

APC PRIORITIES FOR THE 14TH INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM, BERLIN, NOVEMBER 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

**2. CURRENT TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS
REGARDING INTERNET GOVERNANCE**

3. APC'S PRIORITIES AND ACTIVITIES

4. SCHEDULE OF APC'S ACTIVITIES

5. FOLLOW APC ONLINE

6. APC MEMBERS AND STAFF

ABOUT APC

1. INTRODUCTION

The 14th edition of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), the United Nations' most significant multistakeholder platform for discussing internet governance, is taking place in Berlin from 25 to 29 November. The Association for Progressive Communications (APC) values the IGF as a convening space to substantively engage in and contribute to internet policy discussions with a broad range of stakeholders.

The overall theme for this year's IGF is "One World. One Net. One Vision." APC supports an open, stable, free, secure and not fragmented internet. However, we believe the idea that there is "one net" and one shared vision does not really reflect reality, nor is it desirable. APC works towards an internet in which all people, in all their diversity, are able to use and shape the internet and digital technologies to create a just and sustainable world.

After an abbreviated three-day IGF in 2018, the IGF is back to its typical format of four official days plus a Day 0. This year's IGF marks the third year in a row that the IGF takes place in Western Europe, which undoubtedly hampers the ability of people from the global South, particularly civil society, to participate due to visa requirements. The IGF schedule appears

to be more streamlined, with fewer workshops (around 60) than previous years,¹ which are organised around three thematic streams: Data Governance; Digital Inclusion; and Safety, Security, Stability and Resilience. This year, the IGF will feature “Introductory sessions” and “Concluding sessions” for each theme, which may help participants to follow the different tracks, including topics they do not have expertise in. The downside of this streamlined approach is that fewer workshops may mean some topics do not receive adequate attention.

1. In 2018, there were 71 workshops during a three-day IGF, and in 2017 there were almost 100 workshops.

2. CURRENT TRENDS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING INTERNET GOVERNANCE

This year's IGF comes at a time when protests and people's movements have erupted in many countries around the world. While the root causes of the protests are distinct in each country, the internet has allowed the world to follow these events, and in many cases protestors have used digital technologies to connect, organise, document abuses, and show solidarity. At the same time, in a familiar cat-and-mouse game, the powers against which these movements are organising are restricting the use of the internet and employing technologies to protect their interests. Predictably, governments have been intentionally disrupting internet services, such as in Ecuador and Egypt, and deploying pervasive surveillance measures to reign in demonstrations. In Chile and Hong Kong, protestors have employed creative measures to disrupt and in some cases decapitate surveillance cameras and police drones.

This past year also saw increased urgency to address the spread of terrorist and violent extremist content online, new proposals and thinking on

content moderation and regulation, agreements from groups that run internet infrastructure that could also affect speech online, the creation of new processes, norms and institutions to address cybersecurity and stability, heightened concern about the impact of disinformation for democratic institutions, unprecedented scrutiny of the surveillance technology industry, and growing awareness about the widespread ramifications of the application of artificial intelligence on our societies. It is against this backdrop that the internet governance community will convene, tackling critical issues of access and digital inclusion, the regulation of platforms and governance of data, and addressing the proliferation of online threats without undermining the integrity of the internet and people's ability to use it securely to improve their lives.

This year's IGF will provide an opportunity to convene critical discussions about these timely topics as well as persistent challenges like ending digital exclusion. The future of the IGF itself is also likely to be a topic of considerable discussion following the report of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation.

3 APC'S PRIORITIES AND ACTIVITIES AT IGF 2019

3.1 ACCESS AND DIGITAL INCLUSION

3.2 HUMAN RIGHTS

3.3 GENDER

3.4 CYBERSECURITY

3.5 INTERNET GOVERNANCE

3.1 ACCESS AND DIGITAL INCLUSION

Amid growing consensus among international organisations that the rate at which mobile networks are extending coverage is slowing down and even plateauing, and increased awareness that the widely hyped 5G will only benefit wealthy urban sectors of the population, a growing number of voices are recognising the need for innovative models to connect the unconnected. APC works towards affordable and meaningful access to the internet for all people and all the time, irrespective of class, identity, gender or disability, or where they live. The IGF remains a dynamic platform for convening, exchanging knowledge and strategising around this critical issue.

