legitimacy of both the Internet community and the UN system as a way to bridge the two cultures of decision making.

Yet, at the end of the day, WGIG was not a negotiation body. On the one hand, this relieved the group from the pressure of reaching consensus on every contested topic and allowed it to present an array of opinions. On the other hand, it also prevented the group from taking stands on issues and brought the scope of the report to making suggestions that "recognized that neither governmental top-down regulation nor private sector or civil society bottom-up self-regulation alone can manage the totality of Internet issues" (Kleinwächter, 2008, p. 569). In terms of practice, however, the group laid down the foundation for new structures of domination for Internet policymaking.

When the WGIG was originally formed there was no debate regarding its funding. That

omission was intentional in order to ease the adoption of the idea by the participants of the

first phase of the WSIS. As a result, the working group had to receive funding from numerous

entities including governments (Switzerland, Netherlands, Norway, France, and Japan) and non-

governmental organizations (Numbers Resource Organization, Swiss Education and Research

Network - SWITCH, ICANN, and Foundation for MultiMedia Communications). In other words,

the funding of the WGIG secretariat was itself "multi-stakeholder" (Mathiason, 2009, p. 116).

Moreover, the group was composed based on the guiding criteria of balance, in terms of

"regional representation, stakeholders, gender, developed and developing countries, and

different schools of thought" (Mathiason, 2009, p. 117). The final nominal composition of the

group seemed to achieve relatively good results in terms of most of these criteria, but gender.

Also, the governments still constituted the largest group of stakeholders.

Finally, the WGIG process also highlighted the complex relationships between the policymaking

environments and the substantive field they were asking to regulate. For example, two weeks

prior to the public release of the final WGIG report, in July 2005, the National

Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) of the US Department of

Commerce (DOC) released "US Statement of Principles on the Internet's Domain Name and

Addressing System."[57] In the document the US government reaffirmed its intention to maintain

its authoritative role in the management of critical Internet resources, which was one of the

core issues fueling the Internet governance debate. During the same summer, the US

---

[57] See: http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/domainname/USDNSprinciples_06302005.htm

government intervened in the decision-making process at ICANN when the assistant secretary for communication and information at DOC sent a letter expressing the US opposition to approval of the .xxx top level domain. This incident is generally viewed as the US government abusing its formal authority over ICANN (e.g. Lightfoot, 2007; Mueller, 2010); coming soon after the formal release of the WGIG report, the .xxx controversy gave more ammunition to those arguing for the further internationalization of the Internet governance; those who challenged the US Internet governance hegemony called for more involvement of other governments, while their opponents argued for minimizing all government intervention. Events like these illustrate how lengthy policy deliberation processes are inherently embedded in ever evolving social systems and social structures, and they are constantly reacting to and interpreted through the 'real world' developments.

The final report of the WGIG laid the foundation for both the second phase of the WSIS and the IGF. The report was by no means perfect and has been criticized both for not being specific enough in terms of its recommendations and for not tackling the heavy conceptual tasks, such as agreeing on the basic norms and principles of Internet governance. Nevertheless the report, and even more so the policy-discourse practices that developed in the course of the WGIG negotiations, was an important stepping stone towards the institutionalization of the Internet governance debate. It was the first time representatives of the two different cultures of policymaking worked together to produce a result that the international policy community viewed as tangible and constructive. Notwithstanding the political tensions that became evident within the group, the ability to produce a consensus document was an important step

towards the formation of new structures of legitimation and power within the Internet governance sphere.

4.4. The birth of a compromise

As the WSIS was moving into its second phase, other fora, within and outside the UN, started to pick up the discussion about Internet governance (see Kummer, 2005, p. 4 for a list of events).[58] Many individuals who participated in WSIS, especially the idea-entrepreneurs of the WGIG, also participated in those meetings, with some individuals taking part in all of them. The common feature of these spaces was the adoption the multi-stakeholder ethos and the broad definition of Internet governance.

Even though governments continued to challenge the legitimacy of non-state actors' direct involvement in drafting of diplomatic language, there was a noticeable shift in the overall attitude. Kleinwächter (2008) wrote, "[g]overnments could and would continue to discuss and negotiate among themselves in closed shops, but this diplomatic mechanism became partially embedded in a broader development process that was more open and transparent and included more actors" (p. 564). In other words, multi-stakeholderism was moving into the mainstream of the WSIS discussions. Nine out of forty articles of the Tunis Commitment document reference multistakeholderism (*Tunis commitment*, 2005), which was a substantial

---

[58] There is an ongoing debate about the relative importance of Internet governance-focused fora and events to the overall Internet governance-discursive ecology. Hart (2008), for example, is arguing for the importance of G8 and EOCD in shaping the global Internet governance regime, when viewed through the lens of political economy. Yet it is nearly impossible to distill the importance of a standalone event without considering within the context of other IGF developments. All these fora should be viewed in relationship with each other, as well as in relationships with the continuously changing environments of socio-technological affordances and practices.

growth in visibility, compared to the Geneva phase (*Geneva declaration of principles*, 2003,

Geneva plan of action, 2003). At the same time, while there was recognition of the multi-

stakeholder principle in the Tunis documents (also see *Tunis agenda for the information society*,

2005), there was no agreement about the extent to which the involvement of non-state actors

was possible and how it should be conducted.

Soon after the first phases of WSIS, two other competing initiatives were launched within the

UN system. In February 2004, the ITU conducted an "expert meeting on Internet governance,"

which highlighted the multi-institutional and the multidimensional character of the Internet

governance debate. In March of the same year, the UN ICT Task Force organized the Global

Forum on Internet Governance, which was considered a counter-conference to the ITU expert

group meeting. This meeting enacted a version of multistakeholder participation by opening up

the debates to non-state participants and highlighting the debate about Internet rights

(Mathiason, 2009). Both meetings, however, enacted the traditional structures of legitimation

and domination by the very virtue of taking place under the auspice of the UN and thus reifying

the intergovernmental decision-making mechanism. Inputs from these two meetings together

with the WGIG report, served as the basis of the second phase of the WSIS, which took place in

Tunis in 2005.

Mueller (2010) states that the second phase of the WSIS "pitted the United States against the

rest of the world" (p.76) and it was only due to procedural constraints and the bureaucratic

need to produce some results in order for the summit to be considered successful, that the

diplomats were able to reach a consensus. According to Mueller, the final document (*Tunis*

agenda for the information society, 2005) contained consensus on three main points. First, it

acknowledged the viability of existing Internet governance arrangements, with the private

sector in the leading position regarding most of the day-to-day management and future

development of Internet technologies; by doing so, it reaffirmed the public authority of ICANN

over the management of critical Internet resources. Second, it made a dent in the US' unilateral

authority over ICANN, not necessarily in formal terms, but in pragmatic ones. The WSIS

achieved that by emphasizing the policymaking role of nation-states and their sovereignty over

the management of their country code top level domains, thus setting a path towards changing

the ICANN itself, particularly the role of its GAC. As Mueller summarized it, "[i]f the US position

was animated by an attempt to defend 'the soul of the Internet' from governments, it lost"

(p.78).

Finally, the WSIS mandated the creation of the IGF. According to Mueller (2010):

> The creation of the IGF was widely understood to be the kind of agreement that could
> get the WSIS out of its impasse; it allowed the critics to continue raising their issues in
> an official forum, but as a nonbinding discussion arena, could not do much harm to
> those interested in preserving the status quo (p.78).

Indeed, numerous unresolved issues left the definition of the goals and authority of the forum

unclear. There was no agreement about the oversight function over the process of Internet

governance. In other words, the question of "who controls the Internet" or more precisely

"how?", remained unanswered (for example, see the following debate: Al-Darrab, 2005; Hu,

2005; Kleinwächter, 2005; Sha'ban, 2005). While the US supported the ICANN regime, a

number of alternative solutions were put on the table, including an option to hand over the

ICANN function to an intergovernmental organization such as the ITU. For example, the

chairman's "Food for thought" document called for establishment of "an Inter-Governmental

Council for global public policy and oversight of Internet governance" within the UN system

"based on the principles of transparency and democracy with the involvement, in an advisory

capacity, of the private sector, civil society and the relevant inter-governmental and

international organizations" ("Chair's 'food for thought'," 2005, para. 68).

Yet, the IGF was more than just a creative compromise to preserve the status quo. The WSIS

process challenged the way global policymaking community thought about Internet governance

by promoting a more "expansive" view of this domain. It also provided an experimental space

to test preliminary forms of institutionalization that emerged around these new ways of

thinking and allowed the cultures of the Internet community and intergovernmental

policymaking to co-exist in a productive fashion. In a way, the IGF was a vessel that absorbed

both the unresolved tensions of the WSIS and the experimental ways of thinking about and

practicing Internet governance.

4.5. The IGF: Process or Substance?

To reiterate the opening remarks of this chapter, WSIS and its outcomes were a result of

negotiations between two distinctive worldviews. In his reflection on the WGIG process,

Markus Kummer (2005), Executive Coordinator of the IGF Secretariat, described WSIS as "a

confrontation of two visions of the world, or two schools of thought," which clashed on the

issue of "private sector leadership versus intergovernmental cooperation" in Internet

governance (p.2). Kleinwächter (2008) described it as clash between worldviews: a view of

globalization, which anticipated a decline of the system of sovereign states in favor of global

institutions and transnational corporations, much due to the evolution of media and communication technologies; and a view of glocalization, which highlighted the centrality of physical space and left the governments a central role, while redefining the concept of sovereignty. Mueller (2010) portrayed the WSIS as a clash between two models of global governance: one focused on the private and the other on the nation-state leadership. The WSIS, WGIG, and eventually the IGF were born out of this tension between communities that frequently misunderstood and mistrusted each other, but were forced to search for a common ground because they were intertwined and in a way dependent on each other (also see: MacLean, 2005).

The way the Internet and the institutions of its governance have evolved created a somewhat surreal situation. On the one hand, sources of technical and financial control over the medium lie with non-state actors; at the same time, non-state actors are formally subjected to the authority of their sovereign governments (Kummer, 2005). Kleinwächter (2008) made a similar observation emphasizing that the eventual focus of WSIS on the Internet, and not a broader take on telecommunications, made it a unique case. The Summit dealt with a domain that was already established as an inherently global network of networks, run by numerous organizations, and with a clear presence (if not to say dominance) of the private sector and nonprofit technical bodies. Moreover, back in the late 1990s when the G7 and OECD had undertaken a number of attempts for global debates about the Information Society, they also introduced the users as a side that should be directly involved in Internet governance discussions.

The uniqueness of the IGF is often viewed through the lens of the process, particularly the involvement of the non-state actors in the Internet policy debates. Kleinwächter (2008) lists two primary factors that led to the establishment of the IGF as a multi-stakeholder forum. First, although the Internet evolved in the shadow of the US government, its phenomenal growth and openness to innovation were attributed to the lack of active regulation at its early stages. Second, the question of the global information infrastructure came to the attention of the international community at a time of growing legitimacy of non-state actors in international diplomacy. It was that unique constellation of historical factors that created the context for establishing a framework where state and non-state actors could supposedly debate as equals in order to work out their differences (also see Braman, 2009; Mueller, 2010). The focus on multistakeholderism is so significant that some criticize it for becoming an ideology, rather than an ideologically-laden organizational principle (Mueller, 2010).

The IGF mandate (see Box 3), as it is set out in Paragraph 72 of the Tunis Agenda (*Tunis agenda for the information society*, 2005), was a compromise between those who wanted a proactive, authoritative and intergovernmental institution to oversee the Internet and those who wanted a private-sector-led, inclusive, and meritocratic arrangement. The underlying assumption of this compromise is that an open and multi-stakeholder discussion of relevant policy questions will lead to an order that can be supported only through a partnership between governments, the private sector, the civil society, as well as the technical and the academic communities (Mathiason, 2009, p. 126). According to Markus Kumar:

> "… the Tunis Agenda for Information Society (WSIS 2005), which established the IGF's mandate, was 'a diplomatic compromise, the beauty of which is that it is full of creative ambiguity that allows everybody to find something to satisfy their own wishes. As the

agenda was based on a decision-making Summit, the text on controversial topics such as the IPR was carefully balanced in a way that avoided going into details that could be divisive and difficult to resolve'" (Dutton et al., 2007, p. 5).

Box 3: The mandate of the Internet Governance Forum

72. We ask the UN Secretary-General, in an open and inclusive process, to convene, by the second quarter of 2006, a meeting of the new forum for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue—called the Internet Governance Forum (IGF).The mandate of the Forum is to:

    a. Discuss public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance in order to foster the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet;

    b. Facilitate discourse between bodies dealing with different cross-cutting international public policies regarding the Internet and discuss issues that do not fall within the scope of any existing body;

    c. Interface with appropriate inter-governmental organizations and other institutions on matters under their purview;

    d. Facilitate the exchange of information and best practices, and in this regard make full use of the expertise of the academic, scientific and technical communities;

    e. Advise all stakeholders in proposing ways and means to accelerate the availability and affordability of the Internet in the developing world;

    f. Strengthen and enhance the engagement of stakeholders in existing and/or future Internet governance mechanisms, particularly those from developing countries;

    g. Identify emerging issues, bring them to the attention of the relevant bodies and the general public, and, where appropriate, make recommendations;

    h. Contribute to capacity building for Internet governance in developing countries, drawing fully on local sources of knowledge and expertise;

    i. Promote and assess, on an ongoing basis, the embodiment of WSIS principles in Internet governance processes;

    j. Discuss, inter alia, issues relating to critical Internet resources;

    k. Help to find solutions to the issues arising from the use and misuse of the Internet, of particular concern to everyday users;

    l. *Publish its proceedings.*

Through the compromise mandate the WSIS handed the IGF a set of tensions between the two cultures of Internet policymaking, as those were enacted through the politics of principles. At the same time, through its practices, the WSIS also handed to the IGF a genesis of new structures of legitimation and domination, which were enacted through the politics of agenda setting and participation. This dowry was fundamental to the shaping of the IGF as an institution and in defining its significance within the Internet policy space. The practices of the IGF are reflective of WSIS, and especially the WGIG, processes. The Summit set a path for the

IGF in terms of relationships between the Internet and the intergovernmental communities. It also solidified a nucleus of idea entrepreneurs, who saw in the IGF process an important political vehicle towards resolving the tensions around Internet governance; these people played an important role in shaping the practices and the character of the IGF.

5. PEOPLE, PRACTICES, AND PROCEDURES

There is a growing appreciation that to study discourse as a constitutive force requires focusing on "social practices, conventions, rules and norms governing certain sets or groups of speakers and hearers (viewers/listeners)" (Wodak, 2008, p. 17). Text[59] in itself has no agency, it becomes a vehicle of power only through practice—only when it is part of discourse. Yet, enactment of text as social practice does not happen in a vacuum either—discourse is both socially constitutive and socially constrained. In a way, discourse enacts structures of signification, legitimation and domination, but these structures are also challenged through discourse or discursive reflexivity. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) explain that "[d]escribing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s), which frame it: The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them" (p.258). In other words, it is only through the interaction between discourse and its context that meaning and power can be created. One can describe this as an interaction between structures internal to the agent, expressed through text in practice, and the external systems, which embody structures external to the given discursive moment. To study power, one needs to observe how social structures enacted through discourse interact with structural elements embodied in the settings of the discourse.

---

[59] To reiterate, I am relying on Fairclough's (2003) distinction between language, text, and discourse. Fairclough describes *language* in the most straightforward way as words, sentences, etc. He defines *text* as any use of language, as well as visuals or sound effects. Finally, *discourse* according to Faircough is a particular view of text "as an element of social life which is closely interconnected with other elements" (p. 3).

The IGF is not unique in a sense that it acts as a space where social structures are enacted through discourse. Any institution, particularly one tasked with policy construction, constitutes such space. What makes the IGF interesting is its explicit focus on non-binding policy discourse. The IGF was created with shifting notions of governance and governmentality in the background, all attributed to drastic changes in information environment. The forum is a result of intense debates about Internet governance, UN, and international politics. It represents a compromise of many different worldviews about the Internet and how it should be governed. It was given an extremely broad mandate to discuss everything related to information and information policy, but no formal authority to influence the policymaking process. It also received neither tools nor guidance as to how to conduct itself. The result is a space that produces discourse and is shaped by discourse at the same time. Many of the IGF resources are dedicated to (re)shaping its own context, negotiating the scope of issues to be addressed under its roof, and the ways in which they can be talked about. The forum is a space where the politics of agenda setting, of representation, and of principles (Mueller, 2010) are played out. It is a space where the culture of the Internet community meets the culture of intergovernmental politics, and arguably new ways of thinking about the governance of the Internet are being shaped.

Trying to understand the political significance of the IGF means trying to understand its discourse as social practice. What perceptions of information technology are embodied in the IGF texts? What visions of governance are enacted through its practices? What cultural elements do these practices reify? What power structures do they enact? The practices of the IGF, however, are a constantly moving target. As a primarily discursive space, which spends a

lot of its resources on re-contextualizing itself, there is a recursive loop of mutual influences.

Capturing this dynamics requires taking a long view on the evolution of the IGF structures and

practices; it also requires looking into both the structures that have evolved within the IGF

through discursive reflection, as well as exogenous to the IGF structures and systems brought

into the forum by the various key participants; finally such inquiry requires placing analytical

spotlight on one cause of change. Given the available information and prior scholarship on the

IGF, I am placing that spotlight on the context that emerged out of the WSIS and WGIG

processes.

5.1. Path dependency

5.1.1. WGIG and WSIS legacy

Numerous accounts suggest that IGF was, as Mueller (2006a) described it, a "longer term

continuation of the WGIG" (p.4).[60] Mathiason (2009) listed those organizational principles that

were borrowed from the WGIG experience for the IGF; among them are "multi-stakeholder"

extra-budgetary funding, a small secretariat, and an open consultative process. However, the

path ploughed by WGIG runs deeper than organizational principles. On the practical level, the

donors who supported WGIG, such as the governments of Switzerland, Norway, and

Netherlands, as well as the Swiss Education and Research Network (SWITCH) and ICANN,

continued to support the IGF. Also, the leadership of the WGIG continued as the leadership of

---

[60] The WGIG report warned against the envisioned forum function becoming a continuation of the WGIG (see
Report of the working group on Internet Governance, 2005, para. 46). However in practice, the IGF adopted many
of the organizational and conceptual frameworks developed during the WSIS processes and carried on many of its
conversations.

the IGF, which had direct implications on the discourse of the forum. For example, individuals who were pivotal to WGIG, such as Nitin Desai and Markus Kummer, were appointed to equally pivotal roles within the IGF; in fact, they continued carrying out at the IGF the same functions they carried out at WGIG.[61] Finally, people who were particularly active within and around the WGIG, such as Wolfgang Kleinwächter, Ayesha Hassan, Bertrand de la Chapelle, Milton Mueller, William Drake, Jovan Kurbalija, Izumi Aizu, Karen Banks, Jeanette Hoffman, and others, became the main forces shaping the IGF (Mathiason, 2009); "It's my pleasure to meet many old friends all over again," was Nitin Desai's opening of the first meeting of IGF consultations.[62]

On the conceptual level, the WGIG offered new ways of thinking about and deliberating Internet policy in international settings. The continuity of the WGIG was not merely nominal in terms of who came along. Interested institutions and motivated individuals, who continued supporting and participating in the IGF, did so because they viewed it as worthy their time and resources. In a way, they subscribed to the normative framework of openness, inclusivity, multistakeholderism, and also the importance of the personal relations among the participants, all of which emerged out of the WGIG. The conceptual link between the working group and the IGF has been constantly stressed in the early consultative process. For example, during the first open consultations, Heather Dryden from the Canadian government, said: "Building on the spirit of the Working Group on Internet Governance, Canada believes the IGF must be based on

---

[61] During the early consultation processes the participants expressed unanimous enthusiasm and appreciation for Nitin Desai and Markus Kummer continuing in their leadership positions. The participants viewed WGIG as very successful (also see Mueller, 2010) and voiced expectations that Desai and Kummer will replicate that success in the IGF (see transcripts of the first open consultations on IGF in February 2006, available on www.intgovforum.org).

[62] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland.

principles of openness and inclusiveness." Another example is UNESCO intervention, which voiced similar sentiments: "The structure of the IGF could build on the experiences of the Working Group on Internet Governance, particularly as regards the participation of stakeholders." The references to WGIG, and to a degree WSIS, were universal across stakeholder groups. World Forum for Civil Society Networks, for example, stated that they were "extremely satisfied and interested in the heritage [the IGF has] from Geneva and Tunis."[63]

The WGIG placed three concepts at the core of its report that provided the foundation of IGF; to date these concepts continue to contextualize the discourse of the forum by impacting what gets to be talked about, how it is addressed, and with what consequences. First, the WGIG adopted a very broad definition of Internet governance. This definition is rooted in the recognition that "it is impossible to separate the technical from the political issues with regard to Internet governance" (Kleinwächter, 2010, p. 80), which extended the scope of topics that fit the IGF agenda to include practically any communication policy issue (Mueller, 2010). As opposed to a narrow view of Internet governance as the technical management of Internet resources, the WGIG report was heavy on public policy issues that constituted Internet governance as a domain for decision-making (Mathiason, 2009). By adopting this broad interpretive scheme for Internet governance, the IGF positioned itself as a forum suitable for discussion of any Internet-policy related topic (in Giddens's terms, a structure of signification). At the same time, this broad definition channeled many of the IGF preparatory discussions towards delineating thematic boundaries of the forum. Not only is it impossible to address the

---

[63] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland

entire, constantly changing policy domain in a single meeting, but the IGF was also obligated

not to duplicate efforts already undertaken in other fora.[64]

Second, the WGIG emphasized multistakeholderism as a pivotal principle for future Internet

governance debate. It went beyond the frequently quoted "[n]o single Government should

have a pre-eminent role in relation to international Internet governance" statement in its

report, stating that the "organizational form for the governance function will be multilateral,

transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of Governments, the private sector, civil

society and international organizations" (*Report of the working group on Internet Governance*,

2005, para. 48). Multistakeholderism became central to both the organization of the IGF[65] and

the rhetoric of the forum activists (e.g. Kleinwächter, 2008, 2010; Mathiason, 2009; Mueller,

2006a, 2010). In structuration terms it was the pivotal norm or the structure of legitimation

that enabled this new form of authority in international Internet policy discussion. Wolfgang

Kleinwächter (2010, p. 76) noted that "[t]he UN Secretary General's report on the IGF from May

2010 uses the words 'multistakeholder', 'stakeholders', or 'government, private sector, civil

society and technical community' 57 times in 11 pages, which to him is an "indication that the

controversial concept of 'multistakholderism' (…) is now a more or less accepted guiding

---

[64] One example of such a debate took place during the early planning stages of the IGF when the question of intellectual property proved to be divisive. On the one hand, the private sector participants argued for leaving this topic under the umbrella of World Trade Organization (WTO) that was already treating this topic. On the other hand, participants from the civil society argued that intellectual property should be discussed at the IGF as it is an important part of issues such as freedom of speech and openness (e.g. Mathiason, 2009).

[65] One of the criteria for assessing IGF workshop proposals is inclusion of representatives of the multiple stakeholder groups; the advisory group that acts as the IGF program committee is also defined as "multistakeholder (see section 5.2 for a detailed discussion).

principle of global Internet governance." One of the interviewees extended that claim to

suggest that multistakeholderism is the future synonym for Internet governance. He explained:

> [Governance] clearly gained traction the last few years, let's say the last twenty or thirty years, as corporate governance and good governance in developing countries. But if you think about it, with insight now, corporate governance, good governance, or democratic governance, and multi stake and Internet governance, are actually talking about exactly the same thing. The involvement of the multi stake holders in the decision making process. Period. And so if you look at the WSIS definition, I've always made the exercise to show people that first of all the definition of Internet governance is a very detailed and long one. But it can be shortened as follows. Internet governance is the multi stake holder elaboration and application.

Finally, WGIG described the forum functioning as a non-binding discourse space, aimed at a

"dialogue among all stakeholders" (*Report of the working group on Internet Governance*, 2005,

para. 40), but not at decision-making. Stripping the forum of any decision-making power

allegedly contributed to its flexibility and allowed it to adapt to the ever-changing substantive

policy domain the forum would be addressing. This offered a set of structures of domination (or

structures of subordination when viewed from the non-dominant side) that facilitated a

peculiar power relationship within the IGF and between the IGF and other spaces of

international information policy deliberation. On the one hand, lowering the stakes allowed

governments to give more freedom to their representatives. As a diplomat I interviewed

explained it, "if it is an organization with teeth, like the WTO, the governments usually make

sure they have a consolidated position that is solidly defended. The less high the stakes are the

more likely it is that you'll get, I'm not going to say a rogue operator, but a little bit, you know

you are given as a government representative maybe more leeway, more freedom."[66] On the

other hand, the formal 'toothlessness' of the forum placed it in a relatively inferior position in

terms of intra-fora agenda setting. For example, technological innovations are announced at

trade shows such as the Consumer Electronics Show, standards are developed in venues such

as the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) or the International Telecommunication Union

(ITU), and decisions pertaining to public policy or even the IGF itself are made in other fora such

as Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), G8 or the UN Committee

on Science Technology and Development (CSTD). The agenda of the IGF is typically responsive

to the debates generated and taking place elsewhere.[67]

The three elements that emerged out of the WGIG and WSIS were carried over into the IGF

through institutional arrangements and practices, mostly because the same actors continued

steering the debate throughout the WGIG, the WSIS, and the IGF. The broad definition of

Internet governance, the emphasis on multistakeholderism, and the non-binding character of

the IGF debates were fundamental to establishing a context for discourse emerging in the

forum whether through impacting who gets to talk, what gets to be talked about and how, as

well as the array of opinions expressed in the forum. Moreover, each of these elements

---

[66] Similar sentiments were voiced by other interviewees in this study. The distinction between binding and non-binding discussions is fundamental in intergovernmental settings; it impacts the array of opinions government representatives are willing to voice on the record as well as their openness to accept opposing opinions.

[67] One example to such responsiveness is the "Emerging Issues" session of the plenary (see Table 4). In the early days of the IGF, spam, for instance, was one of the main substantive topics on the agenda of the forum. Yet, as time has passed and technical and legal solutions rendered spam to be less of an acute issue, this topic gave way to other issues such as social networks and cloud computing—all of which were socio-technical phenomena that evolved outside of the forum settings. Another example is the recent Working Group on Improvements to the IGF established by ECOSOC (see http://www.unctad.info/en/CstdWG/). This decision resulted in a special session at the fifth meeting of the IGF in Lithuania and was subject to extensive discussions at the IGF Open Consultations and the Multistakeholder Advisory Group meetings in November 2010 and February 2011.

embodied a series of political tensions, as each element represented a compromise achieved during the WSIS negotiations. In other words, the IGF took on not only the institutional innovation in global policymaking, which came out of WGIG, but it also inherited a set of political tensions and limitations that were inherent to the broadly and vaguely defined compromise that emerged from that working group.

5.1.2. As non-UN as a UN forum can get

Yet in other ways the IGF was an organizational and conceptual innovation within the nation-state oriented environment of the UN. This pioneer status placed the IGF leadership (especially the secretariat) in a peculiar situation. On the one hand, the IGF was established by and acted based on a UN-sanctioned mandate; it was an outcome of a UN conference and as such, the forum was tied to UN bureaucracy and to the practices of UN discourse. The IGF pioneers viewed this link as an asset. William Drake, who was and still is very active in the Internet Governance Caucus, said: the "Internet Governance Forum ought to be convened under the authority of the U.N. secretary general, and I think that we also believe that it should be coordinated by the United Nations as the appropriate inclusive forum that brings all stakeholders together."[68] Even the industry, which is typically critical of the UN bureaucracy, expressed opinions stressing the importance of IGF remaining under the auspice of the UN.

The evolving IGF was caught in a tension between competing sources of legitimacy. On the one hand, being a non-government-led forum under the UN umbrella gave legitimacy to the IGF as

---

[68] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland.

a global venue for public policy debates. Being formally associated with the UN enhanced the

authority of the IGF, even though the forum had no formal binding power. Moreover, for those

favoring a more ICANN-based status quo, having a forum that reflected similar values in terms

of bottom-up governance hosted under the UN umbrella helped to fence off arguments about

the US hegemony in Internet governance.[69]

On the other hand, the IGF also drew legitimacy from the existing informal Internet governance

institutions. As such, the IGF community made an effort to distinguish itself from the UN

bureaucracy. As one U.S. government statement put it: "The United States believes that the

Internet Governance Forum should be a truly multistakeholder event. Therefore, it is important

that it not be encumbered by extensive, existing United Nations processes and procedures."[70]

Similar statements were made by other participants in the early consultations. The main

attribute of the IGF distinction was placing the notion of multistakeholderism as one of the

pivotal principles of the forum. In doing so, the IGF was bending, if not breaking, many of the

acceptable norms of the UN. It was evident, from the very beginning, that the Geneva offices of

the UN were not well prepared to handle an extra-governmental meeting.[71]

Extra-budgetary funding of the secretariat and its uniquely lean structure have also

differentiated the IGF from the UN. WSIS outcomes called for the IGF to have a "lightweight and

decentralized structure" (*Tunis agenda for the information society*, 2005, para. 73.b) and early

---

[69] The non-binding nature of the IGF is a double edged sword. On the one hand, it gives IGF the flexibility to bring institutional innovations into the rigid UN system. On the other hand, within the UN system, where authority is derived from decision-making power, the non-binding nature of the IGF places it in a relatively weaker position compared to other spaces for policy deliberation.

[70] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland.

[71] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland.

consultations on the IGF institutionalized this notion by declining a full size bureau in favor of a

secretariat that at the beginning included only three paid officials: the executive coordinator,

the chair of the forum, and a consultant who managed the program logistics and the IGF

website. Yet, deriving legitimacy from a UN mandate and being physically housed in the UN

headquarters in Geneva, some of the UN practices of discourse were also part of the IGF.

The attempt to dance at two weddings[72], i.e. establishing a non-UN-like forum under the

auspice of the UN, was partially successful[73]. The tensions between the UN legacy on the one

hand, and the WSIS-inspired institutional innovation on the other, had an impact on the

settings that shape IGF discourse. During the open consultations, for example, any registered

participant may speak regardless of his or her institutional affiliation. Moreover, contrary to the

regular UN protocol, where government representatives are given priority in taking the floor, in

IGF and IGF consultations the interventions are on the first come, first served basis. These

practices are representative of the new structures of legitimation being conceptualized within

policymaking discourse – no longer are the states, or state-accredited speakers, the only

legitimate participants; civil society and the technical community members are now expected

to be considered as allegedly equals. Mathiason (2009) described these practices as being

---

[72] Daniel Stauffacher's intervention during the first IGF Open Consultations is a good illustration of the tension between UN legacy and WSIS-inspired innovation. In the same intervention, Stauffacher said:

> I think [it is] important to underline that we do not embark on an intergovernmental process with stakeholder participation, but that we really develop a true multistakeholder process," and later emphasized that "WSIS Tunis has given the secretary general [of the UN] and you [Nitin Desai] the mandate to structure and organize this forum. And I think this is important that this forum, then, also remains under the auspices of the United Nations.

[73] In her reflections on the first to meetings of the IGF, Anriette Esterhuysen (2008) wrote: "To be successful, the IGF needed to draw on two cultures - the formal culture of the UN system and the informal culture of the Internet. Only by balancing these two cultures could the IGF attract the support and participation - as importantly, the positive participation - of the necessary range of participants" (p.38).

shocking to the UN system, particularly in the Geneva offices of the UN, which hosted most of the preparatory meetings of the IGF. Indeed, as the transcripts of the first round of consultations indicate, the UN was unprepared to host a meeting with non-government participants. For example, only government officials had name-plates that help the chair of the meeting to call upon speakers; neither the private sector nor the civil society had their name-plates prepared in advance. There were also complications with security clearance for non-UN and non-government participants to enter the Palais des Nations in Geneva, where the consultations were held.

Being physically housed in the UN and operating on the basis of a UN-sanctioned mandate, the IGF also adopted some of the organizational and discursive practices of the UN, which represent the traditional thought about legitimacy and authority—those focused on the nation state. During the consultation processes, for example, Nitin Desai and Markus Kummer, both of whom derived their formal authority from the UN (de La Chapelle, 2010), emerged as pivotal figures. In quantitative terms, Nitin and Kummer are responsible for almost 30% of the total volume of formal discussions during the consultation process.[74] This significant presence is reflective of the status of Kummer and especially Desai as presiding officers of the consultative process[75]. However, qualitative reflections suggest that unlike 'traditional' UN conferences,

---

[74] Over the period of five years, between February 2006 and November 2010, a total of over 643K words constituted the overall volume of formal and substantive discourse in the IGF Open Consultations (see Footnote 75 and Chapter 3 for details); out of that volume almost 200K words (29.2%) are attributed to Nitin Disai and Markus Kummer (127,666 or almost 19.9% and 59,872 or 9.3% respectively).

[75] I tried to account only for substantive contributions as opposed to purely technical or procedural ones (e.g. managing the order of speakers, making sure that microphones work, etc.). A persistent characteristic of a clearly technical intervention is its length. Contributions of substance tend to be much longer compared to technical comments. That does not mean that there are no longer procedural interventions, but for such a simple procedure

114

where presiding officers have limited power and influence[76], Nitin Desai, as the chairman of the IGF seemed to exercise significant framing power over the constitutional preparatory meetings of the forum. While many of Kummer's interventions were primarily procedural, Desai, as the chair of the meeting would typically go on with thorough and extensive summaries of the debate; he would "pluck consensus from the air," as Mathiason (2009, p. 128) described it.

While the most central and formalized, the secretariat was not the only authority in the room. Authority in the IGF is marked by the tensions between the traditional ways of thinking about legitimacy and authority, as those are represented in the UN practices, and the new to the UN system approaches imported from non-governmental institutions of the Internet community. The authority figures in the room would be clearly marked both through institutional markers[77] and through the physical arrangement of space; a typical intervention from the floor would usually be conducted as a dialogue between the chair and the speaker, but not as a direct exchange between participants as the IGF ethos would suggest.[78] The level of formality in the

---

as word count, length is the main predictor. Based on analysis of a sample of procedural interventions, the cut off line was established at 15 words.

[76] Kaufmann (1988, p. 78) described an 'ideal chairman' of a traditional UN conference as an efficient master of the ceremony:

The ideal chairman is able to keep delegates' statements within reasonable length and limits himself to an occasional observation in order to remind delegates of the subject before them. He will summarize (but not too frequently) lest he be accused of talking too much. The good chairman will also give rapid and correct rulings on procedural questions.

[77] Not only the Chair and the Executive Coordinator derived their formal authority from the UN, members of the Multistakeholder Advisory Group, who are nominated by the Secretary General of the UN, also fall under the category of participants carrying an institutional mark of importance (see section 5.2.2).

[78] While the dialogue between the Chair or the Executive Coordinator and a participant was the most common form of formal working interaction during consultations, other, less hierarchical, forms of interaction were also employed. For example, during the open consultations, which I observed in May 2009, in addition to the plenary-style discussions, the participants also worked in small groups to assess workshop proposals. Yet even in that case, the Executive Coordinator, who chaired that particular meeting, did not participate in the small group activities; later on, the groups reported back to him about the results of their small group discussions.

consultative process, however, has decreased over time. In the early consultations, it was common to refer to participants by their institutional affiliation (e.g. France, ISOC, ICC, etc.); in the recent consultations, it is more common to see the Chair referring to participants by their full names or even their first names only (e.g. Bertrand, Ayesha Hassan, Bill Graham, etc.)[79]. The participants, however, would still rather consistently remain formal, which can be partially explained by habit and partially by the settings of the meeting including it being conducted in the UN and awareness of the discussion being recorded.[80] In referring to Nitin Desai and Markus Kummer by their official UN titles the participants of the IGF consultations enacted the hierarchical and procedure-oriented practices of UN conferences.[81]

The physical space of the European headquarters of the UN, where most of the consultative processes have taken place, is designed to reinforce this centrality of the formal authority and the protocol (see Picture 1). Even though the consultations are a working meeting, the presiding officers are seated on the podium with all the other participants facing them; each participant (or delegation) has a name plaque, which would typically have the name of the country or an organization, but not the names of the actual participants; in order to speak, each participant needs to request the floor and use the built-in microphones at their desks to

---

[79] Depledge (2006) describes the use of first names, together with humor and the use of allegories, as techniques of good chairmanship for a working group in the UN setting. Writing about negotiations around the Kyoto Protocol, Depledge explained that these practices helped to create a "largely informal, personal and Interactive" atmosphere, which in turn assisted in building up "a sense of personal involvement and ownership of the negotiation process among parties" (p. 43).

[80] The IGF publishes live transcripts of all the consultative processes online.

[81] Donahue and Prosser (1997), for example, described UN addresses as a distinct genre containing the following elements: "(a) congratulations to the current President of the proceedings, or at least addressing the speech toward him or her or similar officer, (b) an affirmation of the importance or the necessity of the UN and one's alliance to its aims, (c) the use of highly polite and formal language, (d) observations on regional or world issues" (p.65).

address the room; there would typically be an earpiece to listen to simultaneous

interpretation.[82] The UN facilities are designed to observe a particular protocol of interaction in

an intergovernmental setting (Kaufmann, 1988) and as such they preserve the traditional

notion of hierarchical, formal, and designated authority. This aspect added to the dissonance

created by the IGF leadership's attempt to develop a new format for multistakeholder decision-

making processes (for example see Picture 2).[83]

---

[82] Interpretation is an important feature of international meetings as language barrier remains a significant obstacle in cross-cultural communication that inevitably happens in those spaces (Kaufmann, 1988). In the early days of the IGF consultations the IGF secretariat talked about having interpretation into all six official UN languages. However, not being funded through the regular UN budget, interpretation services were offered rather sporadically, upon the availability of interpreters. During the annual meeting of the IGF itself, the interpretation is available in all the main sessions.

[83] The constraints of physical space used during the consultative process are particularly evident when compared to some of alternative space arrangements used in recent annual meetings of the forum. The mains sessions of the annual IGF event (Picture 3) as well as many of the workshops (Picture 4) are still organized as classic lecture halls, with people on the podium being in the center of the attention and those willing to "speak to the power" need to line up by two or three microphones spread around the room. At the same time, there are also attempts to have more of roundtable-style discussions where the participants actually face each other, with no hierarchy embedded into the spatial arrangements (Picture 5).

Picture 1: Venue of the first Open Consultations on IGF that took place in February 2006 (photo by Kieren McCarthy, uploaded to the IGF website).

Picture 2: The venue used for February 2010 Open Consultations was not shaped to have a discussion among the participants (photo by Seiiti Arata, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0).

Spatial arrangements are one of the elements through which the IGF, as an institution, is trying

to negotiate its own identity, distinct from the procedure-oriented, bureaucratic discursive

practices of the UN. Another important element of the UN heritage that the participants of the

forum need to interact with is the UN nomenclature. The very notion of 'multistakeholderism,'

which has become one of the most prominent markers of the forum, is deeply rooted in the

traditional intergovernmental view of global policymaking. Mueller (Mueller, 2010, p. 82)

explains that "the term *multi-stakeholder* has etymological roots in the United Nations complex

of organizations, where interested parties are often referred to as 'stakeholders.'

Multistakeholderism means expanding opportunities for participation beyond governments to

other stakeholders in society" (emphasis in the original). However, operationalization of this

concept within the UN system reinforces the state-centric view of the world. Although the UN

distinguishes between three main groups of stakeholders – governments, the private sector,

and the civil society – and that distinction was institutionalized throughout the WSIS process,

the public lists of participants in the IGF and IGF consultations include three different

categories: government delegation, international delegations, and "other entities."[84] As Josep

Xercavins from the World Forum of Civil Society Networks noted during early Open

Consultations[85]:

> (…) when I saw the list of participants in this meeting, it is very clearly that there are
> governments, there are international organizations, but then we have the entities list.
> (…) taking into account the whole process, the Geneva process and the Tunis process, as
> a minimum we should have two lists at least. The business entities, private sector, and

---

[84] For example, see the classification of participants in the 2010 IGF:
http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/component/content/article/96-vilnius-2010-meeting-events/748-list

[85] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland.

the civil society lists. And I am saying this positively, not negatively. But these are interested parties that are different, different lists. And in many cases, we can have synergies or points of agreement, but during Tunis and Geneva, these are listed as different lists. And that would be good for them to be listed as different lists. "

Classification of participants, spatial arrangements, behavioral protocols, origins of formal authority – all these are structural components of the IGF discourse as social practice. To participate in the IGF discussion, particularly in its consultative stages, one needs to be familiar with the language of the UN and with the protocol of UN meetings. To appreciate the novelty of the IGF settings and understand the tensions inherent to its relationship with the UN apparatus, one needs to have experience with the business practices of intergovernmental fora. To evaluate the political significance of the frames and deliberative practices developed through the IGF consultative process one needs to have a grasp of the settings in which this consensus emerged. As Fairclough (2003, p. 25) described it:

> The relationship between these different elements of social practices [status, language use, and physical settings] is dialectical (…) this is a way of putting the apparently paradoxical fact that although the discourse element of a social practice is not the same as for example its social relations, each in a sense contains or internalizes the other — social relations are partly discoursal in nature, discourse is partly social relations.

The tensions between the UN institutional heritage and the Internet community culture shape how the discourse is conducted. David Allen's concluding remarks to his proposal for the operational mode of IGF is one way to describe this influence[86]:

> (…) shall I call [the needed operational mode for the IGF] the marriage between the working style of the Internet community, where working groups are everything, and where participation in those working groups is wide open, that's on the one side. And on the other side, the working style of U.N. proceedings and those that governments are

---

[86] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland.

particularly familiar with. We need in this brave new world to take the risk of those innovations and make some good choices about how that marriage will come together.

The substance of the IGF discourse is tied to the debates about the practices of deliberation. The notion of consensus, for example, has become one of the early points of contestation in the IGF debate. On the one hand, there were those who argued that the forum should steer away from controversial topics. For example, Heather Dryden, speaking on behalf of Canadian government said that "Canada believes it is essential to concentrate on issues where positive outcome can be anticipated rather than those issues known to be divisive," and Raul Echeberra of LACNIC emphasized that "it's important that in the forum we seek mechanisms to find consensus within the work of the forum."[87]

On the other hand, there were others who argued that debating controversial topics is what the forum should be doing. As Milton Mueller stated during the first open consultation, "[i]n my opinion, and in that of most of the civil society people that I talk to, a well-organized forum is a way of bridging divisive issues and finding solutions to those issues. If we attempt to prevent the forum from discussing those issues, first of all, where will those issues be discussed? Secondly, how will they ever be resolved?"[88] The view of consensus as the ideal outcome is an inherent feature of UN discourse—some UN officials view their role as making everybody in the meeting agree (Epstein, 2010; Kaufmann, 1988). The need for a space for knowledge exchange and debate over controversies was promoted by the civil society during the WSIS and the WGIG processes (Mathiason, 2009; Mueller, 2010). As the forum progressed, the views of some

---

[87] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland.
[88] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland.

stakeholders have changed and others, who could not or refused to adjust, have stopped or

nearly stopped participating. The tension between institutional conservatism and institutional

innovation, however, continues to contextualize the IGF discourse; it is fueled by competing

interests bound by structural arrangements; and it shapes the IGF discourse and is re-shaped

through the discourse at the same time.

5.2. Structuration of the IGF

> *"To be successful, the IGF needed to draw on two cultures - the*
> *formal culture of the UN system and the informal culture of the*
> *Internet"*
> Anriette Esterhuysen (2008, p. 38)

Formalization of the IGF practices is an ongoing process. Some participants I interviewed

rejected the very idea of IGF institutionalization; others wanted a more formal framework with

clearly marked functions and procedures. These two extremes are reflective of the inherent

tensions of the IGF as a non-UN-like UN forum. Since the first set of open consultations, the IGF

community has been spending a lot of its time debating the role of the forum compared to

other Internet governance institutions, the shape of the forum itself, and the internal decision-

making processes within the IGF. Kelty's (2008) description of a community as a "recursive

public," one that is "vitally concerned with the material and practical maintenance and

modification of the technical, legal, practical, and conceptual means of its own existence as a

public" (p.3) is particularly relevant in this case. The institutionalization of the IGF is a

continuous negotiation of the boundaries of Internet governance and principles upon which it should be based.

Mueller, Mathiason, and Klein (2007) argued that the major flaw in attempts to construct a global Internet governance regime lies in the lack of attention and willingness to discuss the norms and principles upon which such regime will be based (also see Mueller, 2010). Mueller et al. claimed that the debates in the WSIS and WGIG jumped to a discussion of rules and procedures, before there was an agreed-upon normative base from which to do that. The IGF seems to continue struggling with the same difficulty, whereby the discussions about rules, procedures, and spheres of authority refer to norms and principles, but do not address them directly.[89] As such, the participants invoke diverse perceptions of the Internet and, with them, different structures of signification, as opposed to having a common normative ground or a shared structural understanding of how to tackle such a wide and broadly defined policy issue.

A newcomer to the IGF will quickly recognize a nexus of relatively stable components composed of bureaucratic units, procedures, and meetings. These include the IGF secretariat, the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG), Open Consultations, the annual meeting of the IGF, and IGF Dynamic Coalitions—the fixtures of the IGF (Figure 4). It may take longer, however, for a newcomer to identify the set of practices that have evolved around these institutional arrangements. This set of practices, brought to the IGF by its participants from a variety of

---

[89] The IGF Dynamic Coalition on Core Internet Values is one of the attempts to mainstream the discussion about values and core principles within the IGF. Established in 2009 the coalition seems to be gaining only limited traction with the IGF community. The mailing list of the coalition is mostly inactive and the meeting held in 2010, although it hosted a dynamic discussion, was scarcely attended, compared to the meetings of other dynamic coalitions such as Dynamic Coalition on Internet Rights and Principles (see section 5.2.4. for a detailed discussion of the dynamic coalitions).

spaces where Internet governance happens, is very diverse. They represent an ongoing conflict between two cultures of Internet policymaking—that of the Internet community and that of the UN-style intergovernmental decision-making.

The newness of the IGF institutional arrangement and its continuous renegotiation embodies a struggle over advancing a set of values and principles of governance each cultural group is asking to preserve. In this debate one can most clearly see both the enactment of social structures and the exercise of the agency of particular IGF players. By debating the formal and the informal practices of the forum, IGF participants engage in discursive reflection not only on the technical modus operandi of the forum, but also on the underlying normative framework for Internet policy decision-making. When figuring out ways of making decisions about the conduct of the forum and its content, the participants bring in often conflicting views on authority, legitimacy, and morality. In the process some of these views become IGF norms, others are adjusted as they become norms, and yet others are pushed out of the IGF space. Unpacking the practices that emerged around the fixtures of the IGF tells a story of the structuration of the IGF as a space that reifies a set of hybrid structures drawn from the two distinct cultures of Internet policymaking.
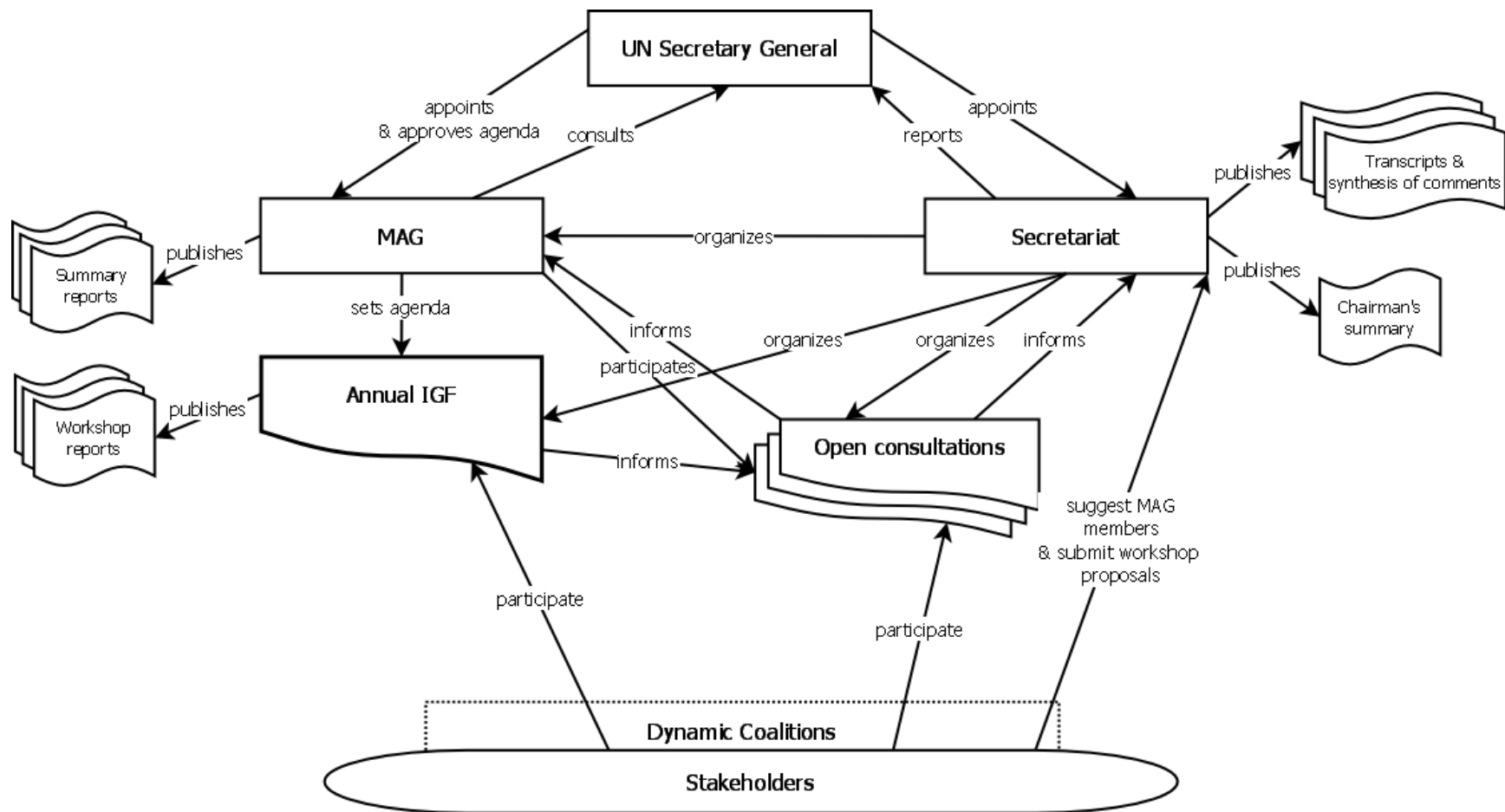
Figure 4: Map of the IGF discursive processes

5.2.1. IGF Secretariat.

The secretariat is one of the core elements of any UN conference. It is typically the main driving

force behind the management of the process and the shaping of the debate. Haas (2002)

explains that "autonomous secretariats staffed with professionals recruited on merit" and

"independent and capable executive heads" are among the most influential "institutional

design features" of any UN meeting (p.76). The secretariat is responsible for the logistics of the

conference, for the preparatory process, and for publishing the official records and the final

reports of the meeting. All these activities taken together make typical secretariats ultimate

gatekeepers in terms of production of discourse[90] and a nexus where ways of thinking about

authority and legitimacy are reified or challenged (Kaufmann, 1988).

The IGF secretariat is similar to any other secretariat of a UN meeting in that it coordinates the

preparatory process for the annual meeting and manages the bureaucracy of the conference.

The IGF Secretariat facilitates the Open Consultations, which are the primary preparatory

process for the annual IGF meeting, and works with the Multistakeholder Advisory Group

(MAG), which acts as a steering committee for the Forum. The Secretariat also works with the

host country to find a venue and settle various logistics such as transportation and security; in

addition, the secretariat works with third party vendors and the UN system to ensure services

such as interpretation and captioning. During the consultations and the annual meeting of the

---

[90] Kaufmann (1988) also explains that the UN practice accepts timely corrections of the language of the record. The
decision to commit corrections lies within the power of the secretariat, which is typically reluctant to make
substantive changes. Yet, when the final reports represent consensus language agreed upon the participating
parties, the language is frequently changed and altered before it is finalized.

forum, the secretariat acts as a host and primarily as an administrating unit. In the phase

following the annual IGF event, the Secretariat coordinates the writing of the Chairman's

Summary, which is the main formal output of the IGF. Although seemingly administrative, these

activities play an important role in shaping elements of social practice that influence IGF

discourse (Fairclough, 2003, p. 25).

In IGF, the secretariat needs to balance the constraints of the UN system and the calls for

organizational innovation coming from stakeholders who are not part of the UN. For example,

one of the growing concerns is the need to balance the large number of workshop requests and

institutional constraints such as the length of each session, which is in part a function of the

availability of interpreters.[91] Moreover, the arrangement of the rooms contributes to the type

of engagement the participants will feel comfortable with; the space in the UN headquarters in

Geneva, as well as in many UN conferences, reifies a hierarchical approach to power where

authority is derived from the formal titles of participants, not necessarily based on merit, and

that celebrates the centrality of the nation state in international politics. In the recent years,

however, the IGF is experimenting with round table arrangements (see Picture 5), as opposed

to the more traditional format where a panel of experts sits on the podium facing the audience

---

[91] During the open consultations in February 2009, Markus Kummer explained:

> The U.N. has fairly fixed rules that are set by the member states and supervised by various committees for budget and utilization of resources. And U.N. slots are two times three hours, and that is mainly because the interpreters work in three-hour slots. And we cannot change that. We cannot have three two-h our slots, for instance. We have to have two three-hour slots. And we are also required to make maximum use of these resources.

(see Picture 3 and Picture 4)[92]. Such seemingly pragmatic decisions play an important role in

guiding the discourse in terms of what voices will get heard and in terms of setting the

discursive environment of the forum; the more leveled settings and round-table arrangements

seen in some IGF meetings, ones that eliminate the prescribed hierarchy of panel and audience,

are said to encourage more inclusive interactions and dialogues where everyone is a panelist

and a member of the audience.