Community networks: Together with our members, as well as the Internet Society (ISOC) and other partners, APC has continued to work intensively on community networks as a means for empowering people to build and manage their own access. A growing number of international reports have recognised the value of community networks, including a recent declaration from African ministers, directing the African Union to promote them. This reflects acknowledgement of the value of community networks beyond the simple extension of connectivity, but also in tackling other barriers



of the so-called usage gap, such as affordability, digital skills, and relevant content. As part of this work, we support alternatives to business models that rely on people's purchasing power. Since current strategies struggle to address the needs of the billions who still suffer from ineffective communication services due to coverage and affordability limitations, communities are increasingly building and managing their own access solutions.

At the IGF, APC is co-organising the workshop Towards equitable, sustainable community-led networks, which will look at infrastructure and connectivity issues from a gender perspective. APC will also participate in a roundtable organised by ISOC, Community networks: opportunities, challenges and solutions, which will look at how governments can work with underserved, rural, remote, and indigenous areas to empower them to create their own connectivity solutions, and what needs to be done to reduce or eliminate administrative, regulatory and policy barriers to community network deployment. We will continue engaging with the Dynamic Coalition on Community Connectivity, which this year will have a focus on the policy and regulatory interventions that enable community networks.

Taxing use of the internet: Another salient issue regarding digital inclusion is the recent trend of imposing "internet taxes" on service providers. APC is co-organising the session Do Internet services deserve a sin tax?, which will unpack the different forms of internet taxes that are emerging and address the human rights and socio-economic impact of these measures.

SESSIONS

APC staff will moderate other sessions on the topic where APC members will also participate such as:

- [NRIs collaborative session on Access](#)
- [Electricity, Community Networks and Digital Inclusion: The case of the underserved communities](#)
- [Internet Commons Forum](#)

Additionally, APC will attend other sessions where digital inclusion is discussed to help ensure that people-centred connectivity models are considered alongside more private sector and government-driven approaches. These include:

- [What Operator Model\(s\) for Digital Inclusion?](#)
- [The Dynamic Coalition on Innovative Approaches to Connecting the Unconnected](#)
- [Closing the digital gap for marginalized communities](#)
- [Business Innovations Foster Digital Inclusion, Bridge Gaps](#)

3.2 HUMAN RIGHTS

In the current political climate, in which technology is frequently the site through which struggles for social justice are carried out, the centrality of human rights to internet governance debates is undeniable. APC will continue to use the IGF as a platform to raise human rights concerns, including issues that are overlooked and not given their due consideration at the IGF, such as the radical economic effects of the internet and platforms on working people throughout the world and the impact of targeted surveillance on labour union activity.

Artificial intelligence: Artificial intelligence (AI) is receiving unprecedented attention due to its widespread application in activities ranging from aviation and transport, medicine, agriculture, climate change, the provision of social services, smart technology in the home, search engines and social media to policing and surveillance. APC's work on AI and big data is focused on their implications for human rights, social justice and sustainable development. During IGF 2019, APC will launch the new edition of the Global Information Society Watch (GISWatch) report, focused on the implications of AI in local contexts from human rights, development and social justice perspectives and with a specific focus on the global South.



This year's GISWatch, produced by APC in partnership with ARTICLE 19, presents 40 country, three regional, and eight thematic reports that address the impact of AI on human rights, such as freedom of association, the rights to work and to organise, the impact these systems have on vulnerable and marginalised populations, and what this means from an intersectional feminist perspective.

The launch of GISWatch will be on Thursday, 28 November at 13:00 in Raum IV.

An APC member will be also participating in the session Formulating Policy Options for Big Data and AI Development.

Environmental impact of ICTs: The expansion of information and communications technologies (ICTs) has spurred the production, consumption and disposal of computers, mobile phones and networking devices, increased energy consumption and increased usage of transport and commerce, which has adverse effects on the Earth's natural resources, on biodiversity and on humanity. While many initiatives have succeeded in creating individual and local awareness about the environmental impact of ICTs, there is still a lack of attention of this issue in internet governance discussions – this topic is absent from the IGF agenda. **APC's ninth Disco-tech, "Reboot Earth", will take place on Tuesday 26 November 2019,** and will be focused on the environmental impact of these technologies. "Disco-techs" are a series of informal evening events that are designed as learning exchanges,

aimed at bridging the gaps between activism and technical and political solutions to critical problems/scenarios/situations that urgently need to be addressed.