Picture 3: IGF 2009 plenary session (photo by Seiiti Arata, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

---

[92] Notably, the IGF community tried to work in less hierarchical interaction even in environments designed to sustain hierarchy. For example, the "Management of Critical Internet Resources" plenary during the 2009 IGF in Sharm el Sheikh was conducted in the plenary room (Picture 3), but without a panel. The session only had Nitin Desai as the chair, and Chris Disspain of the .au registry and Jeanette Hoffman of the London School of Economics, as moderators.

Picture 4: Typical workshop arrangement during IGF 2009 (photo by Seiiti Arata, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Picture 5: Alternative space arrangement for a workshop during IGF 2009 (photo by Seiiti Arata, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

The IGF secretariat is also unique in a number of ways on the practical level. Unlike a typical UN secretariat that needs to deal with a limited range of actors—mostly professional diplomats and government delegations—one of the main tasks of the IGF secretariat, from day one, was mediating between stakeholders coming from different institutional background and bearing a range of, often conflicting, worldviews. The diverse body of participants implied an array of perceptions of the "normal" way of conducting the consultative process and making decisions in a policy deliberation forum. One of the pivotal tasks for the forum, channeled through the secretariat, was to establish a common ground in understanding of authority, legitimacy, and ways of decision-making. For many, this process, which involved new actors and deliberate creation of new institutional settings, was exploring unchartered waters—it was an experiment (Mathiason, 2009). As a result, Mathiason notes, the IGF secretariat was more active compared to traditional presiding officers in the UN settings. First, being nominated directly by the Secretary General of the UN gave the IGF secretariat more autonomy compared to those of other UN fora. Second, extra-budgetary funding reinforced the independence of the secretariat vis-à-vis other players within the UN system. Finally, the open-ended mandate of the IGF gave its leadership the freedom to create new structures and procedures as the forum evolved from the WSIS process. The emergence of dynamic coalitions is frequently cited as one such structure. Others procedures involve publishing verbatim transcripts of the meetings on the IGF website openly accessible to all. The secretariat, as such, was engaged in the creation of a new "normal" within the particular settings of the IGF as a non-UN, yet still UN forum. The particular settings of the IGF creation placed a unique challenge on the IGF secretariat to mediate across different approaches to policy deliberation and various perceptions of the Internet as

economic, cultural, social, and mostly political tool; at the same time, the lack of settled

structures within the IGF gave the members of the secretariat more space to exercise their

individual agency.

5.2.1.1. Secretariat leadership

The leadership cadre of the IGF founders was recruited directly from the WGIG. The UN

Secretary General, Kofi Annan, personally appointed his Special Adviser on WSIS, Mr. Nitin

Desai, who had chaired the WGIG, to lead consultations on the establishment of the IGF; Desai

has since become the Chairman of the MAG and co-chaired some of the annual meetings of the

forum together with representatives of the host countries. In fact, the entire Secretariat of

WGIG was eventually morphed into the IGF Secretariat[93], including, Markus Kummer, who was

the Executive Coordinator of WGIG and later became the Executive Coordinator of the IGF

Secretariat. Both Nitin and Kummer emerged as spokespeople for the WGIG during the second

phase of the WSIS and their transition to leadership positions with the IGF, perceived by some

as 'natural'. They also transferred many of the practices established during the WGIG process to

the IGF. The WGIG was considered a successful experiment in multistakeholderism, and Desai

and Kummer were credited with this success (Mathiason, 2009), even though neither man had

a prior track record in Internet-related policymaking[94]. As Markus Kummer described in an

interview:

> At that time [WSIS] I didn't have any background on Internet policy making or whatever.
> But we managed to conclude the negotiations and the result of these negotiations was

---

[93] To clarify, the WGIG Secretariat was initially lean due to budgetary and time constraints. One of the notable features of both Secretariats was their extra-budgetary funding.

[94] Nitin Desai was involved with environmental issues in the UN and Markus Kummer was a Swiss career diplomat.

to create a Working Group on Internet Governance. (…) And I do remember, when I chaired that group, I did not think in the slightest or remotest that I might stay involved in that issue. But I was then asked if I would take on the Secretary of this Working Group. (…) And I thought, well, after all it might be an interesting challenge because it's combining cutting edge technology with diplomacy in a new way of diplomatic interaction between traditional government diplomats, negotiators, and business technology, and also civil society, for civil society had emerged as very strong player in the WSIS context.

In the IGF context, Desai and Kummer were not just bureaucrats, they were symbols of the WGIG achievements and idea entrepreneurs dedicated to taking the lessons of the working group further by establishing a new kind of institutional setting within the UN. They stayed in this position, because they demonstrated both the understanding of the UN system as well as open mindedness and appreciation of the practices of decision-making of the Internet community. They operated within the structural world of the Internet community as well as that of the UN system. In fact, they acted as a bridge between the two cultures required to co-exist in this new space. In the same interview, Kummer explained:

And out of the Working Group on Internet Governance came the recommendation to create this [IGF]… basically what we know to work. There was something missing out there… where you could discuss all these issues with no natural home. Yes, we identified that there are plenty of organizations dealing with aspects related to policymaking on the Internet, but there was no platform where the linkages could be discussed and that was the proposal that came out of WGIG, and there was taken away the natural continuation that this has to continue and that I be the secretary to this Internet Governance Forum.

The continuity, both conceptual and personified, is important. Both Desai and Kummer are as much products of the WGIG process as the WGIG process was the product of their work. In Malcolm's (2008) terms, they embodied values that a number of stakeholder groups wanted to bring to the new institution and they proved themselves as having contributed substantively to

the work of the community. On the one hand, both came from the background of diplomacy

and intergovernmental relations, but on the other they were open to ideas of meritocracy and

bottom up decision-making, as well as the liberal and neo-liberal values advocated by the civil

society and the private sector. Moving on to the IGF was a continuation of the creative process

started in WGIG. Having the same leadership was an important signal to the participants[95] in

terms of what they can expect from the forum and how they could conduct themselves[96]. The

presiding officers set the tone for the meetings and were very active not only in quantitative

(Desai and Kummer are responsible for almost 30% of the volume of the discussion during the

consultative process), but also in qualitative terms (for a more detailed account of Desai's

contribution to reaching consensus see Mathiason, 2009).

The pivotal role of the individual leadership of Desai and Kummer became particularly salient in

the beginning of 2011, after both individuals had left their respective posts[97] just as the IGF

mandate came under scrutiny from a specially-established working group of the UN

Commission on Science Technology and Development (CSTD). In private conversations I held

with a number of actors since then, some viewed the timing as particularly problematic,

because the dedication of key players to the IGF is viewed as a vote of confidence for the forum

itself. Others referred to the leadership vacuum as a danger to the character of the IGF,

because the forum became associated with Desai and Kummer both as its public faces and as

---

[95] 14 out of 40 members of WGIG participated in the first round of Open Consultations on IGF in February 2006 and many of them remain active members of the IGF community up to date.

[96] See the congratulatory remarks during the first Open Consultations on IGF (available at http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/athensmeeting), which refer to expectation of continuity from WGIG.

[97] Nitin Desai retired and Markus Kummer took a position as the Vice President of Public Policy at the Internet Society.

guardians of what Mueller (2010) labels as "denationalized liberalism" within the UN

environment that generally favors more hierarchical and nation-state-oriented value systems.

This uncertainty regarding the personalities of the future leadership of the IGF is currently one

of the primary concerns of the IGF community when they discuss the future of the forum.[98]

5.2.1.2. Secretariat funding

Funding of the IGF secretariat is a particularly important structural attribute, with both

symbolic and practical repercussions. The IGF secretariat is funded through extra-budgetary

contributions. In other words, there is a dedicated trust fund administered by the UN

Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), where interested parties can contribute

at will ("Input to the Secretary-General's report on the system-wide follow-up to WSIS," 2007).

In their June 2007 concept paper, the Internet Governance Project (IGP) explained that, "[i]n

the United Nations, programs are funded from the regular (assessed) budget when the issues

being addressed are of an interest to all members of the United Nations and there is a need to

provide core financing to ensure that they are addressed properly" (p.3). At the same time,

"[v]oluntary funding is indicated when the issues are of a particular interest to some states and

usually these funds supplement regular budget funding" (*Money and advice for the Internet*

Governance Forum: The structure of the MAG and financing the IGF secretariat, 2007, p. 3). This

arrangement supports the notion of the IGF as both unique and an isolated space within the UN

system. It represents a set of norms that not all members states consider valid, important or

worthy of their support. On the flip side, in the extremely politicized environment of the UN,

---

[98] See transcripts of Open Consultations held in February 2011 in Geneva, Switzerland.

those who choose to support the forum are making a statement that they subscribe to the values enacted through the IGF process.

Formally, reliance on voluntary contributions to support the IGF aimed to signify its independence from intergovernmental influence; were the IGF funded through the regular UN budget, it would be considered a formal UN program, subject to intergovernmental decision-making processes[99]. For example, in recent response to the CSTD questionnaire about potential improvements to the IGF, the Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) stated: "Financing the IGF through the UN budget could be detrimental to its current multi-stakeholder format and could lead to enabling more control by the UN of not only the IGF but perhaps other Internet governance functions."[100] Similarly, the US government wrote: "(…) we do not support the IGF being solely financed by the general UN budget, which would alter the multi-stakeholder nature of IGF support. (…) [We] believe that the UN's role should be light-handed and that IGF funding should be based on the voluntary contributions of stakeholders."[101]

Yet, the model of voluntary contributions raises two important structural questions: the question of sustainability and the question of influence over the IGF, i.e. "who pays the piper, calls the tune;" both questions are interrelated and have implications for the structural settings

---

[99] This is a complex claim and it refers primarily to the symbolism of regular UN funding. Despite claims for apparent independence from the UN system, the IGF came out of a UN process and its mandate was ratified by an inherently intergovernmental General Assembly of the UN. Moreover, as suggested by one of my interviewees, the ITU sometimes frames the IGF being a result of their work (by the way of WSIS), which again places the IGF under the intergovernmental umbrella.

[100] See CIRA response to the questionnaire of the CSTD working group on improvements to the IGF (available at http://www.unctad.info/en/CstdWG/WGIGF_Contributions/).

[101] See US Government response to the questionnaire of the CSTD working group on improvements to the IGF (available at http://www.unctad.info/en/CstdWG/WGIGF_Contributions/).

of IGF discourse. Does the funding make the IGF a mouthpiece of one or more of the interested

parties? Will the support stop if IGF participants start voicing criticism of some of the donors?

The budget of the IGF secretariat is not publically available, but the total number of donors to

the trust fund has been consistently growing since the establishment of the IGF. Starting in

2006 with only 12 donors, 27 entities contributed to the trust fund in 2010. 11 out of the 12

original donors have consistently supported the Forum all these years, and in fact three of them

had started their support already at the WGIG stage.

The full list of contributors to the trust fund across the years can be found in

Table 2. Among them are governments of developed countries, such as Finland, Norway, and

Japan; large international NGOs, such as ICANN, ISOC, and Number Resource Organization

(NRO), which were created explicitly as Internet-governance focused institutions; as well as

major Internet industry players, including large telcos and registries. As of 2010 the ITU is listed

as one of the contributors to the trust fund, but majority of the recently added donors belong

to the private sector.[102]

Table 2: Donors to the IGF secretariat[103]

	WGIG	IGF 2006	IGF 2007	IGF 2008	IGF 2009	IGF 2010
HOST GOVERNMENTS	Switzerland	Greece	Brazil	India	Egypt	Lithuania
TRUST FUND						
Afilias Global Registry Services		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

---

[102] The ITU holds its own WSIS follow up event—WSIS Forum—with an aim to have another phase of the summit in 2015. Some IGF activists view ITU funding for the IGF as a strategic move towards moving the IGF entirely under the ITU umbrella by the next phase of the WSIS.
[103] Shaded cells mark years when the entity contributed to the IGF

	WGIG	IGF 2006	IGF 2007	IGF 2008	IGF 2009	IGF 2010
AT&T					✓	✓
auDA Australia's Domain Name Administrator		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CISCO						✓
CommunityDNS						✓
Coordination Center for TLD RU [In Russian]		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (UK)				✓	✓	
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)						✓
European Union (EU)			✓	✓	✓	✓
Foundation for MultiMedia Communications (FMMC)	✓					
French Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	✓					
Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
ITU						✓
MCADE, LLC.						✓
Ministry of Economic Affairs of The Netherlands	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication of the Government of Japan	✓			✓	✓	✓
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland	✓				✓	✓
Nic.at The Austrian Registry		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NIKKEI DigitalCORE				✓	✓	✓
Nominet UK		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Number Resource Organization (NRO)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Siemens Aktiengesellschaft - Communications		✓	✓			✓
Summit Strategies International						✓
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

	WGIG	IGF 2006	IGF 2007	IGF 2008	IGF 2009	IGF 2010
The Internet Society (ISOC)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The Swiss Education & Research Network (SWITCH)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
UNINETT Norid		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Verisign						✓
Verizon Foundation				✓	✓	✓
IN KIND						
The United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)					✓	✓
Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie- Institut Francophone des Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information et de la Formation (INTIF)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
nic.br The Brazilian Network Information Center					✓	✓
Centre for Distance-Spanning Technology at the Luleå University of Technology					✓	✓
The UNDP Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP)	✓					

The donors constitute a rather homogenous group. With the exception of the IGF host countries and Brazilian Network Information Center, all the donors are coming from western, liberal societies. Even though among the donors there are representatives of the three stakeholder groups (government, private sector, and the civil society), many of them, such as ICANN, Cisco, Verisign, Nominet, etc., can be viewed as affiliated with the existing status quo in Internet governance. ICANN, for example, is the symbol of the status quo, which is frequently referred to as the ICANN regime (e.g. Mathiason, 2009; Mueller, 2010); it is that system that

according to many "ain't broken" (or ain't broken enough) and thus does not need a fix through an intergovernmental intervention. Organizations such as Nominet, auDA, Nic.at, NRO, etc. are all part of the ICANN ecosystem of private-sector-led organizations managing Internet names and numbers with close working ties to ICANN (see Mueller, 2002 for the early history of this ecosystem). The corporate players contributing towards the IGF, such as Verizon, AT&T, Siemens, Cisco, Verisign, and Affilias, are currently enjoying dominant positions in their respective segments of the Internet market, being it providing Internet connectivity, manufacturing network equipment or managing network infrastructure. Governments supporting the IGF financially are overwhelmingly West-European, liberal, developed economies such as Finland, Switzerland, UK, and the Netherlands.[104] What unites these donors is being ideologically, financially or politically invested in the current system of Internet governance, even when they express criticism of certain aspects of it (i.e. the European criticism of the dominant role of the US in the oversight of ICANN and IANA). Moreover, this group is conceptually closer to the private-sector-driven and bottom-up oriented Internet community, which makes it more likely to support the multistakeholder approach, as a function of understanding this approach as well as realizing its strategic value in limiting government intervention in the regulation of the Internet.

Typically, most donors have a representative participating in the open consultations. At no point, however, did I observe the donors to be given formal special treatment, other than occasional thanks, which are usually reserved for governments hosting the IGF-related events;

---

[104] Japan is also a donor country to the IGF. Although not European, it is a developed economy invested in the sustainability of the current Internet governance regime.

the dominance of a particular participant throughout consultative process does not appear to be a function of that actor belonging to a donor organization. This perceived neutrality is important, because it strengthens the legitimacy of both the IGF and the multistakeholder model. Representatives of the donors, as individuals, do establish relative dominance through persistent participation and involvement in the preparatory processes and in the annual IGF event, but that practice is not unique to the donors. On the other hand, donor influence may run on a more fundamental level. For example, location of the IGF secretariat in Geneva, where it also holds most of the consultative meetings, has been under continuous criticism from day one. Participants from developing countries and from the civil society have warned that the high costs of participation in consultations in Geneva may mute voices of the traditionally underrepresented stakeholders, who do not have funds to travel. At the same time the secretariat is bound by practical considerations such as in-kind donation from the United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG), which includes space and, when available, translation and interpretation services. The Swiss government has also conditioned its support to the secretariat being set in Geneva.[105,106] Mueller (2010) implied that donations might have also influenced decisions about membership in the MAG. He alluded to the ICANN $200,000 pledge

---

[105] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland.

[106] Another foundational decision that may have been influenced by donors is establishment of the secretariat and the MAG, as opposed to a more formal bureau, typical to UN settings. In his response to Brazilian intervention, during February 2007 open consultations, Nitin Desai mentioned that the decision-making process included consulting the donors. He said:

> (…) when you have a multistakeholder forum with everybody on an equal basis, the very process of constituting a bureau itself is problematic, but even more so when there's no membership. It's an open door. So then we clarified. We asked this question to the people that sponsored. And they said, "This is what we had in mind." Because I said, "How do I constitute a bureau in an open forum?" And then they explained that this is how it was supposed [to be resolved].

to support the IGF during its early stages, and the co-occurring nomination of 11 MAG members affiliated or associated with the organization.

During the annual IGF meetings, host countries have an exceptionally visible position, which is typical to UN meetings. The hosts bear most of the costs of organizing the physical event and it is customary that government officials from the hosting country would have more "air time" during the event, particularly during the opening and closing sessions. Ministers and other high-level government officials would have opportunities to make speeches, as well as the local chair of the annual meeting of the IGF; local actors are involved in the plenary sessions as speakers. In fact involvement of the host government starts at the preparatory meeting. While most of this involvement is dedicated to logistical issues, it also provides an opportunity for the host government to advance its agenda for Internet governance. Thus, for example, during the preparatory process for the 2007 IGF in Rio De Janeiro, the Brazilian government helped to amplify calls for the inclusion of discussion about critical Internet resources in the main session of the forum. This topic touches on one of the main controversies that led to the establishment of the IGF, i.e. US oversight over ICANN, and as such many participants in the open consultations were opposed to the idea of making it part of the IGF agenda. It was to a great degree the Brazilian position as host that allowed supporters of inclusion of a debate about management of critical resources, to make it part of the agenda. Such practices reify the structures of traditional governance institutions such as the UN, which are built around the notion of nation state and celebrate sovereignty as a primary source of authority.

Relative financial independence of the secretariat comes at a cost of uncertainty and reflects on

the sustainability of the IGF as an institution. Financing the secretariat has been an issue for

each of the open consultations since the inception of the forum. For example, in February 2007

consultations Markus Kummer explained the financial and logistical constraints of following

some of the UN practices, such as publishing documents only when they are translated into all

six UN languages. The IGF eventually deviated from that practice and started publishing the

English version of the documents as soon as possible, with other languages added when

available. At the same time, the secretariat was not able to respond to a request for all the

documents to be translated into the six UN languages, because it was relying on extra-

budgetary funds. Kummer explained it as having "also a time constraint and a capacity

constraint. "We cannot," he said, "just have U.N. translator like that. We can only use them if

they don't have anything to do, and then, in addition, we have to pay for them."[107] Being

primarily a discursive space, language barriers remain one of the obstacles to participation in

the IGF, and occasionally appear on the agenda of the preparatory process.[108]

Lack of predictable funding also impacts the ability of the secretariat to promote diversity of

speakers at the IGF, which is one of the principles the forum has committed itself to.

Participation in the preparatory processes as well as in the annual IGF meeting is costly, so the

question of participation funding is one of the more persistent items on the internal IGF

agenda. Within the current IGF settings, the solutions have been unsystematic. For example, in

2008 the government of Canada contributed funds to the IGF secretariat with an explicit intent

---

[107] IGF Open Consultations, February 2007, Geneva, Switzerland.

[108] For example, see intervention by Y.J.Park during IGF Open Consultations, February 2009, Geneva, Switzerland.

to support the participation of actors from developing countries in the MAG and in the main

IGF meetings; this support was distributed, at least partially, through the Diplo Foundation[109],

which is one of the main players working in the field of capacity building in Internet

governance, specifically in developing countries. In 2009, ISOC launched its "IGF

Ambassadorship" program, which supports participation of ISOC members in the IGF and

includes a mentoring component with an ISOC veteran.

From a discursive point of view, limited funds result in the recycling of speakers. Diversity of

participants and inclusion of new voices are repeatedly mentioned as a desirable achievement.

In search of tangible outcomes for the IGF, Nominet, for example, has proposed including "to

what extent have new voices been included in the policy dialogue" as one of the measures for

the IGF impact.[110] Yet, over the years, the proportion of returning speakers in the IGF plenary

has been constantly growing. Holding 2007 as the base year, the proportion of returning

speakers grew from 18% in 2008, to 28% in 2009, to 33% in 2010 (also see Table 3). In their

response to the questionnaire of the CSTD Working Group on improvements to the IGF, the

Association for Progressive Communication suggested that: "A budget for inviting speakers for

main sessions" is needed "so that their selection is based on expertise rather than on 'they are

attending already',"[111] which is currently one of the main elements that influence who gets to

speak at the IGF in both the main sessions and workshops.

---

[109] IGF Open Consultations, September 2008, Geneva Switzerland.

[110] IGF Open Consultations, September 2009, Geneva, Switzerland.

[111] See APC response to the questionnaire of the CSTD working group on improvements to the IGF (available at http://www.unctad.info/en/CstdWG/WGIGF_Contributions/).

Table 3: Most persistent speakers 2007-2010

Name	Plenary Speaker (count)	MAG (years)	Affiliation
Anriette Esterhuysen	4	0	Executive Director, Association for Progressive Communications (APC)
Chris Disspain	4	5	Chair, Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) Council; Chief Executive Officer, .au Registry
Nitin Desai	4	5	Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Internet Governance and Chairman of the Multistakeholder Advisory Group
Raúl Echeberría	4	5	Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer, Latin America and Caribbean Internet Addresses Registry (LACNIC)
Alice Munyua	3	0	Director, Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK)
David Gross	3	0	Coordinator for International Communications Policy, Department of State, Washington D.C.
Hamadoun Touré	3	0	Secretary-General, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
Jeanette Hofmann	3	5	Researcher, Social Science Research Center
Jonathan Charles	3	0	Jonathan Charles, Foriegn Correspondent, BBC
Katitza Rodriguez Pereda	3	2	International Rights Director, Electronic Frontier Foundation
Lynn St. Amour	3	0	President and CEO, Internet Society
Markus Kummer	3	0	Markus Kummer, Executive Coordinator, IGF Secretariat
N. Ravi Shanker	3	3	Joint Secretary, Government of India, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Department of Information Technology
Nii Quaynor	3	4	Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Network Computer Systems; President, Internet Society of Ghana
Patrik Fältström	3	5	Consulting Engineer, Cisco Systems; Member, Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF); Member, Swedish Government Information Technology Policy and Strategy Group
Robert Pepper	3	0	Government Affairs, Cisco, Washington D.C.

5.2.2. Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG)

An important aspect of creating the IGF 'from scratch' was agreeing on decision-making

mechanisms. Mathiason (2009) explains that during the first open consultations "[t]he

discussions focused on three basic questions: what issues would be discussed at Athens, how would they be discussed and who would decide this" (p.128). In other words, the debate centered on mechanisms of formal agenda setting for the IGF. In traditional UN settings, the decision-making power clearly lies with the representatives of nation-states, but who holds the authority to decide in a space where governments and non-governmental entities are expected to interact on an equal footing?

Early in the IGF process, the participants aired proposals for the organization of decision-making in the IGF. These proposals ranged from a system of traditional UN bureaus, in a fashion similar to the WSIS[112] and supported by the G-77 and China, to self-organizing mechanisms modeled after the Internet Engineering Task Force, as suggested by Vittorio Bertola and echoed by a number of other participants.[113] The compromise solution came in a form that many perceived as similar to the WGIG model[114]—a lean secretariat working alongside a group that represents different stakeholders—the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG); both functions are appointed by the Secretary General of the UN.

The MAG was charged to act as a program committee for the IGF, but it was not given a clear authority to decide, only to advise the Secretary General on the agenda of the forum. In

---

[112] During the WSIS there were three bureaus dedicated to coordination of each stakeholder group. According to Mathiason (2009), the government bureau clearly dominated the scene during the WSIS, which in turn made representatives of the civil society and the private sector wary, when this model was proposed during the IGF consultations.

[113] IGF Open Consultations, February 2006, Geneva, Switzerland.

[114] Speaking during September 2007 Open Consultations, Nitin Desai explained:

> Let me say that in many ways, the origins of this Advisory Group lie in the experience of the Working Group on Internet Governance, which was a multistakeholder group which met and produced surprisingly a report which was unanimous, and which played a certain role in Tunis. And therefore, when the follow-up came in the form of IGF, there was a tendency to look toward that model.

practical terms, however, MAG recommendations regarding the program are rather influential,

because, as Izumi Aizu from the Internet Caucus put it during November 2010 Open

Consultations, "there is no other clear body or structure in and of the IGF."[115] In other words,

the beauty of the MAG solution was that it offered an ever evolving decision-making body for

the IGF, whose decision making authority was not prescribed, but enacted through its

consultative capacity. Malcolm (2008) wrote:

> What is known is that the Advisory Group possessed little formal authority; for the most
> part operating as a forum for discussion akin to open consultations, at which those in
> attendance expressed and debated their views, but without the object of taking formal
> decisions. (…) What few decisions the Advisory Group did make on its own behalf on
> matters such as the selection of panelists for the plenary sessions were made by rough
> consensus as declared by the Chair (p.320-321).

The MAG is the most formalized agenda setting function of the IGF. Members of the MAG

impact the agenda directly by actively participating in the open consultations and then working

as a group, through meetings and a mailing list, to agree on the overall theme for the annual

IGF meeting and finalize the selection of workshops. The MAG is the main space where "the

politics of agenda setting" (Mueller, 2010, pp. 117–120) play out as this is where the formal

agenda is drafted. Debates over the content, however, is one way the politics of agenda setting

can play out; another way agenda is impacted is through formalizing the structure of the annual

event. Using the words of Bertrand de La Chapelle, over the course of five years the MAG "has

shaped the format and the structure of the meeting" so that today there is "a format for those

four days that is relatively stable in terms of the balance between the main sessions and the

workshops, the fact that we adopt now open discussions for the main sessions instead of

---

[115] IGF Open Consultations, November 2010, Geneva, Switzerland.

panels."[116] Thus, for example, workshop proposals need to explain how they fit in one of the

main sessions of the annual IGF event (see Table 4) and unorthodox formats for workshops and

the plenary are encouraged.

Table 4: Main themes of the Internet Governance Forum, 2006-2010

Issue area	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Openness Privacy Security	Openness - Security	Openness - Security	Promoting cyber-security and trust	Openness, privacy and security	Openness, privacy and security
Access Diversity	Access Diversity	Access Diversity	Reaching the next billion	Access and diversity	Access and diversity
Critical Internet resources	-	Critical Internet resources	Managing critical Internet resources	Managing critical Internet resources	Managing critical Internet resources
Emerging issues	Emerging issues	Emerging issues	The Internet of tomorrow	Impact of social networks	Cloud computing
Internet governance	-	-	-	Internet governance in light of WSIS principles	IG4D
Taking stock[117]	The way forward	Taking stock and the way forward	Taking stock and the way forward	Taking stock and the way forward	Taking stock of Internet governance and the way forward

("Continuation of the Internet Governance Forum: Note by Secretary General (A/65/78–
E/2010/68)," 2007)

The primary tension surrounding MAG is focused, however, on the politics of participation

(Mueller, 2010, pp. 114–117). The MAG was off to a rocky start. Candidates to the MAG were

nominated by various stakeholder groups, but the selection process of MAG members was

---

[116] IGF Open Consultations, November 2010, Geneva, Switzerland.

[117] Under the title "taking stock" the IGF hosts a discussion about the future agenda of the forum and its
governance practices. This is one of the sessions where the agenda for the following Open Consultations is set and
where the participants reflect on the IGF process and substance.

criticized, especially by the civil society actors, as opaque. Malcolm (2008) and Mueller (2006b, 2010) notice that originally about half of the seats in the group were reserved for government representatives and another 25% for actors associated with ICANN. The representation factor, while potentially influential in terms of agenda setting, was also symbolic. Although concerned about extensive ICANN representation, Muller (2006b) notes that as individuals, participants represented a wide range of opinions.[118] Yet, being the most formalized organ of the IGF as a multistakeholder environment, perception of representativeness of the stakeholder groups mattered.[119] In addition, MAG started off with closed internal communications and closed meetings, attracting further criticism from those outside of the group. The group was diligent, however, with publishing its reports after each meeting. From these reports we know, for example, that observers from intergovernmental organizations, in fact participated as full members in the closed discussions (Malcolm, 2008). In 2008, following vocal criticism, the MAG made anonymized excerpts from its mailing list publically available; full transcripts of MAG meetings became public in 2010.

---

[118] Mueller (2006b) provides a detailed account of the ICANN related appointees, thus highlighting the blurring borders between individual and institutional identities in Internet governance:

> Two (Alejandro Pisanty and Veni Markovski) are sitting ICANN Board members; one (Theresa Swineheart) is an ICANN staff member; two more (Nii Quaynor and Masanobu Katoh) are former ICANN Board members; two (Chris Disspain and Emily Taylor) represent ccTLD operators; two (Raul Echeberria and Adiel Akplogan) represent Regional Internet Address Registries (RIRs). Even the public interest or "civil society" representatives are long time players in the ICANN sandbox: Adam Peake of Glocom, Robin Gross of IP Justice, Jeanette Hofmann of WZ Berlin, and Erick Iriarte of Alfa-Redi are all associated with either ICANN's At Large Advisory Committee or its Noncommercial Users Constituency (or both). To that one can add an IETF representative, Patrik Faltstrom, often utilized by ICANN as a consultant, and the Internet Society's public policy advocate.

[119] During February 2008 Open Consultations, Parminder Singh, speaking on behalf of the Internet Governance Caucus (a civil society group), noted: "At the outset, I would like to appeal to all stakeholders that we should use the full term 'Multistakeholder Advisory Group' or a very convenient acronym 'MAG', as for purposes, as Chairman Desai just described, multistakeholderism as the most important feature of the IGF."

Serving on the MAG gives its members not only more direct influence on the agenda of the IGF, but also a more authoritative status within the IGF community. MAG members are frequently referred to as a group in the consultative processes, they introduce themselves as such when they make interventions during the IGF, and in a way they are lobbied by actors submitting workshop proposals. In other words, while the debate in the IGF is supposed to be on equal footing, having a group such as MAG recreates an institutional hierarchy. MAG members are in the heart of the IGF community—they are on the MAG because they are active and recognized individuals in their respective stakeholder groups[120], but being on the MAG further reinforces their central positions. For example, among the most persistent speakers at the IGF plenary, half are members of the MAG. Three out of four speakers, who spoke in the main sessions of each IGF between 2007 and 2010[121], have been on the MAG since its inception (see Table 3). In recent consultations, participants aired ideas for the MAG members to serve as evaluators of

---

[120] As mentioned elsewhere (Malcolm, 2008; Mueller, 2010), the selection of MAG members is not systematic and opaque, but so is most of the nomination processes. The civil society is the most transparent of the stakeholder groups in terms of selection of the nominees, which offers a glimpse at the tensions involved in the politics of representation. Mueller, for example, describes the debates that took place across the civil society networks about whether the "technical community" belongs to the civil society in light of its political association with ICANN. There is no similarly transparent record of the nomination process within the government or the private sector stakeholder groups. Observing the MAG, however, suggests that active members of the group are people, who have been substantively involved in the IGF process, many of whom emerged as leaders in their respective communities during the WSIS. At the same time, as Jeanette Hofmann noted in November 2010 open consultations, "there are lots of people on the MAG who have been sent there. They are there because it's their job to be there. And not all of them participate in an active manner so that they will take space away from other people who would like to talk." One explanation for this is political. For example, the government of Iran, one of the more vocal critics of the IGF, has a sit in the MAG, but according to my interviewees, does not participate.

[121] At the moment data about plenary speakers is accessible only for the years 2007-2010. The only people who spoke in each of the IGFs are Chris Disspain (Chair, Country Code Names Supporting Organization [ccNSO] Council; Chief Executive Officer, .au Registry), Raúl Echeberría (E xecutive Director/Chief Executive Officer, Latin America and Caribbean Internet Addresses Registry [LACNIC]), Anriette Esterhuysen (Executive Director, Association for Progressive Communications [APC]), and Nitin Desai, who is the chair of the MAG.

workshop quality during the IGF itself as a means to weed out lower quality workshops.[122] Also, in an attempt to formalize the selection process of MAG members, it was suggested that a "trusted" group of former MAG members serves as a selection committee.[123] The emerging dynamics is similar to the "Matthew effect" (Merton, 1968) whereby people already in position of power continue accumulating advantage, compared to those less powerful or new to the institutional settings. From a structuration point of view, the MAG symbolizes the dialectic relationship between the agency and the structure and demonstrates the evolution of structures of domination over time.

Today, the concept and the practice of the MAG are undergoing scrutiny in light of the work conducted by the CSTD Working Group on Improvements to IGF. The open consultations transcripts suggest that IGF participants seek further institutionalization of the MAG. Among the suggestions that were voiced during the open consultations[124] are: more clearly defined decision-making authority for the group, so that it could participate in procedural decisions, such as recommendations for the Chair of the MAG; clearer procedures for the conduct of the group itself, particularly the rotation of MAG members; and enhanced transparency, especially when it comes to the process of selection of MAG members. For the IGF-loyalists, the MAG became one of the main markers of the internally grown institutional solution to multistakeholder involvement in Internet governance—it embodies a set of continuously evolving values of Internet governance that are enacted and challenged through discursive

---

[122] E.g. IGF Open Consultations, May 2010, Geneva, Switzerland.

[123] IGF Open Consultations and MAG meeting, November 2010, Geneva, Switzerland.

[124] For example, see IGF Open Consultations, September 2008, Geneva, Switzerland.

reflection on the conduct of the group as the decision-making body of the forum. Among those values one may recognize a set of values traditionally associated with the Internet community, such as collaboration, meritocracy, and transparency. Through redefining and further institutionalizing MAG practices, the IGF participants are asking to define themselves as a community.

5.2.3. Meetings

Meetings are the primary mode of organization of the IGF process. Haas (2002) lists "iterated interactions" (p.76) among the most influential "institutional design features" that can shape a UN conference (in addition to "autonomous secretariats staffed with professionals recruited on merit" and "independent and capable executive heads"). Wodak (2000) describes meetings as "sites where decisions are taken and where conflicts evolve and are resolved through decisions in a more or less democratic ways" (p. 76). Death (2011) refers to large UN conferences as "forms of theatrical and exemplary government," which "work as transitional mechanisms (…) within broader regimes of (…) governmentality" (p.2). The IGF has a little bit of each of these.

When the IGF started, there was initial tension, between those who envisioned it as a single annual event and those who viewed the forum as an ongoing process with the annual gathering as a seminal checkpoint (Mueller, 2010). Soon after the first round of consultation, there was a strong sentiment to view the IGF conceptually as a process. Yet, the practices and the language adapted to describe that process placed the annual event at the center of the IGF existence. Most of the activities of the IGF throughout the year are focused on the "preparatory process"

and the annual event is referred to as "the IGF."[125] The model that has evolved over the past six

years includes a series of three planning meetings—open consultations—per year and one

annual event. The preparatory meetings take place in the Palais des Nations in Geneva and are

typically adjacent to the meetings of the MAG (MAG members tend to participate in the open

consultations). This is the IGF's "backstage," in Goffman's (1959) terms, where participants

allow themselves a more informal interaction and exhibit a great degree of collegiality. This is

also a space for discursive reflection on the emerging ways of thinking about Internet

governance, and even more so about the IGF itself, as well as emerging practices of conducting

policy deliberation. The annual event is held in a different place in the world each time in order

to maximize exposure. This is the front stage of the IGF, where exemplary multistakeholderism

as a mode of governance is performed. So far IGF meetings have taken place in Greece, Brazil,

India, Egypt, and Lithuania; the next IGF will take place in Kenya.

5.2.3.1. Open Consultations

The open consultations are indeed open. Technically, all one needs to do in order to participate

is register to gain access to the UN compound. Once in the room, anyone can take the floor on

a first-come-first-served basis. At least theoretically, from that point on, one's input is valued

on its merit and its contribution to the community. Practically, however, effective participation

in open consultations is resource-intensive both financially and in terms of time. First, attending

meetings in Geneva is costly and in order to be a part of a meritocratic community, one needs

---

[125] For example, see IGF Open Consultations, February and May 2007, Geneva, Switzerland.

to establish sustainable presence; time spent 'in the field,' either creating technology or regulating it, is also an important source of authority in the IGF.

Second, participating in the open consultations is an opportunity to influence the agenda of the annual IGF meeting, but it is also learning and socializing experience. It takes time to get familiar with the acronym-rich language used in the meetings, to develop an understanding of the interrelated topics, and to learn the social dynamics of the relatively small group that regularly meets to participate in the consultative process. Location of the secretariat in Geneva, thus, poses a significant barrier to participation, primarily due to the financial cost. Starting from the first open consultations, participants from developing countries lamented that this situation would lead to lack of voices from the Global South. One member of the civil society explained: "I would like to express my thanks for the facilities of being here. Although I must also say that these facilities, this setup, are only usable if one has the economic means to be able to travel to Geneva."[126] In other words, the location of the secretariat poses a systemic barrier, which was not planned for its negative consequences, but emerged as an institutionalized constraint.

Thematically, the open consultations are dedicated to reflecting on the last annual event and planning for the next one. In the process, the institutional features of the IGF are both discussed and enacted. Early open consultations focused a lot on creating the format of the IGF annual meetings and practices for the preparatory process. Today, a significant portion of the open consultation is still dedicated to questions of self organization of the IGF, particularly the

---

[126] See intervention by World Forum of Civil Society Networks during February 2006 open consultations.

status and the authority of the MAG. As the forum matured, as its practices settled, and as the

IGF started to engage with other policy fora through its numerous activists, the preparatory

process also became an important gathering for exchange of information and strategy

coordination. [127] Taken together, these processes also contribute to community building, and,

as I will demonstrate later, constitute a recursive public (Kelty, 2008). In a very atypical for the

UN fashion, during open consultations, it is common to refer to others by their first name and

to utilize the "us" (as in IGF community) vs. "them" (as in competing fora, including those of the

UN) rhetoric, thus contributing towards delineating an institutional boundary of the IGF.

The primary formal task of the open consultations is assisting the secretariat and the MAG with

determining the agenda for the annual event, including decisions about plenary speakers and

debates about the merits of submitted workshop proposals. Over the five years of its existence,

the IGF community has settled on a core format for the annual event. The IGF model is built

around a number of broad themes discussed in the plenary and numerous workshops that are

expected to feed into the main sessions. [128] The process of agreeing on an agenda for the

plenary is political and it highlights conflicts of both values and resources (Wodak, 2000). For

example, the topic of "critical Internet resources" was added in 2007 as a result of pressure

from G77 countries. Although Iran and Pakistan led the motion, Brazil, as the host of the annual

meeting, played a pivotal role in adopting it. The argument was a continuation of discussions

---

[127] For example, the most resent external threat to IGF came from the recently established CSTD Working Group on Improvements to the IGF(http://www.unctad.info/en/CstdWG/). IGF debates concerning this matter can be found in transcripts of November 2010 and February 2011 Open Consultations. The group was (and still is) perceived as a threat to the IGF, because it is a governments-led initiative and was initially envisioned as an intergovernmental group only.

[128] Table 4 offers and overview of the IGF plenary themes 2006-2010 and demonstrates how these themes can be and are negotiated in the process of open consultations.

started during the WSIS about the US oversight over ICANN. As such, this debate (discussed in detail in Malcolm, 2008; Mueller, 2010) was, on the face of it, an enactment of a conflict about names and numbers, which are resources in the context of Internet governance. Yet it ultimately represented a clash of different value systems. Defining a framework that would allow both sides to reach a compromise was an important step for the IGF because, paraphrasing the statement of Willie Currie of APC during May 2007 open consultations, "it was clear that some stakeholders wanted to discuss ICANN and the management of critical Internet resources; others did not and urged caution in adding the issue to the themes."[129] Inserting itself into the heart of the controversy and offering a space for an open debate, the IGF, as an institution, was forming its own identity and establishing a sphere of influence.

Managing workshops offers a different kind of conflict. The ethos of openness and inclusivity of the multistakeholder model created a burdensome situation for the secretariat. Nitin Desai's stated philosophy was not to reject a workshop unless absolutely necessary. As a result, the number of workshops at the IGF has been continuously growing. Starting from 36 workshops during the 2006 IGF in Athens their number climbed to 113 workshops scheduled in parallel to the main sessions during the 2010 IGF in Vilnius. In addition to that, a series of requirements attached to each workshop proposal, such as gender, geographical, and stakeholder group diversity, causes the panels in the workshops to be too crowded. However, as Markus Kummer explained:

> [The number of workshops] is also related to the number of participants. I was told as a
> rule of thumb, you can count that if you have three times as many participants as you

---

[129] IGF Open Consultations, May 2007, Geneva, Switzerland.

have speakers. We had roughly 100-plus workshops. That means 600 speakers in these workshops, and that corresponds fairly accurately to the number of participants. We had 1800 participants. So by steering through the workshops, by limiting the number, you can also automatically limit the overall number of participants.[130]

The IGFers participating in open consultations and the MAG find themselves in a conflict, torn between the desire to be inclusive and the aspiration to maintain a certain quality for the IGF experience. People proposing workshops, on the other hand, find themselves manufacturing the appearance of multistakeholderism in places where they do not necessarily believe it belongs. In the process, both are contributing to establishing patterns of behaviors and thinking about principles of Internet governance and the "normal" way of conducting the IGF business; in other words, both are participating in the process of structuration.

5.2.3.2. Annual IGF event

Contrary to the semi-informal character of the consultative process, the annual IGF event is a form of dramaturgical performance of seriousness and symbolic politics; it is a form of "theatrical and exemplary government" (Death, 2011, p. 2); a showcase for multistakeholderism. The efforts of the MAG and the active participants in the Open Consultations, as a team, culminate at the annual event as a choreographed performance of idealized version of multistakeholderism, which maintains the legitimacy of the forum itself. This is the "frontstage" performance in Goffman's (1959) terms. The event is typically spread over a course of four days with a generous number of red tape events, receptions, and at times meticulous protocol. In addition to workshops and plenary discussions, the IGF also hosts side events, such as an annual symposium of the Global Network of Internet Governance

---

[130] IGF Open Consultations, February 2010, Geneva, Switzerland.

Researchers (GigaNet). Starting in 2009, two more standard sessions were added to the IGF.

First, an orientation session was added to brief the participants about the work done at the IGF between the previous annual event and the current one. Together with the "Taking Stock" session, these components simulate a more formalized version of the open consultations held in Geneva. Second, with the growing number of regional and national Internet governance events, it was decided to add a regional perspective session at the beginning of the forum in order to maintain a link between the local and the global fora.

In absence of predefined "tangible" outcomes, the success of the IGF is a fluid concept.[131] In search of tangibility, the reports of the chairman, the formal document summarizing each annual event, emphasize the volume and the diversity of participation. Each report starts with the number of participants and their breakdown according to the stakeholder groups, followed by mentioning the number of workshops held in parallel with the main session (also see *Internet Governance Forum: Identifying impact*, 2009). The search for tangible outcomes is part of the structural heritage of the traditional policymaking, where the output of the work can take a finite number of shapes such as treaties or resolutions; process as an outcome is not one of the more common products of traditional policy deliberation.

---

[131] This fluidity of the definition of the IGF success is part of the diplomatic compromise at the basis of its mandate. While open enough to include almost any communication policy issue under its umbrella, the IGF was not mandated to produce any tangible results. This tension is illuminated every time the IGF comes under scrutiny. One major occasion where lack of metrics for success became an important issue, was continuation of the IGF mandate beyond its original five years. The Chinese delegation, for example, with a hint towards a completely intergovernmental model for the IGF, openly stated that it won't support continuation of the forum without having clearly defined outcomes. Most recently, during the CSTD working group consultations the question of results, perhaps not as rigid as envisioned by the Chinese delegation, has been continuously brought up.

Implicitly, the annual events are also assessed by their smoothness or the "perfection" of the

performed governance. As a front stage performance (Goffman, 1959) aimed at an idealized

presentation of multistakeholder policy dialogue, explicit conflicts among the stakeholders are

viewed as very problematic. Thus, for example, when in 2009 a poster mentioning the "Great

Firewall of China" was removed by the UN security during the launch of OpenNet Initiative's

book launch for *Access Controlled*, upon "objections of a member state," it overshadowed most

of the other qualitative developments during the meeting in Sharm el Sheikh.[132] At different

points in time, other developments at the IGF were framed as tangible outcomes of the forum.

Thus for example, dynamic coalitions, which started to form during the first IGF in Athens in

2006, were referred to by some as an IGF outcome.[133] More recently, the growing number of

regional and national IGF events, which are autonomously organized by the local communities,

is viewed as an important outcome of the forum (see Mueller, 2010).

The IGF meetings are a vehicle through which Internet governance as a multistakeholder

endeavor is both performed and enacted. There is a clear distinction between the back and the

front stages of this act (Goffman, 1959). The front stage in this case aims to demonstrate an

idealized version of multistakeholder policy dialogue, under the constraints of the UN discursive

practices. There is no debate about the meaning of the practice at front stage. The back stage is

where conscious debates about the practices and their formalization take place. It is in the back

---

[132] For additional details about the incident see the report on the OpenNet Initiative's blog
(http://opennet.net/blog/2009/11/un-security-forces-removal-oni-poster) and on the Internet Governance Project
blog (http://blog.Internetgovernance.org/blog/_archives/2009/11/15/4380817.html). For the formal reaction of
the IGF secretariat see IGF Open Consultations, February 2010.

[133] IGF Open Consultations, February 2007, Geneva, Switzerland.

stage, where the core of the IGF community is being formed, and it is in the shaping of that

core and the performance rituals, that structures of domination and legitimation are enacted. It

is in the back stage of the IGF processes where the normative framework of the IGF is

systematized as a mediating mechanism that allows values of the Internet community work in

the UN settings. The two stages can be viewed as collections of processes of structuration,

whereby different actors reify structures imported through the practices of the Internet

community and the UN; when these processes collide, or the practices are forced to co-exist in

a single space, new forms of thinking about and enacting of Internet governance are formed

through reflection and deliberation.

5.2.4. Dynamic coalitions

One of the challenges of institutionalizing the IGF is defining its relationship with the public it

serves. During the WSIS, the civil society self-organized thematic caucuses and working groups,

contributed to the summit through a set of ad hoc fixtures such as "content and theme drafting

group" and the "civil society plenary" (see Mueller, 2010 for a more detailed account). Seeking

to replicate that model, civil society organizations at the first IGF meeting in Athens started

organize dynamic coalitions—groups of IGF stakeholders "organized around specific policy

positions or perspectives" (p.121), so called "thematic 'homes' of some of the specific issues

that compose IG as a policy field" (Padovani & Pavan, 2007, p. 104).

Since the IGF has no formal deliverables, other than holding the annual meeting and preparing

the report of the chairman, there is a continuous quest to identify the IGF impact (e.g. *Internet*

Governance Forum: Identifying impact, 2009). When the dynamic coalitions started to form,

some suggested that they should be viewed as one of the tangible outcomes of the IGF. For

example, during February 2007 Open Consultations, the Swiss delegation commented:

> (…) some people feel that the IGF should have an impact that goes beyond just
> discussing issues. They feel that the IGF should facilitate discussions, but also concrete
> solutions to challenges connected to the Internet and Internet governance. Now the
> question is: how should this be achieved? At the first session of the IGF in Athens, a
> series of dynamic coalitions has been formed. These coalitions formed themselves in
> order to work between meetings to promote action that should emerge from the
> discussions at the IGF. This is a good idea, and I think -- we think we have to support
> those dynamic coalitions, because if they do good work, they can help the IGF to have
> an impact outside the meeting rooms.[134]

While some perceived the dynamic coalitions as an outcome of the IGF, others asked to make

them a formal part of the IGF structure. The civil society was particularly vocal with calls to

formalize the relationship between the secretariat and the coalitions, thus giving the coalition

members a greater say in the agenda setting mechanism of the IGF. Yet, formalizing

relationships with the community ran into questions similar to those faced by the formalization

of MAG, namely questions of representativeness, legitimacy, and authority. During September

2008 open consultations, Markus Kummer, explained:

> You will recall, we had a discussion last year (…) we had requests to be posted as a
> dynamic coalition, and we asked for guidance. What are the criteria? (…) Does it need to
> include representatives of all stakeholder groups or is it enough if it's just maybe one or
> two? And to sum up the discussion we had then, the general feeling was that the
> dynamic coalitions were an experiment, and we should give them a little bit more time
> to develop, and it was generally acknowledged that it should be revisited and their
> relationship with the IGF ought to be more clearly defined. The only clear guidance I got
> from that meeting was a dynamic coalition should be at least more than one person.
> Because there was I think at the time one person with several hats who said, "I am a
> dynamic coalition." So there we said, "No, you are not."

---

[134] IGF Open Consultations, February 2007, Geneva, Switzerland.

Now we have 14, and there are more in the pipeline. We've been approached by people who said, "We are in the process of setting up a coalition." And we say, "Okay, the more, the merrier." But, nevertheless, I think the more we have, the more urgent it is, actually, to look at these questions. What are the criteria? what is the relationship with the IGF at large?

We also asked for reports, if they had a meeting in Rio, please send us a report on the meeting and also please send us a report on the activities since. We certainly do not want to burden dynamic coalitions with additional bureaucracy. But I think it's good to know whether a coalition is alive and well and actually is dynamic or whether it's just a sleeping coalition on paper and doesn't really do anything. But of these 14 dynamic coalitions, I think only five submitted a report. Now, does that mean we are going to delete them from our Web site or should we push them a little bit more to deliver a report? We did receive a few reports in the last few days. As deadlines approach, people do remember maybe they ought to do something. But on all these questions, I look forward to guidance so that we know how to react when confronted with these questions.

The formalization of relationships between the dynamic coalitions and the secretariat has never materialized. The secretariat continues to publish information about dynamic coalitions on the IGF website and to provide them with space to meet during the annual IGF meeting, but there is no other formal relationship between the coalitions and the secretariat or the MAG. As of today, the IGF website lists 13 active and 6 inactive dynamic coalitions.[135] Some of the coalitions, such as the "Stop Spam Alliance" halted their activity because the policy issue lost its public relevance. Others, such as "Online Collaboration" or "A2K@IGF" dynamic coalition, did not get enough traction or were not capable of sustaining it over time. Yet other coalitions, merged to form a larger and more active body, such as the "Internet Bill of Rights" and "Framework of Principles for the Internet" dynamic coalitions, which joined forces to form the "Internet Rights and Principles" dynamic coalition.

---

[135] Available at: http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/dynamiccoalitions.

Although there is no formal relationship between the IGF secretariat and the dynamic coalitions, in terms of practice, the coalitions play a role in shaping the discourse of the forum. As discursive devices, the coalitions are utilized as authority amplifiers within the IGF setting. Talking on behalf of a coalition, which is a common practice, gives the speaker the aura of representativeness in the eyes of the other participants. Although speaking on behalf of a group is not a unique to the IGF structure of legitimation, the special status of informal dynamic coalitions that developed in the forum gives this particular form of perceived legitimation a unique IGF flavor; compared to other, non-IGF formed groups, this form of performance is viewed as more authentic to the IGF, thus carrying more weigh. The coalitions add another layer to the in-group/out-group dynamics of the IGF —a person typically belongs to a stakeholder group, which is an important marker of organizational identity within the IGF, but he or she can also belong to one or more dynamic coalitions, which makes them a member of another group within the IGF, thus adding another layer to their IGF identity. During the preparatory process an intervention on behalf of a coalition supposedly carries greater weight, compared to opinions expressed in personal capacity, because it represents a consensus of a group invested in the IGF process. Typically, the participants are careful to distinguish between the different capacities they are speaking in. During the annual event, it is a common sight in the workshops for people to introduce themselves as belonging to a dynamic coalition; some of the workshops are formally organized by the coalitions as well. Moreover, messages delivered on behalf of the coalitions in the plenary add a sense of authority not only to the speakers, but to the IGF itself; it allows performing a structured process of not only multistakeholder, but also multi-interest representation.

Also, from the point of view of practice, the coalitions are used for coordination of workshop proposal submissions and drafting statements for the "Taking Stock" session of the IGF. In between the annual meetings, the level of activity in coalitions varies. As part of my field work, I've joined the mailing lists of three coalitions, which provided me with wide range of examples of how this construct is being utilized. The Dynamic Coalition on Internet Rights and Principles (IRP), for example, maintains an active mailing list, where participants share relevant materials from other fora and coordinate activities not limited to the IGF settings. The Youth Coalition on Internet Governance (YCIG) also maintains a mailing list, but it gets utilized almost solely in relation to workshop submissions to the annual IGF event and then for coordination of activities at the event itself. Finally, the communication channels of Dynamic Coalition on Internet Values are mute. As loosely formalized entities, the level of communication between the annual IGF meetings depends solely on the initiative of the members of the coalition; I observed that individual leadership and existence of formal structures in the group play an important role in sustaining coalition activity via email—while the IRP has a well developed structure and a formalized steering committee[136], the other two coalitions I observed lack those elements (also see Cogburn, Johnsen, & Bhattacharyya, 2008 for discussion of factors influencing remote engagement in similar settings). However, the intensity of online activity between IGF meetings seems to be directly proportional to the reach and the amount of work a coalition manages to accomplish during the face to face meeting at the yearly IGF event. For example, while YCIG is still trying to figure out its own governance mechanisms (the coalition

---

[136] See IRP website for further details about its history and structure:
http://Internetrightsandprinciples.org/node/17

166

was established in 2009, but still does not have formal leadership), IRP is using the face to face time to coordinate interventions at the IGF and beyond. The more established and formalized, in the most traditional sense, a group is, the more active and effective it seems to be within the IGF space.

While coalitions vary in their level of activity and impact, they offer a form of belonging to the IGF in a more systematized fashion; they offer another identity marker to the IGF participants. It is my impression from participating in two annual meetings of the IGF, that most participants do not make use of the coalition mechanisms. Belonging to a coalition, and even more so, maintaining an active status within one and utilizing the membership status as an identity marker within the IGF community, are signs of a commitment to the IGF model; borrowing from engineering terminology, the coalitions amplify the authority of individual players.

The fixtures of the IGF—the secretariat, the MAG, its meetings, and solution such as the dynamic coalitions—are a set of evolving practices that enact a web of social structures. The emerging construct draws from the normative worlds of the bottom-up, meritocratic, and liberal ethos of the Internet community and the top-bottom, hierarchical, and nation-state-centric umbrella of the UN. Each culture strives to reify itself within the IGF; in doing so, it not only it affects the structures of the other culture, but also its own. For example, a government official representing a country following a formal diplomatic protocol enacts the hierarchical and nation-state centric way of thinking about policy deliberation; but by sitting at the same table with an Internet entrepreneur, who has an equal say in the debate, the government official alters the traditional thought, even if only nominally. Similarly, simply by participating in

a UN sponsored forum, the same entrepreneur enacts structures of legitimation and domination that are embodied in the nation-state-centric nature of the Union.

At the core of the IGF formalization is the notion of multistakeholderism, which in the IGF interpretation not only tackles the question of sovereignty in Internet governance, but also serves as a vessel for values such as openness, inclusivity, and individual freedoms. Mueller (2010) warned that as an *ideology* multistakeholderism is flawed and incomplete, as it "addresses issues of representation and process," but "does not provide any guidance on the substantive policy issues of Internet governance" (p. 264). Yet, analyzed through the lens of structuration, multistakeholderism can be seen instead as a *practice that enacts ideological elements*. It is not necessarily the "marriage" between the culture and the normative basis of the Internet community and that of the UN, as some of the IGFers have envisioned; it is more of an "adoption" of a version of liberal principles of Internet community by the intergovernmental system, and an adoption of the formal and somewhat hierarchical principles of the UN as a solution for representativeness and legitimacy. The ultimate power to choose the form, and frequently the substance, of engagement remains with the governments, and these structures of domination are deeply rooted into the UN practice. The practices of the IGF, although somewhat constrained by the institutional settings of the UN, enact alternative power structures and structures of legitimation.

5.3. People of IGF

> *"It's my pleasure to meet many old friends all over again"*
> Nitin Desai, IGF Open Consultations, February 16, 2006

Previous sections focused primarily on the structures and practices of the IGF. This section will focus explicitly on the actors in order to complete the puzzle of agency and structure as they are expressed through the practice of the forum. Mueller (2010; see also Malcolm, 2008) classified IGF participants into the IGF "hawks and doves" (p.110). He explained that the "hawks"—developing, mostly BRICS, countries and civil society organizations—wanted to see a more formalized IGF that produces tangible results (e.g. intergovernmental framework convention, policy recommendations, etc.); on the other hand, the "doves"—mostly Western development government, the private sector, and the technical community—sought to maintain existing status quo and focused on the informational and educational aspects of the IGF. While this is a useful classification for understanding the perspectives and the motives of various players, it provides little insight into the potential influence of individual actors on the structuration processes and the discourse of the IGF.

In my observations, I identified two broadly defined groups that exert qualitatively different influence on the discourse of the IGF. The first group is a loosely connected collective of Internet pioneers and government officials, who participate, primarily in the annual meeting of the IGF. Members of this collective draw their authority on external to the forum sources, such as a position in the host government or legacy of a pivotal role in the Internet community. Their impact on the discourse of the forum is temporal and typically reifies structures of the communities from which they draw their authority. I label this group the "IGF celebrities." The second group is much more cohesive and consists of the persistent participants, who have mostly self-selected to take greater stock in the IGF. Members of this group draw their authority not only from external sources, but also, and perhaps mostly, from their long-term

engagement in the IGF process. These are the people who participate actively in the

consultation process, serve on MAG, and take active roles in various dynamic coalitions. Their

impact on the IGF is longitudinal and as such they have more opportunities to challenge the

structural assumptions of each other and those getting formalized through the IGF practice. I

identify this group as the "IGF nucleus." The interaction between the nucleus and the cell is at

the heart of the structuration process of the forum. In both cases, the actors draw on the

structural resources of the IGF, which enable both groups to exercise their agency in particular

ways, while also reifying the structural heritage they bring from their home institutions. In this

context, the celebrities, both political and technical, have more prescribed roles that reify the

structures typical to their communities; the participants in the nucleus, however, spend more

time resolving intra-IGF discrepancies that stem from the collision of different ways of thinking

about the appropriate conduct of Internet policy deliberations.

5.3.1. IGF celebrities

One group that frequently exhibits celebrity behavior across various IGFs is the high-level

officials of the host country. As mentioned above, the host country, which picks up most of the

bill for the annual gathering of the IGF, receives more "air-time" during the event. It is

customary to invite local politicians and industry leaders to participate in the opening and

closing ceremonies, plenary sessions and social events during the meeting. In many cases, these

interventions are staged with great fanfare and rigid protocol. It is a demonstration of state

political power and affirmation of its central role in the context of the meeting. As a ritual

emphasizing importance, main actors, such as prime ministers or ministers, would leave the

venue right after their speech. Their "tangible" impact on the IGF discourse, however, is typically limited in both scope and span; from a structural perspective they are beholden to and reify hierarchical structures of authority, where the nation state holds a central position.

The most illustrative example of such participation I observed in 2009 during the IGF in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, when then-the-first-lady of Egypt, Susan Mubarak, was one of the speakers. To accommodate her schedule and her security needs, the speech was rescheduled a number of times at a very short notice until it was finalized to take place on the last day of the forum. The speech, scheduled at the last moment, interfered with the regular schedule of the IGF; workshops had to be shortened and rescheduled, while at the same time many people were rushing to their flights. Accommodating the security needs of the first lady also required additional screening at the entrance to the venue, which caused another delay and being arranged at the last minute, did not allow for adequate planning on behalf of the IGF organizers and participants. As a result, while the content of Ms. Mubarak's speech[137] may have had little substantive impact on the IGF, the way it was conducted had influence in both the short and the long terms. In the immediate term, the need to adjust other workshops to accommodate Ms. Mubarak's schedule impacted the discussions in all these workshops by altering their settings. In the long term, the impact could be twofold. First, making Ms. Mubarak's speech a central piece of the forum's program was celebrating the authority of the nation-state. By demonstrating acknowledgment through participation of a high-level government official, the

---

[137] The speech and the panel discussion that followed are available at:
http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/2009/sharm_el_Sheikh/Transcripts/Sharm%20El%20Sheikh%2018%20November%2009%20Honorary%20Session.txt

IGF reified its own legitimacy both towards its participants and towards other, competing fora

where the legitimacy of the IGF is questioned. Second, by accommodating Ms. Mubarak and

observing the protocol, the IGF enacted a clear power structure between the political elite of

the host country and other attendees of the forum.

A very different class of celebrities in the IGF is the techno-political elites of the Internet

community. "Fathers of the Internet," the engineers behind various aspects of the modern

Internet, TCP/IP or Web, have a celebrity status within the IGF community. Most notable tech-

celebrities I observed in the IGF meetings I attended were Vint Cerf, Bob Kahn, and Tim

Berners-Lee.[138] When Vint Cerf participated in the Vilnius IGF in 2010, the most common sight

was seeing him taking pictures with the forum attendees. Tech-celebrities attract more

participation, when they are part of a workshop, not just in the plenary. As one of the

participants in the February 2011 Open Consultation noticed, "when you have a workshop

being attended by Vint Cerf. You would have people even standing outside the room and

blocking the entrances to the other workshops."[139] When Cerf, Kahn, or Berners-Lee participate

in a workshop or in a plenary, the content of their speeches would resonate throughout the

conference—in their presentations and interventions from the floor other attendees would

refer back to the content of celebrity speeches or conversations they had with them.[140]

---

[138] Vint Cerf and Bob Kahn were among those who co-created the fundamental communication protocols of the Internet (the Transmission Control Protocol and the Internet Protocol) and were pivotal in the establishment of Internet institutions such as ICANN and ISOC. Tim Berners-Lee is credited with the invention of the Hypertext Transfer Protocol and the World Wide Web.

[139] IGF Open Consultations, February 2011, Geneva, Switzerland.

[140] For example see Jonathan Charles's comment as he chaired the "Taking Stock" plenary session during Vilnius, 2010 IGF:

Having tech-celebrities participating in the IGF and at the same time repeatedly celebrating

their foundational roles in creating the Internet provides the IGF with another structure of

legitimation. Similar to the political celebrities who reify nation-state-centric way thinking

through their symbolic behavior, the tech celebrities do the same with regards to the Internet

community. The iconic figures of the Internet are symbolic in that they are associated with the

ethos of the Internet as "a unique electronic frontier, one that steadfastly resists all attempts at

governmental control or state-imposed regulation" (Drissel, 2006, p. 105; also see Uimonen,

2003). Some of the "Internet pioneers" have also aligned themselves clearly with the private-

sector-led Internet governance arrangement. Vint Cerf, for example has actively contributed to

the formation of ICANN and served on its board between 1999 and 2007. In other words, while

government-celebrities offer the IGF legitimacy rooted in the centrality of the nation-state as

the ultimate source of power, tech-celebrities offer the IGF the legitimacy of the Internet

community and its meritocratic approach to authority. The formal interaction between the two

types of celebrities within the IGF context therefore is an exemplary performance of

multistakholderism, which over time both normalizes the idea as a form of information policy

deliberation and sets the terms for what multistakholderism can look like in practice.

There is this question we're discussing this afternoon as to whether or not Internet Governance is keeping up with the pace of change in the Internet. And Bob Kahn said something at lunchtime which I hope you won't mind me repeating, a very interesting thought. That was that we should perhaps devote some of our speaking time at future IGFs to the idea of looking further ahead because we spend a lot of time looking at the current issues, when actually, the Internet is moving faster than we are sometimes. And maybe there is a case for sometimes throwing our perspective 10 or 15 years ahead and have some very specific broader blue skies thinking on that. That may be something you want to reflect on as you frame your discussion this afternoon.

5.3.2. IGF nucleus

The core group of the IGF, or its nucleus, is rather small. It includes those, who are actively involved in shaping the IGF as an institution and its discourse on an ongoing basis. These are the people who attend most of the preparatory meetings, the annual IGF events, and participate actively in online discussions in between the meetings. They are also more likely to be members of the MAG or serve as its consultants, to be a speaker in the IGF plenary or appear in a number of workshops or even to intervene from the floor. Many of the members of the nucleus have continued their involvement in IGF since the days of WSIS and WGIG. People like Avri Doria, Ayesha Hassan, Marilyn Cade, Raúl Echeberría, William Drake, Wolfgang Kleinwächter, and others, who participated in drafting the WGIG report, are still active members of the IGF community; most have made Internet-governance-related activities part of their day jobs. These people were engaged in the early consultations on IGF: they interpreted its mandate in a broad fashion, argued for various institutional arrangements for the MAG, and actively participated in design of agendas of the annual IGF events. They are occasionally hired by the secretariat as consultants to work on the summary report or to edit the proceedings of the annual events. These are the people who are invested in the IGF and who appear to be genuinely concerned with making it a meaningful space for Internet policy discussion. These are also the people who have the most persistent and conscious impact on the structures of the IGF, preserving the forum being the most consistent goal across the board.

As I mentioned above, participation in the IGF process is costly. Having the secretariat housed in the Geneva headquarters of the UN favors those based on the European continent and those

for whom attending IGF and other Internet-policy-related meetings is part of their job. Looking

at the most persistent participants in the IGF open consultations (Table 5), we will see, for

example, the governments of Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, Japan, France, India, Russia, and the

United States, all of which have Geneva missions, as well as the European Union and the

Council of Europe. Among the NGOs for example, are APC, which established itself as a pivotal

civil society player during the WSIS (see Mueller, 2010); the Diplo Foundation, led by Jovan

Kurbalija; and the Conference of NGOs (CONGO), led by Qusai Al-Shatti. All have European

offices and have demonstrated the strongest stamina in terms of persistent participation. In the

business community, Marilyn Cade (who at different points has represented different entities),

the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), specifically Ayesha Hassan, and then the

European Telecommunications Network Operators (ETNO) have been the most persistent

participants in the IGF process. Finally, a group of European academics, including Wolfgang

Kleinwächter, William Drake, and Francis Muguet are also among the more persistent IGFers.

Being the most persistent participants, the members of the nucleus are the main carriers of the

IGF structures, as those are expressed in continuous debates about the internal organization of

the forum and both formal and informal understandings achieved during the consultative

process. To a degree, their way of thinking about the IGF and Internet governance is what

defines the IGF as an emerging institution.

Members of the nucleus are not only more persistent in their participation, but they are also

more likely to engage in the discussions during the preparatory process. For example, members

of the persistent group made 2.5 interventions per meeting on average, while the other

participants made only 1.9 interventions (Table 5). Similarly, members of the persistent group

were more voluminous in their interventions. On average, a member of the nucleus would use 814 words per meeting, compared to 530 for everybody else.[141] Taken together, these quantitative markers add to the overall impression that there is a core group driving the debate that shapes the IGF. While there are a variety of opinions expressed by the members of this group, they appear united in their explicit appreciation of the IGF process with an emphasis on its desirability.

[continues after tables]

---

[141] Reversing the lens and looking at the top 20 most active (Table 6) or top 20 most voluminous (Table 7) participants keeps a number of the persistent participants on the list.

Table 5: Actors who participated in 5 or more open consultations, 2006-2010

	Total #interventions	Total #words	Persistence	Interventions per meeting	Words per meeting
MARILYN CADE	56	12256	**10**	5.6	1225.6
BERTRAND DE LA CHAPELLE	71	23489	**9**	7.9	2609.9
WILLIAM DRAKE	22	10887	**9**	2.4	1209.7
AYESHA HASSAN	38	9715	**9**	4.2	1079.4
FRANCIS MUGUET	24	7752	**9**	2.7	861.3
WOLFGANG KLEINWAECHTER	21	5316	**9**	2.3	590.7
CHINA	16	4798	**9**	1.8	533.1
BILL GRAHAM	16	4539	**9**	1.8	504.3
ADAM PEAKE	13	3872	**9**	1.4	430.2
EGYPT	18	7086	**8**	2.3	885.8
EMILY TAYLOR	13	4000	**8**	1.6	500.0
UNESCO	11	3515	**8**	1.4	439.4
UNITED STATES	10	2429	**8**	1.3	303.6
BRAZIL	26	12036	**7**	3.7	1719.4
ETNO	14	8591	**7**	2.0	1227.3
COUNCIL OF EUROPE	8	4623	**7**	1.1	660.4
JOVAN KURBALIJA	9	4237	**7**	1.3	605.3
QUSAI AL-SHATTI	10	3444	**7**	1.4	492.0
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	9	3078	**7**	1.3	439.7
ICC	18	9213	**6**	3.0	1535.5
GEORGE PAPADATOS	35	6933	**6**	5.8	1155.5
MARTIN BOYLE	17	6367	**6**	2.8	1061.2
RAUL ECHEBERRIA	16	6195	**6**	2.7	1032.5
APC	11	4616	**6**	1.8	769.3
INDIA	9	4031	**6**	1.5	671.8
KAREN BANKS	7	3499	**6**	1.2	583.2
EUROPEAN UNION	6	3032	**6**	1.0	505.3
GINGER PAQUE	34	6962	**5**	6.8	1392.4
SWITZERLAND	9	5090	**5**	1.8	1018.0
LEE HIBBARD	21	4888	**5**	4.2	977.6
FOUAD BAJWA	28	3941	**5**	5.6	788.2
PARMINDER SINGH	10	3836	**5**	2.0	767.2
EL SALVADOR	6	3207	**5**	1.2	641.4
KATITZA RODRIGUEZ	17	2759	**5**	3.4	551.8
JEFF BRUEGGEMAN	10	2607	**5**	2.0	521.4
CANADA	6	2222	**5**	1.2	444.4
JEANETTE HOFMANN	8	1894	**5**	1.6	378.8
EUROLINC	6	1884	**5**	1.2	376.8
JAPAN	5	1400	**5**	1.0	280.0

Notes:

1. The calculations are based on automated analysis of Open Consultation meeting transcripts 2006-2010.
2. 5 meetings constitute over 1/3 of the total number of Open Consultations 2006-2010
3. The calculations exclude Nitin Desai and Markus Kummer, who clearly were the most persistent, the most active, and the most voluminous participants
4. Not all participants could be identified as individual due to the practice of UN meetings to call upon speakers using their institutional affiliation. Thus, for example, it is quite possible that when APC is listed as an intervener, it is possible that Karen Banks was speaking on behalf of the organization. Similarly, Ayesha Hassan commonly speaks on behalf of ICC.
5. I counted any intervention longer than 20 words as substantive. The purpose of this practice was to eliminate noise stemming from technical interactions (e.g. a microphone that does not work).

Table 6: The 20 most active participants (number of interventions per meeting, 2006-2010)

Name	Affiliation	Total #interventions	Total #words	Persistence	Interventions per meeting	Words per meeting
HADIL DA ROCHA VIANNA	Government of Brazil	58	5993	2	29.0	2996.5
LIESYL FRANZ	TechAmerica	46	3941	2	23.0	1970.5
RAQUEL GATTO	NIC.br	10	865	1	10.0	865.0
EDMON CHUNG	DotAsia	9	441	1	9.0	441.0
LUCINDA FELL	Childnet International	8	625	1	8.0	625.0
BERTRAND DE LA CHAPELLE	Government of France	71	23489	9	7.9	2609.9
ANDREA SAKS	Personal Capacity	29	3793	4	7.3	948.3
PATRIK FALSTROM	Cisco	21	2091	3	7.0	697.0
ANDREY SHCHERBOVICH	Moscow State University	7	1174	1	7.0	1174.0
CHRISTINE ARIDA	Government of Egypt	7	640	1	7.0	640.0
GINGER PAQUE	Diplo Foundation	34	6962	5	6.8	1392.4
GEORGE PAPADATOS	Government of Greece	35	6933	6	5.8	1155.5
OLGA CAVALLI	Government of Argentina	23	3058	4	5.8	764.5
MARILYN CADE	mCADE LLC	56	12256	10	5.6	1225.6
FOUAD BAJWA	Independent consultant	33	4932	8	5.5	822.0
CHRIS DISSPAIN	.au Domain Administration Ltd.	20	2089	4	5.0	522.3
ALEJANDRO PISANTY	ISOC Mexico	5	2832	1	5.0	2832.0
SYRIA	Government of Syria	5	1481	1	5.0	1481.0
YASSER HASSAN IBRAHIM	Government of Egypt	5	1308	1	5.0	1308.0
STEPHEN LAU	HP	14	2857	3	4.7	952.3

Notes:

1. See notes to Table 5.
2. Affiliations of some participants change over time. The table includes the most dominant affiliation in the course of the five years between 2006 and 2010.

Table 7: Top 20 most voluminous participants (number of words per meeting, 2006-2010)

Name	Affiliation	Total #interventions	Total #words	Persistence	Interventions per meeting	Words per meeting
HADIL DA ROCHA VIANNA	Government of Brazil	58	5993	2	29.0	2996.5
ALEJANDRO PISANTY	ISOC Mexico	5	2832	1	5.0	2832.0
BERTRAND DE LA CHAPELLE	Government of France	71	23489	9	7.9	2609.9
WOLFGANG KLEINWACHTER	University of Aarhus	5	4710	2	2.5	2355.0
LIESYL FRANZ	TechAmerica	46	3941	2	23.0	1970.5
CCBI	International Chamber of Commerce	3	1886	1	3.0	1886.0
KONSTANTIN KLADOURAS	European Telecom Network Operators (ETNO)	11	5213	3	3.7	1737.7
BRAZIL	Government of Brazil	26	12036	7	3.7	1719.4
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce	18	9213	6	3.0	1535.5
NERMINE EL SAADANY	Government of Egypt	9	4464	3	3.0	1488.0
SYRIA	Government of Syria	5	1481	1	5.0	1481.0
FRANCE	Government of France	10	5754	4	2.5	1438.5
GINGER PAQUE	Diplo Foundation	34	6962	5	6.8	1392.4
IAN PETER	Ian Peter and Associates Pty Ltd	3	1388	1	3.0	1388.0
YASSER HASSAN IBRAHIM	Government of Egypt	5	1308	1	5.0	1308.0
ETNO	European Telecom Network Operators (ETNO)	14	8591	7	2.0	1227.3
MARILYN CADE	mCADE LLC	56	12256	10	5.6	1225.6
VITTORIO BERTOLA	ISOC-ECC	3	2421	2	1.5	1210.5
WILLIAM DRAKE	Centre for International Governance	22	10887	9	2.4	1209.7
MILTON MUELLER	Syracuse University	11	4827	4	2.8	1206.8

The nucleus of the IGF is characterized by two primary factors. First, it is socially close. While those, who sporadically attend the annual IGF events or occasionally partake in the preparatory process, exhibit loose associations[142] based primarily on their professional interest, people at the nucleus exhibit attributes of task or even intimacy groups[143] (Lickel et al., 2001). This cohesion of the nucleus has a self reinforcing tendency in terms of strengthening the views of the nucleus about the IGF and Internet governance, and at the same time protecting those views from outside influences. In other words, in a classical Giddens-ean fashion, the existence of the nucleus is reifying the structural trajectory started during WSIS.

To be a member of the nucleus it is not enough to attend the preparatory process, it is also required to share a set of common goals and priorities. Members of the nucleus seem to share a belief in the uniqueness of the IGF as a multistakeholder forum and they strive to maintain its relevance among other fora where Internet governance is discussed. In other words, while the members of the nucleus represent different cultures and institutional settings, there is an established meta-structure at the basis of the IGF as it is represented through the practices of the nucleus. This unanimous support of the IGF as a concept is particularly evident when there is an external threat to the IGF. For example, when the question of renewal of the IGF mandate was discussed, there was unanimous support among the members of the nucleus about continuing the IGF. They might have disagreed about the direction of the forum, but there was

---

[142] Lickel et al. (2001) describe loose associations as marked by "very high permeability; fairly short duration; and low levels of interaction, common goals, common outcomes, importance, and similarity" (p.131).

[143] Lickel et al. (2001) describe task groups as "small in size; moderate in duration and permeability; and moderately high in interaction, common goals, common outcomes, importance, and similarity;" using the same criteria, intimacy groups are perceived as "having a long duration; as being small and impermeable; and as having high levels of interaction, common goals, common outcomes, importance, and group member similarity" (p.131).

no questions raised about the principle desirability and the multistakeholder character of the IGF. China was the only persistent delegation which stated during the Open Consultations that they do not intend to vote for the extenuation of the IGF mandate.[144]

The use of first names is one of the prominent practices that delineate the nucleus group. It was common during the preparatory process that Desai or Kummer, as chairs of the meeting, called on the members of the nucleus, those they personally knew, by their first names; they would call on those outside of the nucleus using generic names or names of the entities those people were represented. For example, the Chinese delegation, the only one that openly questioned the necessity of continuation of the IGF, was always referred to as an entity, while members of other government delegations, such as that of Brazil, Greece or the Council of Europe, are frequently called on using their first names. Distancing those confronting the internal basic consensus of the IGF nucleus through a particular form of signification is again part of reifying the emerging structures of legitimation and domination.

There were other indicators of this social intimacy. I also observed cases of loss in one's family and the support that the community provided; I learned that romance is not foreign to the halls of Palais des Nations and there are couples that grew out of IGF; I heard stories of vacations people spent together with each other's families. But, I also witnessed cases of personal animosity, mistrust, and professional betrayal. One of my informants used the analogy of a family to describe this community. "There are always disagreements within the family," she explained, "And people argue with each other. But when something happens to you or if there

---

[144] IGF Open Consultations, February 2009, Geneva, Switzerland.

is an outside threat, the family will always be there for you to support." In other words, the nucleus group is by no means homogenous and it enacts political tensions surrounding long-standing Internet governance issues such as management of names and numbers and the role of the nation-states in Internet-related policy-making. At the same time, there is a sense of solidarity and a joint mission among the members of the nucleus; or in other words, a shared structural basis. As another one of my interviewees, a member of the nucleus, put it, "I also think we value the relationships that get built. It's not just what happens in the room. " The notion of family makes the interactions among the members of the nucleus more personal and it also makes the group less permeable to those outside of the nucleus.

The second characteristic of the nucleus is that its members are very mobile and focused at the same time. Over the relatively short span of IGF history, a number of individuals, who can be associated with the nucleus, have changed their professional affiliations and even the stakeholder groups to which they belong, but remained active within the IGF in their new capacities. For example, when the IGF started, William Drake was the president of Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility, an international NGO that developed professional ethics among a new class of experts, but soon after that he shifted back to an academic career with the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. Bertrand de La Chapelle shifted stakeholder groups at the end of 2010, when he left his position as a Special Envoy for the Information Society with the French Foreign Ministry to become a Program Director at the International Diplomatic Academy and to join the board of directors of ICANN. Bill Graham made a similar move in 2007 when he left a position with Canadian Government to work on strategic global engagement at ISOC. Most recently, Markus Kummer, has left his

position as an Executive Coordinator of the IGF to become a Vice President of Public Policy at ISOC. While changing their institutional affiliations these individuals remain actively involved in and committed to the IGF processes; for them doing this under a different institutional label is to approach Internet governance from a different angle.[145] This shift draws a picture of IGF as not only professional, but a personal quest for those in the nucleus.

While many IGF participants are there because it is their job, the members of the nucleus seem to adjust their jobs so that they can participate. They seem to seek positions that allow them a way of participation that better suits their personal aspirations with regards to the forum. They are on a mission to make the Internet ethos compatible with the intergovernmental system of decision-making. This focused mobility is an important attribute from the point of view of structuration, because it suggests that members of the nucleus are not only the most influential group that maintains the conceptual infrastructure of the forum, but also acts as ambassadors to other institutional settings by leveraging their experience with IGF. Furthermore, focused mobility enhances the persistence factor of the members of the nucleus.

Over the years, the IGF developed a series of practices that embody a value system that sees merit in non-binding discussion, inclusion of non-state stakeholders in policy debate, organic institutional evolution, and a belief in the ultimately positive impact of the Internet. As Esterhuysen (2008, p. 38) explained:

---

[145] In response to a question about separating the different institutional "hats," one of the interviewees explained: "You don't really need to distinguish them you just need to wear a really good, broad, rimmed hat and keep embellishing it with different bells and whistles, because the fundamental principle of Internet and user voice and stability and security and all of those things that go across all of them."

To be successful, the IGF needed to draw on two cultures - the formal culture of the UN system and the informal culture of the Internet. Only by balancing these two cultures could the IGF attract the support and participation - as importantly, the positive participation - of the necessary range of participants. In practice, the IGF adopted more of the Internet community's informality than of the UN system's formalism. The relatively informal and egalitarian character of the IGF felt appropriate and should be maintained in the future."

Yet, I would argue that it is those individuals that constitute the IGF community, and especially the nucleus, who carry on this value system: not necessarily IGF as a well defined institution (because it is not), but a collective of individuals, who care deeply about the subject matter and share some basic agreement about the way solution might be reached. Paraphrasing Kelty (2008), the nucleus represents a community that exists insofar as it comes together in new forms of Internet-related policy discourse of its own creation. While their affinity is very clearly constituted through the IGF, the forum is not the only reason for that affinity. It is this collective affinity that Kelty refers to as a recursive public. "Because it is impossible to understand this affinity by trying to identify particular types of people, it is necessary to turn to historically specific sets of practices that form the substance of their affinity" (p.92). The analysis of the IGF presented in this and previous chapters, offers this perspective.

While the IGF community remains true to its multistakeholder ethos and, at least nominally, is open to a plurality of opinions, one needs to subscribe to this value system to develop that affinity, in order to participate in the forum effectively and sustainably. Those who steered away from the IGF, despite their initial interest for the forum, are an interesting illustration of this point. Iran and Pakistan, two vocal speakers on behalf of "G-77 and China" in the early stages of IGF, are no longer participating in the IGF meetings. The Iranian representative was an

important factor in making Internet critical resources part of the IGF agenda. Yet, despite that success, the Iranian delegation is no longer taking part in open consultations.

An episode I witnessed during one of my research trips suggests that while Iran may have practical reasons for withdrawing its mission from the IGF processes[146], there also remain deep conceptual divides. I witnessed an argument between that representative and a member of the IGF nucleus. The argument took place in the spring 2009, at the beginning of debates about the extension of the IGF mandate. The Iranian diplomat was arguing that the IGF has failed its mandate, because it did not address the question of US control over ICANN thoroughly enough. In return, the member of the IGF nucleus called upon the Iranian delegation to raise this issue within the forum, stating that IGF exists exactly for the purpose of hosting this kind of discussion. The argument quickly deteriorated into a (diplomatic) shouting match regarding the merits of non-government-centric public policy fora. In other words, although it started as a disagreement about a specific issue, the argument was essentially about the value system enacted through the practices of the IGF.

The argument presented above illustrates the main catalyst of the structural processes of the IGF—cognizant and knowledgeable participants as agents who enact a variety of often conflicting social structures. The IGF draws its legitimacy on participation. Celebrity participants,

---

[146] During open consultations in 2006 and 2007, Iran called upon the IGF to address the issue of enhanced cooperation, which, together with the establishment of the forum, was one of the action items on Tunis Agenda for Information Society document. The concept of enhanced cooperation implied intergovernmental, as opposed to multistakeholder, control over Internet-related international public policy, and the calls of the Iranian delegation were systematically dissolved in the IGF (see Malcolm, 2008; Mueller, 2010). As time passed, other organizations, such as the ITU, added enhanced cooperation to their agenda, which could explain the shift in resource allocation by the Iranian delegation (in Epstein, 2010 I discuss the active role of the Iranian delegation in the ITU, which may further rationalize the shift).

acting in their respective roles during the annual IGF event, offer the IGF the legitimacy of their

respective communities and ideological bases. The government-celebrities reify the centrality

of the state in Internet policy debate and amplify the state-centric environment of the UN

where the IGF is hosted. The tech-celebrities, however, symbolize a set of private-sector

focused and individual liberties oriented culture of the Internet community. Having both

participating in the IGF creates a new, hybrid source of legitimacy for the IGF and also shifts the

perceptions of power among the IGF participants; by acknowledging the concept of

multistakeholderism through their participation, the nation-sate actors concede some of their

symbolic power otherwise contained within the UN system (same holds true for the other side

of the argument, i.e. actors representing the Internet community).

The IGF nucleus has undergone a process of self-selection, so that the people who remain

active do share a common appreciation of the process and the values it represents. The

tightness of the core group and its high profile in shaping the practices of the IGF make it a

major ideological force. The nucleus solidified multistakeholderism as vessel for values such as

openness, inclusivity, and individual freedoms, and made it a major organizing principle both

for the forum and for their vision of the Internet governance regime. Although there are

debates within the nucleus itself about the role of nation-states vis-à-vis individual liberties in

the ultimate Internet regime, this vision is constructed primarily using the vocabulary of

individual freedoms. These ideological elements enacted through practice of the nucleus are

both reified and challenge by the rest of the IGF community. On the one hand, as a rather tight

task group, the nucleus is not particularly welcoming to ideas that deviate from its status quo

(e.g. the Chinese and the Iranian cases). On the other hand, members of the nucleus are in a

continuous interaction with the broader community IGF participants, where they enact and reflect on the structures emerging from the group. In other words, although a significant driving factor in the IGF, the nucleus is both shaping and is being shaped by the universe of Internet governance debates.

5.4. Governing through discourse

The story of the IGF is a story of a contest for power. Yet, it is not a typical one. The forum was created as a venue for the unresolved tensions of the WSIS, but without any authority for policymaking in the traditional sense. On the face of it, this is an impossible arrangement – a policy forum without the formal legitimacy to make and without the material resources to assert any decision. This apparent lack of traditional authority and lack of material leverage within the forum make it difficult to explain the IGF in terms of theories of international relations, which rely heavily on existence of material resources at the basis of power. The analysis above suggests that power within and of the IGF may not be material but conceptual, and the outcome of the forum may better be viewed not as tangible, but ideological.

In Giddens's (1984a) terms, the debate in the IGF is about producing and reproducing structures of domination by enacting structures of signification and reifying structures of legitimation derived from a variety of contexts. This phenomenon, however, is difficult to explain in terms of traditional theories of international relations, precisely because of the lack of tangible resources as the basis of power. The theory of structuration shifts attention from power defined exclusively in terms of allocative resources, which is at the basis of evolutionary

theories such as realism and rational choice institutionalism, to power understood in terms of authoritative resources.[147] As Giddens wrote:

> The augmenting of material resources *is* fundamental to the expansion of power, but allocative resources cannot be developed without the transmutation of authoritative resources, and the latter are undoubtedly at least as important in providing 'levers' of social change as the former (p. 260).

While the IGF process, and the IGF debate, is to some degree concerned with and driven by allocative resources, the main focus is indeed on the authoritative resources. Bringing the two worlds—that of the UN and that of the "Internet community" (Esterhuysen, 2008)—into a single discursive space produced an arsenal of practices that enact the dialectic relationships between structures and discourses originating in the different conceptual "homes" of the IGF participants.

For a participant in the debate, who is focused on carrying his or her point across, the structures and discourses are inseparable as these are the conceptual tools they are used to operating with (Yanow, 1999). Yet, from an analytical perspective, unpacking discursive practices may shed light on the state of the IGF structures as a way of thinking about the Internet and its governance, because it is in the discursive interaction that the original ways of

---

[147] Giddens (1984b) distinguishes between allocative and authoritative resources. The former are tangible, physical resources, such as material features of the environment, the means of material production and reproduction, and produced goods; the latter are described as conceptual infrastructure and include organization of social time-space, production and reproduction of the body, and organization of life chances (see pages 256-262).

perceiving the world are expressed by the actors. What ideological elements are enacted in IGF discourse? How do those change over time or in different contexts?

Structuration theory places the analytical focus on the discourse of the IGF as a social practice. It is through observing the dynamics of discourse one can observe the constitution of structures of dominance based on authoritative resources. The unique contribution of the theory of structuration in this case is that it offers a holistic framework where structure and agency are inherently intertwined, not treated separately as in approaches such as realism, rational choice or constructivism. Building off Sikkink's (2001, p. 393) critique of the theories of international relations, structuration offers "a more specific understanding of who the relevant actors are, what they want, and what the content of social structures might be." This framework allows us to treat policy discourse as a power manufacturing process that happens through the actions of individual actors involved in the act of policy deliberation; it can be unpacked through analysis of their perceptions of the world and their understanding of what is normal, normative, or desired; and it is more clearly observable when the discourse centers on conscious construction of institutions for policy deliberation, which is the case of the IGF.

The structural tensions between the UN heritage of the IGF and the Internet-community-inspired innovations are reflected in the way discourse is conducted at the IGF. Structurational tensions in this context are more than formal rules of engagement in each one of these spaces. They are the ways in which participants, particularly veteran participants, in these spaces think, what they hold as normal and obvious elements of the information policymaking world. On the one hand, the UN discourse is built around the centrality of the nation-state as the primary

decision making entity and a hierarchical approach to decision making. Donahue and Prosser

(1997) described UN addresses as a distinct genre containing the following elements: "(a)

congratulations to the current President of the proceedings, or at least addressing the speech

toward him or her or similar officer, (b) an affirmation of the importance or the necessity of the

UN and one's alliance to its aims, (c) the use of highly polite and formal language, (d)

observations on regional or world issues" (p.65). Scott (2001) alludes to the use of ambiguity as

another pivotal element of the UN genre, especially in the area of conference diplomacy.

Observing the genre is one of the defining factors of the community of practice that is UN

diplomats. The actors need to operate within the boundaries of the genre to maintain their

legitimacy and authority; for a career diplomat in the UN system, these are the obvious

elements of how one conducts him or herself if they want to be a legitimate part of this

community and a voice that will be listened to. To derive power from this system they need to

manipulate the elements of the genre in order to achieve their goals and dominate. Yet, by

working within the elements of genre, either using of abusing them, the participants in the UN

setting legitimize the authority of the UN as an intergovernmental institution [148]. Like in a game

of chess, an experienced player may come up with creative solution to a complex situation;

while the number of such solutions is practically infinite, all these solutions have to play out

---

[148] Donahue and Prosser's (1997) book analyzes UN discourse surrounding conflicts, which makes articulation of the elements of the genre more prominent. During my field work at the ITU, I could observe similar elements of the genre within the specific context of the Union. Both presidium speakers and interveners from the floor would congratulate the presiding officers and address their intervention to him or her. They would use polite and formal language, and affirm the importance of the ITU and never pose direct critique of the Union. Finally, speeches would build off observations about the state of the world telecom or the state of the meeting, depending on the particular context. Another element of the ITU genre is continuous reference to the issues of development as part of the reasoning for one's position.

only according to the rules of the game. The difference from a game of chess, however, is that in the case of UN deliberations these rules are not set in stone. Instead they are reified through repeated behavior and argumentation tactics, no matter the final outcome of a particular debate.

On the other hand, the Internet community is drawn from a plurality of fields, each with a set of distinctive discursive genres. There is no single genre that unites the various discourses of all the organizations that constitute the Internet community. Yet, there are strong links to the early ethos of the Internet as a free and open network, and the Internet governance process as based on principles of meritocracy and bottom-up problem solving. For example, Braman (2010), when analyzing the discourse of the IETF, noticed that the formal ground rules were as follows: "anyone was welcome to speak, there were no genre restrictions, minimum required length was one sentence, and any thoughts, however tentative, were welcome" (p.310). Similar to the factors that constitute the UN as a community of practice, here a different set of behaviors and perceptions of the normal and the normative constitute a community of practice that is Internet technologists.

While on the face of it, these genres are different, the fundamental mechanism behind both is similar from the perspective of the theory of structuration; as genres represent an assembly of structural properties and practices. Just like the UN diplomats practice certain elements of genre that celebrate the nation state as a pivotal organizing principle, the Internet community enacts a different set of practices, which reifies their view of meritocratic and distributed authority in Internet matters. The two discursive genres delineate the range of the discursive

arsenal deployed in the IGF. Between the two extremes lies a variety of combination of discursive elements, which are deployed strategically by the IGF participants.

In the IGF, the two genres were forced to co-exist, which from the structuration point of view is bound to produce new structures, new ways of thinking. Each genre brings with it distinct structures of domination "whereby power that 'flows smoothly' in processes of social reproduction (and is, at it were, 'unseen') operates" (Giddens, 1984a, p. 257) in ways that are unique to that genre. Yet, as the analysis above demonstrates, when elements of one genre are placed in the context of another, they are reinterpreted; structures of domination in one context can be adopted with a different meaning in another and new structures of domination (and legitimation) emerge.

The procedural change that allowed participation of non-government stakeholders, in formerly state-dominated domain of public policymaking, was a significant strategic achievement for the multistakeholderism movement. Yet on the tactical level, in order to participate, the non-state actors must conform to the UN discursive practices, or, in other words, rely on the structures of domination, legitimation, and signification. This meant using the UN classification system of stakeholder groups, being conscious about how many times one took the floor, observing the rituals of congratulating the presiding officers, and conducting the verbal exchange through them. These procedural norms are observed more strictly during the plenary sessions of the annual IGF even; less so during the consultative processes, which is hosted in the UN headquarters; and in the workshops of the annual event, one can observe the most casual and interactive atmosphere, which is closer to the practices of discourse in communities such as the

IETF. The degree of (in)formality of a workshop is typically a function of institutional identity of the organizers; workshops organized by corporate players and government representatives tend to be more formal, while workshops organized by the members of the civil society tend to be more casual.[149]

The need to conform to the UN genre put the newcomers to the UN system (mostly non-state actors) at a relative disadvantage, compared to the veterans (nation-states). Many of the state-centric UN practices, such as identifying participants by the country they represent or the enhanced sense of authority associated with speaking on behalf of a country, are still followed in the IGF. Adopting attributes of traditional UN discourse meant also enacting the underlying structures of legitimation, which originally evolved around nation-states as primary actors. When affirming the importance and necessity of the multistakeholder approach, for example, it is more common for the non-state actors to acknowledge the importance of the participation of the governments, but the reverse is not always true. Similarly, the need for consensus, although formally dismissed by the IGF leadership (because the IGF is a non-binding forum), is widely practiced and also deployed as a rhetorical device. Another UN-specific attribute is the power of "development" as a universal motivating principle in argumentation. Most centrally, however, adopting the UN genre meant conceptually accepting the authority of the UN itself in the IG debate as an intergovernmental body. Put together with contextual factors such as the

---

[149] An extreme example in the context of the IGF is a workshop held during the 2010 annual meeting. Titled "Innovative Internet Governance Ideas and Approaches - An Open Discussion Space," the workshop had no formal speakers, but a free flow discussion among the participants. As the title suggests, the aim of the workshop was generating ideas. The transcript of the workshop is available at:
http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/component/content/article/102-transcripts2010/701-54

UN mandate of the IGF, this practice creates dissonance with the multistakeholder rhetoric of the forum, because it reifies a system where the ultimate political authority lies solely in the hands of the nation-states.

Despite the need to conform to the UN discursive practices and despite the institutional home of the forum within the UN system, the multistakeholderism movement brought with it new genre elements.   First, some of the features of the UN genre got re-appropriated. For example, the practice of affirmation of the importance or the necessity of the current forum and one's alliance to its aims remained, but instead of the UN, it is turned to the IGF and its multistakeholder approach. The practice of providing general observations of the state of affairs as a basis for one's intervention is also present, but deployed strategically to either survey the state of affairs in a particular domain of Internet governance, or, when the discussion is focused on institutional arrangements of the forum itself, the state of affairs of the IGF. The participants also tend to make broad comments and avoid specificity (specificity many times signals confrontation); they maintain the same 'creative ambiguity' that characterized the definition of the IG itself.[150]

Second, "injection" of the "Internet community" culture also resulted in distinctive new elements of discourse, new structures of domination, legitimation, and signification, in the IGF. For example, unlike in other UN meetings, the use of first names, as opposed to formal titles, is very prevalent in the IGF, particularly in the secretariat references to the participants and in

---

[150] I observed similar elements in the ITU meetings where the discussions were focused on the Union and ICT policy (including the Internet).

participants' references to each other. This practice highlights the informal character of the meeting and the centrality of individuals, not formal institutions or governments; referring to somebody by his or her first name became a badge of seniority and a status marker for the IGF participants; consistently referring to someone by their institutional identity marks them as not belonging to the IGF nucleus. At the same time, newcomers into the multistakeholder setting are expected to clarify their institutional identities, as well as the capacity in which they are speaking; the more regularly a person attends the IGF meetings, the less significant, at least on the face of it, their formal affiliation becomes; the reference by the first name vs. institutional affiliation, serves as an in-group/out-group marker. In the IGF, it is also common for the participants to express their personal opinions, as opposed to the opinions of an entity they represent—an atypical element for the UN genre. Finally, critical comments during the IGF, especially during the consultative process, are made with an explicit or implicit demonstration of care for the well-being of the forum. Taken together, these discursive elements acknowledge the plurality of stakeholders in Internet governance and the informal exchange as a means of resolving public policy issues; they replace the centrality of the nation state as an ultimate source of authority in the debate, with a more individual-focused and meritocratic view of authority.

When combined, the UN-centric and the Internet-community-centric elements create a discursive domain that is both shaped by and is shaping the IGF process. In the processes, actors bring into the debate different ways of thinking about the Internet and perceiving authority and legitimacy in the information policymaking processes. The discursive attributes deployed in the IGF are symbolic representations of different worldviews on Internet and

Internet governance. To participate effectively in the IGF, one needs to internalize attributes of both, to accept a model of coexistence of the different perspectives, and to know how to navigate the elements of discursive practices of both the UN and the Internet community. Actors, who unequivocally reject the structures enacted through the UN-centric attributes or actors who unequivocally reject the structures enacted through the Internet-community-centric discourses are likely to be marginalized in the IGF[151]; those, who embrace and balance the two, move to the power center of the forum. Driven primarily by authoritative resources, this dynamic cannot be adequately explained through realism or rational choice, as it deals with the change of categories that structure the power hierarchy of the IG debate.

For example, among those who have rejected the Internet-community-centered practices, the government of Iran participated actively in the early stages of the debate, but quit soon after the second annual meeting of the IGF. Observing the commentary of the Iranian delegation in the IGF and in other settings[152], I could see how the fundamental disagreement about the role of the governments in Internet-related policy-making processes was a significant obstacle for effective Iranian participation in the IGF[153]. Pakistani involvement in the IGF followed a similar trajectory.

---

[151] Hintz and Milan (2009) demonstrate an extreme case. They interviewed grassroots media activists, radical tech collectives, and alternative Internet Service Providers in Europe, who actively chose not to participate in the IGF, because of fundamental disagreement with the notion of institutionalized policy-related decision-making and skepticism regarding their ability to influence the forum.

[152] I observed formal interventions of the Iranian delegation in the WSIS Forum as well as informal exchanges between them and other participants in OGF open consultations and the WSIS forum.

[153] See example described in section 5.3.2.

The Chinese delegation, on the other hand, is among the most persistent participants in the open consultations. Yet, it fails to penetrate the nucleus because of its open rejection of the merits of the IGF; it was the only delegation taking part in the preparatory process that loudly opposed the continuation of the IGF mandate beyond the initial five years. When the Chinese delegation participates during the open consultations, its substantive contributions are treated on par with everybody else, as long they remain on the technical level or are reserved to congratulatory remarks. One can observe, even, how the Chinese delegation is marginalized through subtle practices such as the official way other participants and the secretariat refer to it (as opposed to the more informal reference to other participants). When the Chinese delegation has questioned the merit of having a non-binding policy deliberation forum, it has usually faced an open confrontation from a number of members of the nucleus at a time. In other words, even though the Chinese delegation is generally a productive member of the IGF community, because of the normative gap between its position and the status quo of the nucleus, it is marginalized.

Unlike the Iranian and the Chinese examples, ISOC is an example of an organization that has adapted to this emerging discursive space. ISOC acts as a protector of existing IG organizations, which emerged out of the technical community. During the WSIS process, it had rejected the nation-state-centric structures prevailing in the UN community and dismissed the very need for the IGF as a UN forum. Over time, however, the ISOC adapted to the new conceptual framework and embraced some of the UN practices, while remaining a carrier of the Internet community perceptions of authority and legitimacy in Internet-related policymaking. Eventually ISOC became a pivotal actor in the IGF community and one of its important financial backers.

Viewing the IGF participants, particularly at the IGF nucleus, as a community that exists insofar as it comes together in new forms of Internet-related policy discourse of its own creation, the discourse becomes a vehicle through which affinity among the IGF stakeholders is built (in Kelty, 2008 terms). Since the discourse of the IGF, as a structure of signification, captures ways of thinking about the Internet and its governance, adopting the discursive practices of the forum reifies other social structures it is shaped by and is shaping at the same time. For example, for the critique of the forum to appear constructive to its participants, it has to be done using the discursive mechanisms of the forum and while making a gesture that the critique is contributing to the overall sustainability of the IGF. In other words, the IGF discourse produces authoritative resources that insure the existence of the forum as a space that generates authoritative resources for the broader debate about Internet governance.

The IGF discursive space is used to co-create the IGF as an institution; and one of the tacit, yet important, factors of institutionalizing the IGF is its discourse. Without speaking the language of the forum it is difficult to participate in it effectively. Without subscribing to the hybrid genre of the IGF discourse, a participant runs the danger of being marginalized as an extremist, newbie, or simply weird. Adopting the new structures of IGF thinking allows the actors to maintain positions that may appear counterproductive to maintaining the formal authority of the IGF or transforming it into a decision-making body in the more traditional sense. Discursive practices become the definitive factors of the in-group/out-group dynamics. Through repetitive participation in the IGF consultations and the annual events, the participants reify the structural basis of the compromise between the UN-heritage and the WSIS-inspired innovation. Yet, the structural basis and its discursive representation are a moving target. Through adjusting their

discursive behavior within the parameters of the genre, the participants are able to alter the

discursive space and re-define the boundaries of the IGF as an institutional arrangement. The

strong and active nucleus of forum participants acts as both the carrier and the guardian of that

structural basis.

6. CONCLUSIONS

What can we learn from unpacking the practices of the IGF? I started this research curious about the dynamics of the IGF as a non-binding multistakeholder debate about information policymaking. My intention was to look "under the hood" of the IGF; to explore how the nation-state-centric and the Internet-community-centric perceptions of authority and approaches to decision-making manifest themselves in the forum; to understand what political and cultural norms they reify. I aspired to gain insight into why people engage in the politics of agenda setting and participation in the IGF, provided that the forum does not have "tangible outcomes;" and I wanted to reveal how they do it.

My analysis draws a complex picture of the inner workings of the IGF as a space where the historical tensions between the traditional methods of global policymaking and the unorthodox approach to governance developed by the Internet community are played out. The IGF is a UN forum that aspires to bring collaborative, meritocratic, and bottom-up decision-making practices into the nation-state-focused, hierarchical environment of the UN system. My analysis demonstrates how the two worldviews on Internet policymaking are enacted through the institutionalized fixtures of the IGF and the practices that evolved around them.

This study highlights the importance and the complexity of studying and theorizing the dynamic construction of governance institutions, as opposed to the analysis of the steady states. The IGF fixtures are in fact not fixtures at all, they are in constant flux; they are another face of the institutions of the Internet in the making. The secretariat, funded through extra-budgetary

200

contributions and reliant on in-kind contributions from the UN headquarters in Geneva for its

logistics, acts as a mediator among the variety of stakeholders participating in the IGF and

between the IGF community and the UN system. The Multistakeholder Advisory Group,

nominated by the Secretary General of the UN in a rather vague selection process, is an ever

evolving internal decision-making body that sets the agenda for the annual meeting of the

forum, decides on the speakers for the plenary, and enacts the unofficial hierarchy of the IGF

community; with that, in an ideal state this internally grown solution to multistakeholder

participation is perceived by the IGF loyalists as embodying a set of values traditionally

associated with the Internet community, such as collaboration, meritocracy, and transparency.

My analysis also highlights the role of idea entrepreneurs in shaping the practices of the IGF

and their formalization. It identifies a nucleus of committed and active IGF participants who

consciously engage in the negotiation of IGF structures and their systematization. Not only are

these people engaged in setting the agenda of the forum and reflecting on its practices, they

also enact a relatively unified culture of multistakeholderism. Paradoxically, although inherently

open, this culture is hostile to strong criticism of the IGF or of collaborative policymaking; the

critics conform, find themselves at the margins of the IGF discourse, or choose to turn to the

traditional intergovernmental frameworks instead of participating in the IGF deliberations. The

resulting discourse, while reifying the basic structural properties of the UN-style decisions

making, such as the centrality of the nation-states, relies heavily on the Internet community's

discursive genre insofar as plurality of voices, bottom-up initiative, and technical or policy

expertise are valued as power resources within the IGF. What do these observations about IGF

practices contribute to our understanding of the Forum, and to Internet governance more broadly?

6.1. Mainstreaming Internet community values

While the non-binding nature of the IGF is frequently mentioned as one of the main strengths of the forum, it has been also criticized for rendering the IGF toothless and thus of questionable significance in the Internet governance debates. Those invested in the continuation of the forum repeatedly rehearse this concern in their search for "tangible" outcomes of the IGF to respond to it; some view attendance as a metric of success and importance, others point to the variety of stakeholder groups and voices represented, still others suggest that the dynamic coalitions that have spun off of IGF are its primary accomplishment.

Viewing the practices of the IGF through the lens of structuration theory suggests that the long-lasting impact of the IGF may not necessarily be tangible, but structural—a harder deliverable to "sell" in a traditional policymaking environment, admittedly, but nevertheless an important one for the constitution of Internet governance.

From the rationalist perspective, deliberately arguing for a lack of decision-making power appears counterproductive (or irrational) to establishing of the IGF as a space with any impact on Internet-related policy. Decision-making power is the surest form of tangible control over authoritative resources (Giddens, 1984a), yet it is based on the allocation of tangible resources and the centrality of the nation state as an ultimate decision-making power. Making a formal decision where a small elite group enforces behavior on broader groups of the public is

grounded in the material authority of the nation state. The theory of structuration, however, offers an alternative, albeit somewhat tautological view. From that perspective, the competition is indeed over resources, but these resources are less tangible and rooted in building off and altering the thought process of decision-makers.

The non-binding nature of the IGF is an important part of the ethos of the forum that gives it legitimacy across the board, at least on the nominal level. This ethos also creates a structural path dependency – the IGF as an institution has evolved with the lack of binding decisions (and all the formal politics attached to it) as one of its cornerstones and advertised strengths; it was the enabling factor that gave the IGF its unique flavor as a space where governmental and non-governmental actors could talk on an equal footing; it was also the characteristics that set the IGF apart from other Internet governance bodies. Over time, buying into the IGF ethos and way of thinking meant also buying into the value of non-binding discussions.

Taking away this non-bindingness would mean undermining one of the pivots of legitimacy of the IGF. Changing the non-binding status of the IGF would alter the very fabric of the forum and its open character. As such, the very idea of the IGF as inherently non-binding becomes a point of commonality for the insiders, and a point of contestation of the authority and legitimacy of the forum for its outside critics.[154] In exclusively allocative terms (Giddens, 1984a), the IGF might be viewed as a decoy, that draws human and attention resources away from other fora with traditional decision-making power; yet in terms of authoritative resources, the

---

[154] The IGF nucleus offers a tangible outcome of the use of authoritative resources embodied in the culture of consensus driven non-bindingness. Supporting the view that the IGF should remain a non-binding forum also became one of the markers of in-group-out-group dynamics; to be in the nucleus, one has to accept at least the value of having non-binding discussion that includes a range of stakeholders.

atmosphere of openness and dialogue made possible by the lack of formally binding outcomes creates a space that, for many involved, reflects the culture of the Internet itself and the culture they would like to preserve in its governance institutions. By doing so, the advocates of the non-binding doctrine may be undermining the status of the forum in the otherwise allocative environment of information policymaking. But in the view of structuration of Internet governance, there is an internal logic that offers an explanation to this otherwise irrational behavior.

The values of the Internet community are largely foreign to traditional policymaking settings. While the Internet community leans on a meritocratic, globally-oriented, bottom-up, and consensual decision-making, the traditional policy-making environment is based on a formal hierarchy, bureaucracy, and, in the international settings, an emphasis on competing nationalist interests. In the ITU, for example, the authority of the speaker stems first of all from their position within a government delegation and then from their professional contribution to the debate. In a non-hierarchical environment such as the Internet Governance Caucus this order is reversed—authority is first derived from one's contribution and dedication to the policy deliberation process, and only then from one's organizational affiliation. Thus, the IGF, as a forum hosted within the UN-system, but fueled by the Internet community values, is indeed a peculiar case. In the IGF, some of the practices enact structures typical of the intergovernmental policy settings, while others enact structures typical of the Internet community.

In the IGF, the two genres of discourse and decision-making are forced to co-exist. Yet they are

not on equal footing. By the very virtue of being based within the UN system and acting

through a UN-sanctioned mandate, the IGF is first and foremost a UN forum; members of the

Internet community, who arrived into the WSIS and later the IGF settings from outside of the

UN system, had to conform to some degree to UN discursive practices and their structural

properties. Yet, the IGF is not a typical UN forum; these newcomers, who followed from the

WSIS process into the IGF, also infused the UN environment with the Internet community's

values. When combined, the UN-centric and the Internet-community-centric elements create a

hybrid policy discourse that is both shaped by and is shaping the IGF process.

But with what outcome? The main contribution of the IGF process, as I see it, is the

mainstreaming of the Internet community values within the intergovernmental UN system. The

practices that have evolved in the IGF bring meritocratic and open structures to the formal

intergovernmental policy-discourse settings. By creating mechanisms for participation for non-

state actors, formalizing consultative and decision-making processes that are agreed upon by

actors coming from different policymaking backgrounds, and developing a language to describe

those systems, the IGF normalized concepts such as openness, inclusivity, meritocracy,

individualism, and bottom-up decision-making within the UN system. Multistakeholderism, for

example, which some of the IGF participants indeed treat as an ideology (see discussion in

Mueller, 2010), is significant insofar as it marks a set of diverse practices that embody some of

the values of the Internet community. In this sense multistakeholderism is not an ideology, but

a set of practices that help enact structures of legitimation and domination brought to the UN

system from the Internet community way of setting rules and procedures. The IGF participants,

especially the nucleus of the forum, argue about systems of decision-making but also argue with and through them, by formalizing, modifying, and maintaining the very practices of participation in the IGF by which they associate with one another.

Going back to Braman's (2009) distinction between government, governance, and governmentality[155], the IGF does not produce government in the "tangible" sense, as it is not a formal institution of law-making, or even a formal standard-setting body. Yet to the degree that the IGF produces systems of consultative and decision-making processes that have constitutive effects for Internet policymaking elsewhere, as nominal as it may be at this point in time, it does engage in governance. Moreover, to the degree that the IGF helps mainstream the values of the Internet community within traditional policymaking environments and spreading them beyond the boundaries of the tight IGF process, it also may impact governmentality. For example, the ITU has begun to open up some of its meetings to non-government participation, albeit in a limited fashion. They have also formalized the practice of providing publically accessible transcripts and captioning to the open meetings of the union.

These are signs that the hybrid structures of the IGF are being taken up by other UN fora that deal with Internet policy. Also recently the CSTD was pressured not to limit participation in the Working Group on Improvements to the IGF to governments only. The chair of the commission was persuaded to reserve seats also for the civil society, business sector, academic and

---

[155] Braman (2009, p. 3) distinguishes between: "*government* (formal institutions of the law); *governance* (decision-making with constitutive [structural] effect whether it takes place within the public or private sectors, and formally or informally); and *governmentality* (cultural predispositions and practices that produce and reproduce the conditions that make particular forms of governance and government possible)."

technical communities, and intergovernmental organizations. This shift was possible largely because the practices of participation in the IGF are now viewed as acceptable or even the "right" form of participation in Internet policy debates within the UN system. The emergence of local and regional IGF-like events in different parts of the world is another example of how practices of the global forum get re-appropriated in local settings. Taken together, this anecdotal evidence suggests a change in the way a desired Internet-related policymaking process is perceived.

It is important to emphasize that structuration is not the same as values transfer; structuration highlights the mutual co-construction of social structures through the interactions between actors and already existing structural elements. When I describe the mainstreaming of Internet community values within the UN system, it is important to read it not as a claim that UN bureaucrats are adopting an idealized set of principles. This is an iterative process, where value-laden practices shape and are shaped by their encounter with institutionalized systems. Through this process of structuration, a forum such as the IGF can in fact have a long-lasting impact that involves not necessarily allocative, but authoritative resources represented through discourse. Multistakeholderism, for example, is subject to a range of normative and practical interpretations. Taking up multistakeholderism could be a deep adoption of the values it represents, or a nominal gesture, which does not mean its deep embrace. Still, taking it up opens a door to a more Internet-centric policy approach regardless of the specific interpretive lens. Formalizing a particular form of multistakeholder participation as a set of practices that reflect a particular ideology can be an important, long-lasting outcome of the IGF as a practice "negotiating" space.

6.2. Multistakeholderisms

Analysis of the IGF process through the lens of structuration theory and critical discourse analysis raise further questions about what is in fact meant by multistakeholderism, or about how multistakeholderism plays out in practice. Multistakeholderism is accepted as one of the main contributions of the WSIS process to the practice of Internet governance, but the rhetoric of multistakeholderism often focuses on an idealized notion of equal participation of non-governmental actors as the goal of Internet governance. Mueller (2010) criticized multistakeholderism as an ideology. "At best," he wrote, "it tells us to open up existing intergovernmental institutions to participants other than states. (…) At worst, it offers a simple-minded communitarianism that implies that all political, economic, and social conflicts can be resolved if everyone involved just sits down and talks about them together" (pp. 264-265). While agreeing with Mueller's critique of multistakeholderism as an ideology, in my analysis, I find merit in viewing it as a set of practices that enact ideological elements.

Analysis of the IGF meetings and IGF celebrities suggests that multistakeholderism can often be an empty shell. It assembles actors, who carry the labels of the various stakeholder groups. Yet, those actors do not necessarily engage in a meaningful exchange in the search for deeper knowledge or consensual solutions that one might hope for, given the idealized rhetoric of multistakeholderism. Instead, the participants often resort to re-stating well-worn positions of their stakeholder groups without any exchange. In other words, the participants enact social structures, thus reifying them, but often do not discursively reflect on them, which is the source

of structural change. Opening and closing ceremonies of the IGF annual event in particular are scripted moments that enact only the nominal performance of multistakeholderism.

In the IGF nucleus, however, one can observe a different kind of multistakeholderism at work. The nucleus includes actors from a variety of stakeholder groups, but all the participants share a common appreciation of the IGF process and are invested in it professionally. It is a close collective where people move between stakeholder groups while maintaining loyalty to the ideal of open participation and dialogue as a way to solve policy problems. In the nucleus there is often meaningful exchange, which sometimes highlights tensions between the interests of the stakeholder group one represents and the interests of the forum as a compromise space. Moreover, in the nucleus, the practice of multistakeholderism depends on individuals, whose personal merit has already made them prominent in the IGF preparatory meetings, and enables the particular type of interaction that can be observed in that space. This is the kind of paradoxical multistakeholderism that emphasizes the individual freedoms of the members of the group, by already excluding those who do not subscribe to the communal culture of the nucleus. Paraphrasing Galloway's (2006) observations about the IETF, in the nucleus there is a communitarianism based in openness, inclusion, universalism, and flexibility; it is a communitarianism born of a process of self-selection and preemptive exclusion from high degrees of personal freedom and individualism.

Finally, in the workshops of the annual IGF events, and even in the open plenary sessions that garner a high level of audience participation, one can observe yet another version of multistakeholderism. The depth of multistakeholder participation in the workshops ranges in

terms of meaningfulness, typically as a function of themes, speakers, and organizers. The

distinctive feature of the workshops, however, is the unpredictable audience. During the formal

parts of the forum, among the celebrities, or even within the nucleus, the discourse of each

actor is moving in a predictable trajectory; the unpredictable nature of participation in the

workshops can yield unexpected surprises. People who are not regularly involved in the IGF

process, many times local participants from the host country, who bring different normative

frameworks and attitudes to Internet policymaking, can end up making points deemed radical

within the systems of the IGF. To mediate this, interest groups strategize their participation in

various workshops to control the agenda, yet this practice of unpredictable participation enacts

the sort of disruptive innovation that is, ironically, valued by the Internet pioneers.

Treating the IGF as a laboratory for the multistakeholder experience, the future of the Internet

governance debate will depend, to a degree, on which multistakeholderism will be formalized.

For future research, and policy debates, however, it is important to recognize that there is a

multiplicity of practices of multistakeholderism, each enacting different structures with

different potential long-term results.

6.3. Internet governance as a system

My research supports recent claims that the study of Internet governance by focusing on single

institutions is limited (Mueller & van Eeten, 2011). IGF is an example of a discursive nexus,

where structures of the Internet governance community are enacted through the collision of

various ways of organizing and carrying out the debate. Yet, understanding the practices that

constitute and shape IGF discourse is impossible without taking into account the historical

trajectory of this debate and the context in which it has evolved. The path set by the WSIS

process is an important factor in shaping the IGF and defining its core elements. The broad

definition of Internet governance, the emphasis on multistakeholderism, and the non-binding

character of the IGF debates were fundamental to establishing the context from which

discourse emerges in the forum, impacting who gets to talk, what gets to be talked about, and

how the array of opinions is expressed in the forum.

At the same time, events external to the forum, such as the CSTD Working Group on

Improvements to IGF, or the G8 meeting in May 2011, have a more immediate impact. Such

events, as well as socio-technological developments (e.g. the rise of social networks or cloud

computing) play an important role in setting the agenda of the IGF as well as defining the range

of acceptable opinions. In addition, the fundamental notion of multistakeholderism implies that

participants in the IGF arrive from a diversity of institutional backgrounds, thus not only infusing

the debate with the interests of their home institutions, but also importing structures of

legitimation and domination that typically do not co-exist in a single discursive space (e.g. the

UN and the Internet community organizations).

A structuration approach to the analysis of the Internet governance space, thus, calls for a more

nuanced understanding of the practices and structures of the spaces that impact it. Some of

these spaces have a systematic influence that is altering the institutional context in which IGF

acts (e.g. recommendations of the CSTD working group); the outcomes of others impact the

substantive agenda of the forum (e.g. the new generic Top Level Domains policy by ICANN); the

influence of others is felt through vocal participants, who represent that space in the IGF (e.g.

strong advocates of specific interests in the nucleus). Similarly, at this point in the evolution of the field of Internet governance, understanding each of these other spaces would still be incomplete, without a deeper understanding and account for the structuration processes taking place within and around the IGF.

In a systemic view of Internet governance, the institutions and the decision-makers in the Internet policy field are linked through structures of signification, legitimation, and domination that change and evolve over time, as the key players interact and debate not just the role of information technologies as social, political, and cultural forces, but the proper means by which these forces should be governed. The IGF has a potential structural impact on other institutions of information policy, not limited to Internet governance, and including those with more formal decision-making authority, by influencing the ways in which people think about both the Internet and its governance.

6.4. Contribution and emerging research agenda

This study is the first step towards a broader program of research in Internet governance. Not only does it open up additional questions about the IGF, it also offers a trajectory for asking more nuanced questions about other aspects of the field of Internet governance. This project focused primarily on the practices of IGF as mechanisms that enact competing normative frameworks of its participants. Future research can continue this trajectory, to deepen our understanding of the elements of structuration within the forum itself, or it could pursue a comparative approach to further investigate the potential repercussions (or lack of thereof) of

the IGF on the Internet governance. The systematic view of Internet governance would suggest that the two trajectories are related.

Structuration theory offers a prism to examine aspects of the Internet governance process that were assumed as given or not treated with adequate sophistication by the theories of international relations. Whereas the realist and the rational choice institutionalism approaches focus on steady states of policymaking and assume as given contextual factors such as material resources or the fixed preferences of the actors, structuration shifts the focus to the dynamics of the political process. In the particular case of the IGF it helped explain how resources (albeit not material, but authoritative) are shaped and how preferences of the actors shift in the process of institutionalization of the forum and structuration of thought about Internet-related policymaking. Moreover, structuration brings the focus back to the individuals, whose behavior is shaped by, but is also shaping the emerging institutional settings. Unlike in structuralism, where individuals interact with and within predetermined structures, here the actors are a pivotal factor in structuring the social context in which they act.

To deepen our understanding of the processes of structuration within the IGF, additional studies of the norms and values held by the individual participants, particularly those active in the nucleus, would be beneficial. As a product of human activity, IGF is, to a great degree, a reflection of the individual beliefs, perceptions, and ambitions of the people in its nucleus. When the participants argue for a particular policy position, whether about the adoption of IPv6 or freedom of expression, they do not argue for a mere technical solution, but for an arrangement that reifies their view of the desired social, political, economic, or cultural state.

When the participants insist on a particular way of conducting the business of IGF, they seek to reify their perceptions of how technology should be governed.

The study of information policy needs to more carefully examine policymaking elites, as a way to make sense of the emerging structures and institutions. In this study I examined policymaking interactions on the micro level, to see how the policy language is constructed in order to understand the political meaning of that language. Policy is written by individuals in groups that come to have they own unique practices of deliberating and making decisions. Some of these practices are "imported" from the stakeholder groups the policymakers represent; but some are inherent to the group, shaped by the group members, and at the same time influencing the behavior of the members of the group. A structuration analysis suggests that policy and policymaking processes should be viewed as a whole. The mundane and the obvious of the policymaking space is integral to how policy is produced by the small group of decision-makers. This observation is particularly important for thinking about an emerging medium such as the Internet, which is being constructed partially through debates about policy regulating its use, whether in binding or non-binding settings.

Some of the perceptions and attitudes of the key players in the Internet governance debate can be explained as factors of their institutional and national affiliations. But not all of them. The institutions of Internet governance are still evolving, and in a rather unique, mostly bottom-up fashion. As such, the emphasis should be on the dynamic constitution of these institutions, on accounting for the actions of individuals, and on revealing the link between their agency and the structures they craft. The individuals who drove the Internet governance debate in the early

days left a permanent mark on the institutions of Internet governance, arguably more than in other spheres of policymaking, because this field and its institutions evolved in a bottom-up fashion under the leadership of these individuals. Studying policymaking processes related to the Internet can teach us about the way we, as a society, think about information policy. One of the trends the findings of this study support is the move away from the purely technical focus to the more content-conscious view of the Internet, also by the policymakers.

The interviews conducted for this research can shed preliminary light on the normative basis of individual members of the nucleus. Future research can have both a broader and a deeper look at the norms and values of individuals participating in and shaping the agenda of the IGF. Mapping out the individual perceptions and visions of the Internet of the IGF participants, combined with the understanding of their practices offered by this study, can provide a detailed map of the structures guiding the IGF discourse. Such a map can shed further light on the processes of agenda setting and norm producing that happen during the IGF preparatory process and the annual events. Comparing the values, norms, perceptions, and visions of technology of the first-time participants in the forum before and after the IGF could shed additional light on the impact of the forum on its participants. Such analysis can offer lessons to the broader study of information policymaking process; as convergence blurs the boundaries between distinct information and communication technologies, decisions made in one particular technical arena have the potential of affecting the entire filed.

At the same time, insights about the practices of discourse production, as well as better understanding of the normative frameworks enacted through them, can shed additional light

on the substantive discourse of the IGF. The framing of policy issues, as well as the ways of arguing for or against a policy view, is another form of enacting social structures. Particularly interesting in this regard are the visions of technology coming out of the IGF. My observations suggest that one of the discursive "artifacts" created in the IGF are socio-technical visions of the Internet. These visions of technology are inherently normative and fueled by the individual perceptions of technology as well as the cultural, national, and institutional identities of the participants. While some attribute high value to personal freedom, openness, and individualism, others attribute high value to economic stability, nationalism, and cultural conformity. Evaluating the same policy positions against such different ideals will most likely yield very different assessment results. Yet, these ideals are the building blocks of the broader notion of the information society.

It is possible, however, that in the process of IGF deliberations, some visions of the Internet have become more acceptable than others. In IGF-USA, for example, the use of future scenarios as a way to reflect on Internet policy issues has become a common practice in the past two years; the premise of such exercises is, how do we avoid the social consequences described in scenarios through governing the Internet's role in them? Analyzing such visions can shed light on potentially competing version of information-based society being constructed through information technology regulation in other fora, whose representatives participate in the IGF.

Structuration theory is frequently perceived as all-encompassing and explaining everything to a degree that it is not falsifiable. Yet, when applied, structuration is actually very much confined to particular settings (for example, see the conceptual adaptation in Orlikowski, 1992). To

consider the complexity of information policy broadly defined one needs an expansive notion of governance, one that spans beyond the law and regulatory discussions to include development and adoption of technology (very much in Lessig's (2006) notion of code as governance). Yet, when applied, structuration requires a well confined space, a commitment to looking at the phenomenon from within an institution as a structural vessel or a system. In other words, to ask macro questions, structuration calls for a nuanced micro-level investigation. The level of nuance in fact grows with the breadth and scope of the research question, as it includes an ever greater number of structures, systems, and participants.

Following the systematic view of Internet governance, in order to broaden the scope of the questions asked, future research on the structuration of Internet governance should move well beyond the boundaries of the IGF, while keeping in mind the limitations noted above. This study can serve as launching pad, from which to track the practices of the IGF to other domains of Internet governance. To better assess the impact of the IGF and to understand the structures of the emerging Internet governance regime, it will be useful to study how the people, practices, and ideas, "travel" between the spaces where regulation of the Internet is being discussed. This study supports a common observation that the same individuals participate in a number of fora that debate Internet governance on national, regional, and international levels. But do these people carry practices and ideas from one such forum to another? Can we identify a meta-structure of Internet governance by observing common practices and ideas across spaces that address Internet policy? Social network analysis offers useful tools for mapping out such cross-fora processes. In addition, such inquiry will require an in-depth analysis of the practices in these other fora as well as their outcomes. While conducting this kind of inquiry is

expansive, it can prove to be invaluable for understanding the macro picture of the de facto

emerging Internet governance regime.

The study of the IGF points also to questions of the public understanding of Internet

governance. The forum appears to be uniquely positioned to make Internet governance, as

policy sphere, more accessible to the general public. If the IGF produces ideas, one of the ways

to assess its impact would be to evaluate the reach and the accessibility of these ideas for the

general public. Public opinion has an important role to play in steering resource allocation and

influencing the policy positions of government officials. To that end, it will be important to

understand how the ideas of the IGF disseminate through mass media and how the mass media

interpretation of substantive issues of Internet governance is understood by the public.

Even more broadly, this study lays a foundation from which to ask questions about the

construction of our understanding of the information-based society. Questions of privacy,

anonymity, security, inclusivity, etc. are not unique to the Internet. The boundaries between

particular information and communication technologies are disappearing and the concepts we

use to make sense of this ever changing information environment are also becoming

ubiquitous. For example, the constitution of the notion of privacy in the IGF is not, and cannot

be, separated from the discussions of privacy as they happen in other information technology

related contexts, on local, national, and international levels. The IGF is just one part of a larger

mechanism through which we as a global society are making sense of the dynamic information

environment that is challenging earlier established norms and institutions, and at the same

time we are co-creating this environment in the process. As such, this research calls attention

to the study of information policy and policymaking as a way to critically assess the making of

information and communication technologies as social, cultural, and political constructs.

APPENDIX A

Interview outline (as submitted to IRB)

I am conducting semi-structured interviews, which are by a great degree driven by the interviewees themselves. Having said that, there are some fundamental points that each interview covers. These points refer to the capacity in which an interviewee is participating in the Internet Governance debate, their views of information and communication technology, and their views of the international telecom policymaking process, particularly the Internet Governance related issues (as those viewed by the interviewee).

To illustrate, a general flow of a typical interview is presented below. It includes "starter questions" or prompts that I use to initiate a conversation about a particular point. Not in every interview all the questions are getting asked. At the same time, additional questions may be asked to unpack the interviewee's response to a particular prompt.

Context
- What is your background in the field?
- How did you get involved in Internet Governance / telecom policy?
- What does your involvement include today?
    - What does your organization do?
    - What do you personally do?

Internet Governance
- What is this process about?
    - What are the core issues?
    - Why are they important?
- Where is the discussion on these issues are heading?
    - Who are the players arguing for a particular stand on an issue?
    - Why would they support this position?
    - Is there enough attention paid to these issues?
    - How did this particular issue became pivotal to the debate?
- How do you envision the future of the Internet?
    - Why is this the way you think the Internet should evolve?
    - What kind of Internet / information society is emerging in the current discussion?

Internet Governance Debate/Process
- Does the current meeting matter for shaping the Internet policy?
    - Why yes/no?

- - - o Where (else) are these issues will be decided?
    - o Why in these fora?
  - Since most Internet governance debate are not binding, why are they important (or not)?
    - o Why the stakeholders invest time and money in this process?
    - o Does this debate have impact on actual Internet-related policies?
    - o Why yes/no?
    - o If yes, what is this impact?
  - What does it mean that this is multi-stakeholder process?
    - o Do all the stakeholders have an equal say?
    - o Who have a stronger voice?
    - o What does it mean for the discussion?

Use of technology
- How do you use the Internet in your daily routine?
    - o How do you use it as part of your work?
    - o How do you use it outside of your work?

The duality of telecom policymaking

Study consent form

You are invited to take part in a research study of international telecom policy debates, particularly those focusing on Internet Governance. I am asking you to take part because you hold a decision making position related to information and communication technology (ICT) policy and are an active member of the internal telecom policymaking community. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: The purpose of this study is to learn how the agenda for global telecom policymaking is set and how the various views and constraints that policymakers are bringing into these debates shape the discourse.

What I will ask you to do: If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to participate in an interview, envisioned to last between 30 minutes to one hour. The interview will include questions about the organization you represent, the nature of your involvement in the telecom policy and Internet Governance debates, your views of information and communication technology, and your views of the international telecom policymaking process. With your permission, I would also like to digitally record the interview.

Risks, benefits, and compensation: I do not anticipate any risks for you participating in this study, other than those encountered in day-to-day life. The study will not have any direct benefits for you and will include no financial or other compensation. If we correspond via email, there is a chance that a third-party could read our correspondence. Indirect benefits of participation include a greater understanding of the processes of international telecom policymaking.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide not to take part or to skip some of the questions, it will not affect your current or future relationship with Cornell University. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

Please continue on the next page

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In light of your potentially publicly or professionally visible position, you may choose your comments to be attributed explicitly to you or to remain confidential. If you decide to remain confidential, in any sort of report I might publish, I will make an effort to obscure any information that will make it possible to identify you. If you choose not to be confidential, articles for publishing may include your comments in a way that may make it possible to identify you.

I choose to be confidential in this study (circle one):   **Yes   /   No**

All data will be securely stored in my office on my computer, and on several hard disks. Hard copies of data will remain in my office. All data will be destroyed (i.e., shredded or erased) when their use is no longer needed but not before a minimum of five years after data collection.

I**f you have questions:** The researcher conducting this study is Dmitry Epstein. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dmitry Epstein at de56@cornell.edu. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 607-255-5138 or access their website at http://www.irb.cornell.edu. You may also report your concerns or complaints anonymously through Ethicspoint by calling toll free at 1-866-293-3077. Ethicspoint is an independent organization that serves as a liaison between the University and the person bringing the complaint so that anonymity can be ensured.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Your Name (printed) _____

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having the interview recorded.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Signature of person obtaining consent _____ Date _____

Printed name of person obtaining consent _____ Date _____

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study and was approved by the IRB on April 18, 2011.

REFERENCES

Abell, J., & Myers, G. (2008). Analyzing research interviews. In R. Wodak & M. Krzyzanowski (Eds.), *Qualitative discourse analysis in the social sciences* (First Edition., pp. 143-161). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., & Robinson, J. A. (2001). The colonial origins of comparative development: An empirical investigation. *The American Economic Review*, *91*(5), 1369-1401.

Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., & Robinson, J. A. (2005). Economic history and political science: Clarifying the questions, methods and answers. *The Political Economist*, *12*(3), 4-13.

Adorno, T. W. (1991). *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Al-Darrab, A. A. (2005). The need for international internet governance oversight. In W. J. Drake (Ed.), *Reforming internet governance: perspectives from the working group on internet governance* (pp. 177-183). New York, NY: United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force.

Apthorpe, R., Gasper, D., & Gasper, D. (1996). *Arguing developmental policy: Frames and discourses*. Portland, OR: Frank Cass.

Avgerou, C. (2010). Discourses on ICT and development. *Information Technologies and International Development*, *6*(3), 1-18.

Bacchi, C. (2000). Policy as Discourse: What does it mean? Where does it get us? *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *21*(1), 45-57. doi:10.1080/01596300050005493

Banks, S. P., & Riley, P. (1993). Strucuration theory as an ontology for communication research. *Communication Yearbook*, *16*, 167-196.

Bell, D. (1999). *The coming of post-industrial society: A venture in social forecasting* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Basic Books.

Beniger, J. R. (1986). *The control revolution: Technological and economic origins of the information society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Retrieved from http://catalog.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=4834454&DB=local

Berleur, J. (2008). 15 years of ways of Internet governance: Towards a new agenda for action. In C. Avgerou, M. L. Smith, & P. Besselaar (Eds.), *Social Dimensions Of Information And Communication Technology Policy* (Vol. 282, pp. 255-274). Boston, MA: Springer US. Retrieved from http://www.springerlink.com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/content/3n855w257018m328/

Boczkowski, P. J., & Lievrouw, L. A. (2007). Bridging STS and Communication Studies: Scholarship on Media and Information Technologies. *The handbook of science and technology studies*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Borg, K. (1999). The "chauffeur problem" in the early auto era: Structuration theory and the users of technology. *Technology and Culture*, *40*(4), 797.

Bosso, C. J. (1994). The contextual bases of problem definition. In D. A. Rochefort & R. W. Cobb

(Eds.), *The politics of problem definition: Shaping the policy agenda* (pp. 182-203).

Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. (G. Reymond & M. Adamson, Trans.).

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Braman, S. (2009). *Change of state: Information, policy, and power*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Braman, S. (2010). The interpenetration of technical and legal decision-making for the Internet.

Information, Communication & Society, *13*(3), 309–324.

Brinberg, D., & McGrath, J. E. (1982). A network of validity concepts within the research

process. *New Directions for Methodology of Social and Behavioral Science*, *12*, 5-21.

Brinberg, D., & McGrath, J. E. (1985). *Validity and the research process*. Beverly Hills: Sage

Publications.

Bryant, C. G. A., & Jary, D. (1991). *Giddens' Theory of Structuration: A critical appreciation*.

Routledge.

Bryant, C. G. A., & Jary, D. (Eds.). (2001). *The contemporary Giddens: Social theory in a

globalizing age*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bygrave, L. A., & Bing, J. (Eds.). (2009). *Internet governance: Infrastructure and institutions*. New

York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Castells, M. (2004). Informationalism, networks, and the network society: A theoretical

blueprint. In M. Castells (Ed.), *The network society: A cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 3-

45). Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Pub.

Castells, M. (2007). Communication, power and counter-power in the network society.

International Journal of Communication, *1*(1), 238–266.

Castells, M. (2010). *The rise of the network society*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Chair's "food for thought." (2005, September 30). Retrieved from

http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs2/pc3/working/dt15.pdf

Checkel, J. T. (1998). The constructivist turn in international relations theory. *World Politics*,

324-348.

Chouliaraki, L., & Fairclough, N. (2010). Critical discourse analysis in organizational studies:

Towards an integrationist methodology. *Journal of Management Studies*, *47*(6), 1213-

1218. doi:10.1111/j.1467-6486.2009.00883.x

Codding, G. A. (1983). The changing nature of the ITU Plenipotentiary. *Telecommunications*

Policy, *7*(4), 317-325. doi:10.1016/0308-5961(83)90086-1

Codding, G. A. (1991a). Evolution of the ITU. *Telecommunications Policy*, *15*(4), 271-285.

doi:10.1016/0308-5961(91)90050-L

Codding, G. A. (1991b). Introduction : Reorganizing the ITU. *Telecommunications Policy*, *15*(4),

267-270. doi:10.1016/0308-5961(91)90049-H

Codding, G. A. (1995). The International Telecommunications Union: 130 years of

telecommunications regulation. *Denver Journal of International Law & Polity*, *23*, 501.

Codding, G. A., & Gallegos, D. (1991). The ITU's "federal" structure. *Telecommunications Policy*,

15(4), 351-363. doi:10.1016/0308-5961(91)90056-H

Codding, G. A., & Rutkowski, A. M. (1982). *The International Telecommunication Union in a*

changing world. Dedham MA: Artech House.

Cogburn, D. L., Johnsen, J. F., & Bhattacharyya, S. (2008). Distributed deliberative citizens:

    Exploring the impact of cyberinfrastructure on transnational civil society participation in

    global ICT policy processes. *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, *4*(1), 27-

    49. doi:10.1386/macp.4.1.27_1

Cohen, I. J. (1989). *Structuration theory: Anthony Giddens and the constitution of social life.*

    New York, NY: St. Martin's.

Continuation of the Internet Governance Forum: Note by Secretary General (A/65/78–

    E/2010/68). (2007, May 7). Genral Assembly and Economic and Social Council.

Cordesman, A. H., & Cordesman, J. G. (Eds.). (2002). *Cyber-threats, information warfare, and*

    critical infrastructure protection: Defending the US homeland. Santa Barbara, CA:

    Greenwood Publishing Group.

Craib, I. (1992). *Anthony Giddens*. New York, NY: Routledge.

de La Chapelle, B. (2010). Towards an internet governance network: Why the format of the IGF

    is one of its major outcomes. In W. J. Drake (Ed.), *Internet governance: Creating*

    opportunities for all (pp. 92-106). New York, NY: United Nations.

Dean, M. (2009). *Governmentality: Power and rule in modern society* (1st ed.). Thousand Oaks,

    CA: Sage Publications.

Death, C. (2011). Summit theatre: exemplary governmentalityand environmental diplomacy in

    Johannesburg and Copenhagen. *Environmental Politics*, *20*(1), 1-19.

DeNardis, L. (2009). *Protocol politics: The globalization of internet governance*. Cambridge, MA:

    MIT Press.

DeNardis, L. (2010a). The privatization of internet governance. Presented at the Fifth Annual

GigaNet Symposium, Vilnius, Lithuania.

DeNardis, L. (2010b, September 17). The emerging field of internet governance. Yale

Information Society Project. Retrieved from

http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1678343

Depledge, J. (2006). *The organization of global negotiations: Constructing the climate change

regime*. Sterling, VA: Earthscan.

Desai, N. (2005). Preface. In W. J. Drake (Ed.), *Reforming internet governance: Perspectives from

the working group on internet governance (WGIG)* (p. vii-x). Geneva, Switzerland: United

Nations.

di Gregorio, S., & Davidson, J. (2008). *Qualitative research design for software users* (1st ed.).

London, UK: Open University Press.

Diplo Foundation. (2009). *Internet Governance Forum: Identifying impact*. Msida, Malta.

Retrieved from http://www.diplomacy.edu/ig/impact/

Donahue, R. T., & Prosser, M. T. (1997). *Diplomatic disocurse: International conflict at the

United Nations - adresses and analysis*. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Publishing

Group.

Doria, A., & Kleinwächter, W. (Eds.). (2008). *Internet Governance Forum: The first two years*.

Geneva, Switzerland: UNESCO.

Drake, W. J. (2004). *Reframing Internet governance discourse: Fifteen baseline propositions* (pp.

122–161). Geneva, Switzerland: International Center for Trade and Sustainable

Development.

Drake, W. J. (Ed.). (2005). *Reforming internet governance: Perspectives from the working group on internet governance (WGIG)*. Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations.

Drake, W. J. (Ed.). (2010). *Internet governance: Creating opportunities for all*. New York, NY: United Nations.

Drezner, D. W. (2004). The global governance of the internet: Bringing the state back in. *Political Science Quarterly*, *119*(3), 477-498.

Drissel, D. (2006). Internet governance in a multipolar world: Challenging American hegemony. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, *19*(1), 105-120. doi:10.1080/09557570500501812

Dunn, M., Krishna-Hensel, S. F., & Mauer, M. (Eds.). (2007). *The resurgence of the state: Trend and processes in cyberspace governance*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Durkheim, E. (2003a). From "Suicide." In M. Emirbayer (Ed.), *Emile Durkheim: Sociologist of Modernity*, Modernity and Society (pp. 32-49). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Limited.

Durkheim, E. (2003b). From "The division of labor in society." In M. Emirbayer (Ed.), *Emile Durkheim: Sociologist of Modernity*, Modernity and Society (pp. 58-77). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Limited.

Dutton, W. H., & Peltu, M. (2007). The emerging Internet governance mosaic: connecting the pieces. *Information Polity: The International Journal of Government & Democracy in the Information Age*, *12*(1/2), 63-81. doi:Article

Dutton, W. H., & Peltu, M. (2009). The new politics of the internet: Multi-stakeholder policy-

    making and the internet democracy. In A. Chadwick & P. N. Howard (Eds.), *Handbook of*

    internet politics (pp. 384-400). New York, NY: Routledge.

Dutton, W. H., Palfrey, J., & Peltu, M. (2007). *Deciphering the codes of Internet governance:*

    Understanding the hard issues at stake (Discussion Paper No. 8). Oxford, UK: Oxford

    Internet Institute. Retrieved from

    http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1325234

Emirbayer, M. (2003). *Emile Durkheim: Sociologist of Modernity*. Blackwell Publishing Limited.

Epstein, D. (2010). Constructing the Information Society: The binding nature of non-binding

    debates about Internet Governance. Presented at the Telecommunication Policy

    Research Conference, Arlington, VA. Retrieved from

    http://www.tprcweb.com/images/stories/2010%20papers/epstein_tprc2010.pdf

Esterhuysen, A. (2008). Reflections on the Internet Governance Forum from 2006-8. In A. Doria

    & W. Kleinwächter (Eds.), *Internet Governance Forum: The first two years* (pp. 37-41).

    Geneva, Switzerland: UNESCO.

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language*. New York, NY:

    London.

Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research* (1st ed.).

    Routledge.

Fairclough, N., & Wodak, R. (1997). Critical discourse analysis. In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse*

    as social interaction (pp. 258-284). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Farquharson, K. (2005). A different kind of snowball: Identifying key policymakers. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *8*(4), 345-353. doi:10.1080/1364557042000203116

Finnemore, M., & Sikkink, K. (2001). Taking Stock: The constructivist research program in international relations and comparative politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *4*(1), 391. doi:Article

Fischer, F. (2003). *Reframing public policy: Discursive politics and deliberative practices*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Fischer, F., & Forester, J. (Eds.). (1993). *The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning*. Duke University Press.

Foucault, M. (1970, December 2). *The order of discourse*. Speech presented at the Inaugural Lecture, College de France.

Foucault, M. (1989). *Archaeology of knowledge*. Brunswick, NJ: Routledge.

Galloway, A. R. (2006). Protocols vs. Institutionalization. In W. H. K. Chun & T. W. Keenan (Eds.), *New media, old media: a history and theory reader* (pp. 187-198). New York, NY: Routledge.

Gasper, D., & Apthorpe, R. (1996). Introduction: Discourse analysis and policy discourse. *Arguing developmental policy: Frames and discourses* (pp. 1-15). Portland, OR: Frank Cass.

Genieys, W., & Smyrl, M. (2008). *Elites, ideas, and the evolution of public policy*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Giddens, A. (1979). *Central problems in social theory: Action, structure, and contradiction in social analysis*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.

Giddens, A. (1984a). *The constitution of society*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.

Giddens, A. (1984b). Elements of the theory of structuration. *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration* (pp. 1-40). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. (1985). *The nation-state and violence: Volume 2 of a contemporary critique of historical materialism*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. (1993). *New rules of sociological method: A positive critique of interpretative sociologies* (2nd ed.). Stanford University Press.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Anchor Books.

Goffman, E. (1963). *Behavior in public places: Notes on the social organization of gatherings*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Goldsmith, J. L., & Wu, T. (2006). *Who Controls the Internet?: Illusions of a Borderless World*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Haas, P. M. (2002). UN conferences and constructivist governance of the environment. *Global Governance*, *8*, 73-91.

Hall, P. A., & Taylor, R. C. R. (1998). Political science and the three new institutionalisms. In K. E. Soltan, E. M. Uslaner, & V. Haufler (Eds.), *Institutions and Social Order* (pp. 15–43). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Hart, J. A. (2008). Global internet governance. Presented at the Faculty/Student Conference of the International Public Affairs Association at Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.

Hart, J. A. (2011). Information and communications technologies and power. In S. Costigan

    (Ed.), *Technology and international affairs*. Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Hilgartner, S. (2000). *Science on stage: Expert advice as public drama*. Stanford, CA: Stanford

    University Press.

Hintz, A., & Milan, S. (2009). At the margins of internet governance: grassroots tech groups and

    communication policy. *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, *5*(1&2), 23–

    38. doi:10.1386/macp.5.1&2.23/

Hu, Q. (2005). Internationalized oversight of internet resource management. In W. J. Drake

    (Ed.), *Reforming internet governance: perspectives from the working group on internet*

    governance (pp. 185-192). New York, NY: United Nations Information and

    Communication Technologies Task Force.

Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (Eds.). (2002). *The qualitative researcher's companion*.

    Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Huston, G. (2002). Telecommunications policy and the internet. *On the Internet*,

    (January/February). Retrieved from http://www.isoc.org/oti/articles/1201/huston.html

Input to the Secretary-General's report on the system-wide follow-up to WSIS. (2007, May). The

    Internet Governance Forum.

Internet Governance Project. (2007). *Money and advice for the Internet Governance Forum: The*

    structure of the MAG and financing the IGF secretariat (Concept paper). Syracuse, NY.

    Retrieved from

    http://blog.internetgovernance.org/blog/_archives/2007/7/10/3083236.html

Kaspersen, L. B. (2000). *Anthony Giddens: An introduction to a social theorist*. Wiley.

Katzenstein, P. J., Keohane, R. O., & Krasner, S. D. (1998). International organization and the

study of world politics. *International Organization*, *52*(4), 645-685. doi:10.2307/2601354

Kaufmann, J. (1988). *Conference diplomacy: An introductory analysis* (2nd ed.). Norwell, MA:

United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

Kelty, C. M. (2008). *Two bits: The cultural significance of free software*. Durham, NC: Duke Univ

Press. Retrieved from http://twobits.net/discuss/

Keohane, R. O. (1984). *After hegemony: Cooperation and discord in the world political economy*.

Princeton, NJ: Pinceton University Press.

Keohane, R. O. (2002). Governance in a partially globalized world. *American Political Science

Review*, *95*(01), 1-13.

Kleinwächter, W. (2005). De-mystification of internet root: Do we need governmental

oversight? In W. J. Drake (Ed.), *Reforming internet governance: perspectives from the

working group on internet governance* (pp. 209-225). New York, NY: United Nations

Information and Communication Technologies Task Force.

Kleinwächter, W. (2008). Multistakeholderism, civil society, and global diplomacy: The case of

the World Summit on the Information Society. In W. J. Drake & E. J. Wilson (Eds.),

Governing global electronic networks (pp. 535-582). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Kleinwächter, W. (2010). Multistakeholderism and the IGF: Laboratory, clearinghouse,

watchdog. In W. J. Drake (Ed.), *Internet governance: Creating opportunities for all* (pp.

76-91). New York, NY: United Nations.

Kleinwächter, W. (Ed.). (2007). *The power of ideas: Internet Governance in a global multi-

stakeholder environment*. Berlin, Germany: Marketing für Deutschland GmbH.

Krippendorff, K. (1996). Information, information society and some Marxian propositions. In H. B. Mokros (Ed.), *Between communication and information*, Interaction and identity (2nd ed., Vol. 5, pp. 487-521). Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Kummer, M. (2005). Introduction. In W. J. Drake (Ed.), *Reforming internet governance: perspectives from the working group on internet governance* (p. 107). New York, NY: United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force.

Law, J. (1987). Technology and heterogeneous engineering: The case of the Portugueseexpansion. In W. E. Bijker, T. P. Hughes, & T. Pinch (Eds.), *The social construction of technological systems: New directions in the sociology and history of technology* (pp. 111-134). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Leeuwis, C. (1993). Towards a sociological conceptualization of communication in extension science:: On Giddens, Habermas and computer-based communication technologies in Dutch agriculture. *Sociologia Ruralis*, *33*(2), 281-305. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9523.1993.tb00965.x

Leitch, S., & Palmer, I. (2010). Analysing texts in context: Current practices and new protocols for critical discourse analysis in organization studies. *Journal of Management Studies*, *47*(6), 1194-1212. doi:10.1111/j.1467-6486.2009.00884.x

Lessig, L. (2006). *Code. Version 2.0*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Lickel, B., Hamilton, D. L., & Sherman, S. J. (2001). Elements of a lay theory of groups: Types of groups, relational styles, and the perception of group entitativity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *5*(2), 129-140. doi:10.1207/S15327957PSPR0502_4

Lightfoot, C. A. (2007). ICANN and the .xxx top level domain: The tipping point for future

    internet governance independence? Presented at the International Studies Association

    48th Annual Convention, Chicago, IL.

Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. H. (2006). *Analyzing social settings*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Macintosh, N. B., & Scapens, R. W. (1997). Structuration theory in management and accounting.

    In C. G. A. Bryant & D. Jary (Eds.), *Anthony Giddens: Critical Assessments* (Vol. 15, pp.

    455-77).

MacLean, D. (2005). A brief history of WGIG. In W. J. Drake (Ed.), *Reforming internet*

    governance: perspectives from the working group on internet governance (pp. 10-23).

    New York, NY: United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force.

MacLean, D. (Ed.). (2009). *Internet for all: Proceedings of the third Internet Governance Forum*.

    New York, NY: United Nations.

Malcolm, J. (2008). *Multi-stakeholder governance and the Internet Governance Forum*. Perth,

    Australia: Terminus Press.

Mansell, R., & Nordenstreng, K. (2007). Great media and communication debates: WSIS and the

    MacBride report. *Information Technologies and International Development*, *3*(4), 15–36.

    doi:10.1162/itid.2007.3.4.15

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research* (4th ed.). Sage

    Publications, Inc.

Mathiason, J. (2009). *Internet Governance: The new frontier of global institutions*. New York,

    NY: Routledge.

McLennan, G. (1997). Critical or positive theory? A comment on the status of Anthony Giddens'

  social theory. In C. G. A. Bryant & D. Jary (Eds.), *Anthony Giddens: Critical assessments*

  (pp. 318-326). New: Routledge.

Merton, R. K. (1968). The Matthew effect in science: The reward and communication systems of

  science are considered. *Science*, *159*(3810), 56-63.

Moravcsik, A. (2003). Taking preferences seriously: A liberal theory of international politics.

  International Organization, *51*(04), 513-553.

Muehlebach, A. (2001). "Making place" at the United Nations: Indigenous cultural politics at the

  U. N. working group on indigenous populations. *Cultural Anthropology*, *16*(3), 415-448.

Mueller, M. L. (1999). ICANN and Internet governance: sorting through the debris of "self-

  regulation". *info*, *1*(6), 497 - 520. doi:10.1108/14636699910801223

Mueller, M. L. (2002). *Ruling the root: Internet governance and the taming of cyberspace*.

  Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Mueller, M. L. (2006a). "A funny thing happened on the way to the forum…"

  Multistakeholderism, international institutions and global governance of the internet.

  Presented at the Telecommunication Policy Research Conference, Arlington, VA.

  Retrieved from web.si.umich.edu/tprc/papers/2006/615/Multistakeholdersim.pdf

Mueller, M. L. (2006b, May 18). The forum MAG: Who are these people? *ICANN Watch*.

  Retrieved June 27, 2011, b from

  http://www.icannwatch.org/article.pl?sid=06/05/18/226205

Mueller, M. L. (2007). The new global politic of internet governance. In W. Kleinwächter (Ed.),

> *The Power of Ideas: Internet Governance in a Global Multi-Stakeholder Environment*.

> Berlin, Germany: Druckerei J Humburg GmbH.

Mueller, M. L. (2010). *Networks and states: The global politics of internet governance*.

> Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Mueller, M. L., & van Eeten, M. (2011). *Where is the governance in internet governance?*

> Unpublished manuscript, .

Mueller, M. L., Kuerbis, B. N., & Page, C. (2007). Democratizing global communication? Global

> civil society and the campaign for communication rights in the information society.

> *International Journal of Communication*, *1*, 267-296.

Mueller, M. L., Mathiason, J., & Klein, H. (2007). The internet and global governance: Principles

> and norms for a new regime. *Global Governance*, *13*(2), 237-254. doi:Article

Muntigl, P. (2000). The European Union: Policy-making through organizational discursive

> practices. In R. Wodak, P. Muntigl, & G. Weiss (Eds.), *European Union discourses on*

> *un/employment. An interdisciplinary approach to employment policy-making and*

> *organizational change* (pp. 1-25). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co. Retrieved

> from http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/1651/

Nye, J. S. (2004). *Soft power: the means to success in world politics*. New York, NY: PublicAffairs.

Oberhuber, F., & Krzyzanowski, M. (2008). Discourse analysis and ethnography. In R. Wodak &

> M. Krzyzanowski (Eds.), *Qualitative discourse analysis in the social sciences* (First

> Edition., pp. 182-203). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Orlikowski, W. J. (1992). The duality of technology: Rethinking the concept of technology in

organizations. *Organization Science*, *3*(3), 398-427.

Orlikowski, W. J. (2000). Using technology and constituting structures: A practice lens for

studying technology in organizations. *Organization Science*, *11*(4), 404-428.

Padovani, C., & Nordenstreng, K. (2005). From NWICO to WSIS: Another world information and

communication order? *Global Media and Communication*, *1*(3), 264-272.

Padovani, C., & Pavan, E. (2007). Diversity reconsidered in a global multi-stakeholder

environment: Insights from theonline world. In W. Kleinwächter (Ed.), *The power of*

ideas: Internet Governance in a global multi-stakeholder environment (pp. 99-109).

Berlin, Germany: Marketing für Deutschland GmbH.

Padovani, C., & Tuzzi, A. (2004). WSIS as a world of words. What can we say about so much

talking. *Journal of Media and Society*, *18*(3).

Parsons, W. (1995). *Public policy: An introduction to the theory and practice of policy analysis*.

Aldershot, UK: Edward Elgar.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks,

CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Phillips, N., & Hardy, C. (2002). *Discourse analysis: Investigating processes of social construction*.

Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pickard, V. (2007). Neoliberal visions and revisions in global communications policy from

NWICO to WSIS. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, *31*(2), 118-139.

doi:10.1177/0196859906298162

Pinch, T., & Bijker, W. E. (1987). The social construction of facts and artifacts. In T. P. Hughes &

    T. Pinch (Eds.), *The social construction of technological systems* (pp. 17-50). Cambridge,

    MA: MIT Press.

Przeworski, A. (2004). Economic history and political science. *The Political Economist*, *12*(2), 1-

    12.

Przeworski, A., & Limongi, F. (1997). Modernization: Theories and facts. *World Politics*, *49*(2),

    155-183.

Rao, A. (1995). The politics of gender and culture in international human rights discourse. In J.

    Peters & A. Wolper (Eds.), *Women's rights, human rights: International feminist*

    perspectives (pp. 167-175). New York, NY: Routledge.

Rawls, A. W. (1996). Durkheim's Epistemology: The Neglected Argument. *The American Journal*

    of Sociology, *102*(2), 430-482.

Reisigl, M. (2008). Analyzing political rhetoric. In R. Wodak & M. Krzyzanowski (Eds.),

    Qualitative discourse analysis in the social sciences (First Edition., pp. 96-120). New York,

    NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (2009). The discourse-historical approach (DHA). In R. Wodak & M.

    Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (2nd ed., pp. 87-121). Thousand

    Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Rochefort, D. A., & Cobb, R. W. (1994). Problem definition: An emerging perspective. In D. A.

    Rochefort & R. W. Cobb (Eds.), *The politics of problem definition: Shaping the policy*

    agenda (pp. 1-31). Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

Rosenau, J. N., & Czempiel, E. O. (1992). *Governance without government: Order and change in world politics*. New York, NY: Cambridge Univ Press.

Schmaus, W. (1998). Rawls, Durkheim, and causality: A critical discussion. *The American Journal of Sociology*, *104*(3), 872-886.

Scott, N. (2001). Ambiguity versus precision: The chellanging role of terminology in conference diplomacy. In J. Kurbalija & H. Slavik (Eds.), *Language and diplomacy* (pp. 153-162). Geneva, Switzerland: Diplo Foundation.

Sha'ban, C. (2005). Proposal for establishment of an Internet Governance Forum. In W. J. Drake (Ed.), *Reforming internet governance: perspectives from the working group on internet governance* (pp. 235-245). New York, NY: United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force.

Shahin, J. (2007). The reassertion of the state: Governance and the information revolution. In M. Dunn, S. F. Krishna-Hensel, & V. Mauer (Eds.), *The resurgence of the state: Trend and processes in cyberspace governance* (pp. 9-34). Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Silverstone, R. (2007). *Media and morality: On the rise of the mediapolis* (1st ed.). Malden, MA: Polity.

Singh, J. P. (2008). *Negotiation and the global information economy* (1st ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Stahl, B. C. (2008). Empowerment through ICT: A critical discourse analysis of the Egyptian ICT policy. In C. Avgerou, M. L. Smith, & P. Besselaar (Eds.), *Social Dimensions Of Information And Communication Technology Policy* (Vol. 282, pp. 161-177). Boston, MA:

Springer US. Retrieved from

http://www.springerlink.com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/content/0410g407633p5071/

Strauss, A. C., & Corbin, J. M. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Streeter, T. (1996). *Selling the air: A critique of the policy of commercial broadcasting in the United States*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

The World Summit on Information Society. (2003a). *Geneva plan of action* (No. WSIS-03/GENEVA/DOC/0005). Geneva, Switzerland. Retrieved from

http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents/doc_multi.asp?lang=en&id=2266|2267

The World Summit on Information Society. (2003b). *Geneva declaration of principles* (No. WSIS-03/GENEVA/DOC/4-E). Geneva, Switzerland. Retrieved from

http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents/doc_multi.asp?lang=en&id=1161|0

The World Summit on Information Society. (2005a). *Tunis commitment* (No. WSIS-05/TUNIS/DOC/7 -E). Retrieved from

http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents/doc_multi.asp?lang=en&id=2266|0

The World Summit on Information Society. (2005b). *Tunis agenda for the information society* (No. WSIS-05/TUNIS/DOC/6(Rev.1)-E). Tunis. Retrieved from

http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents/doc_multi.asp?lang=en&id=2266|2267

Thompson, M. P. A. (2004a). ICT, power, and developmental discourse: A critical analysis. *The Electronic Journal on Information Systems in Developing Countries*, *20*(4), 1-25.

Thompson, M. P. A. (2004b). Discourse, "development" & the "digital divide": ICT and the World Bank. *Review of African Political Economy*, *99*, 103-123.

Throgmorton, J. A. (1991). The rhetoric of policy analysis. *Policy Sciences*, *24*(2), 153-179. doi:10.1007/BF00138058

Uimonen, P. (2003). Networks of global interaction. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, *16*(2), 273-286.

Walt, S. M. (1998). International relations: One world, many theories. *Foreign Policy*, *110*, 29-32+34-46.

Waltz, K. (1979). *Theory of international politics* (1st ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Webster, F. (2006). *Theories of the information society*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

Weiss, R. S. (1994). *Learning from strangers: The art and method of qualitative interview studies.* New-York, NY: The Free Press.

Wendt, A. (1995). Constructing international politics. *International Security*, 71-81.

Wendt, A. (1999). *Social theory of international politics*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Wodak, R. (1996). *Disorders of discourse*. Boston, MA: Addison Wesley Publishing Company.

Wodak, R. (2000). From conflict to consensus? The co-construction of a policy paper. In R. Wodak, P. Muntigl, & G. Weiss (Eds.), *European Union discourses on un/employment. An interdisciplinary approach to employment policy-making and organizational change* (pp. 73-114). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co. Retrieved from http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/1651/

Wodak, R. (2008). Introduction: Discourse studies - important concepts and terms. In R. Wodak & M. Krzyzanowski (Eds.), *Qualitative discourse analysis in the social sciences* (First Edition., pp. 1-29). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wodak, R. (2009). *The discourse of politics in action: Politics as usual*. New York, NY: Palgrave

    Macmillan.

Wodak, R., & Krzyzanowski, M. (Eds.). (2008). *Qualitative discourse analysis in the social*

    sciences (First Edition.). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2009a). Critical discourse analysis: History, agenda, theory and

    methodology. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of critical discourse analysis*

    (2nd ed., pp. 1-33). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (Eds.). (2009b). *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (2nd ed.).

    Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Wodak, R., Muntigl, P., & Weiss, G. (Eds.). (2000). *European Union discourses on*

    un/employment. An interdisciplinary approach to employment policy-making and

    organizational change. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co. Retrieved from

    http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/1651/

Working Group on Internet Governance. (2005). *Report of the working group on Internet*

    Governance. Château de Bossey. Retrieved from

    http://www.wgig.org/docs/WGIGREPORT.pdf

Yanow, D. (1999). *Conducting interpretive policy analysis*. Qualitative research methods (1st ed.,

    Vol. 47). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Yardley, L., & Bishop, F. (2008). Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: A pragmatic

    approach. In C. Willig & W. Stainton-Rogers (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative*

    research in psychology (1st ed., pp. 352-369). Sage Publications Ltd.

Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Vol. 5). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Zittrain, J. (2009). *The future of the internet and how to stop it*. New Haven, CT: Yale Univ Press.