Platform responsibility and accountability: In his speech during the 2018 IGF, French President Emmanuel Macron said that “the values of the Internet are threatened” by “giant platforms” that can “no longer be called simple gateways, but gatekeepers.” Discussions on how to govern platforms and their role in propagating hate speech, violent extremist content and disinformation online promise to remain on the IGF’s agenda this year as well, especially in light of the tragic terrorist attack in Christchurch, New Zealand earlier this year, which was livestreamed. APC works to advance models that hold platforms responsible and accountable for their own actions to manipulate, rank, filter, moderate and take down content or users’ accounts, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. We recently published an issue paper, authored by Dr. Mathias Vermeulen, that proposes a co-regulatory approach to online content governance, which focuses on the regulation of company processes rather than content. The paper proposes a model with mandatory oversight by an independent regulator that will allow for scrutiny on design choices of platforms that allow the amplification of harmful content.

At the IGF we will actively engage in discussions around platform governance, especially as they pertain to countering violent and extremist content. APC joined the Christchurch Call Advisory Network

this year, and along with many of our civil society partners, we are working to ensure that the Christchurch Call, and other related initiatives, engage those affected and embrace holistic solutions, rein in outsourcing of speech regulation to private actors, consider the different technical layers of the internet and avoid the mythical “technical fixes”, and address the full range of forms that violent extremism takes, in particular violent misogyny, white supremacy, and far-right and anti-LGBTIQ extremism.

Surveillance in Latin America: The increasing use of technology for surveillance purposes, online and offline, often without clear human rights safeguards, is a fundamental threat to marginalised populations, activists, journalists, political dissidents and other groups. Derechos Digitales, an APC member, is organising a pre-event on surveillance in Latin America that will gather representatives from governments, civil society and the private sector to discuss strategies towards a regional human rights framework to address use of technologies for surveillance purposes, online and offline.

Measuring a free, open, rights-based and inclusive internet: As part of ongoing work to apply a tool that we facilitated the development of for UNESCO to measure the extent to which the internet is free, open, rights-based and inclusive, APC is co-organising a Day Zero session on the R.O.A.M.-X Indicators. During that session, APC member Media Matters for Democracy will be presenting the country assessment in Pakistan.

3.3 GENDER

Despite global recognition that the gender gap is widening, it is surprising that, compared to previous editions, gender is not a more prominent topic in this year's IGF. APC works towards a feminist internet that empowers women and people of diverse sexualities and gender expressions, to fully enjoy our rights, engage in pleasure and play, and dismantle patriarchy. The IGF is an important space to allow feminist researchers, advocates and activists to engage in internet policy discussions and to challenge the current internet governance system.

APC's gender interventions include organising a workshop on internet governance and sexuality. This workshop is a joint initiative of the Feminist Internet Research Network (FIRN) and the EROTICS initiative. The main objective of the workshop is to promote greater understanding and reflection on the relevance of genders and sexualities as entry points for governance and policy in a relaxed environment.

Since a feminist internet starts with enabling more women and people of diverse genders and sexualities to enjoy universal, acceptable, affordable, open, meaningful and equal access to the internet, APC will be actively participat-



ing in the Best Practice Forum on Gender and Access, highlighting gender perspectives and experiences with respect to working in community networks. We will also participate in the session of the Dynamic Coalition on Gender and Internet Governance organised by our member, Point of View, as well as a workshop on Sex work, drug use, harm reduction, and the internet, which aims to address questions connected with how to ensure women's safety both online and offline, and how to guarantee that legislation aimed at removing sexual content, child protection, and cybersecurity does not result in exclusion of the most vulnerable groups. Another session to keep an eye on is the EQUALS in Tech Awards 2019, which will be granted to organisations working on equal access, building skills and opportunities online and in the tech industry.

3.4 CYBERSECURITY

Since last year's IGF, there has been a flurry of global cybersecurity-related initiatives, amidst continued threats to the availability, confidentiality and integrity of information and its underlying infrastructure. APC has been actively engaging in many of these discussions, advocating for a human rights-based approach to cybersecurity. This means putting people at the centre and ensuring that there is trust and security in networks and devices that reinforce, rather than threaten, human security. Microsoft, with the support of the Hewlett Foundation and Mastercard, among others, recently launched the CyberPeace Institute, whose mission is to enhance the stability of cyberspace by helping and defending civilian victims of cyberattacks, analysing and investigating cyberattacks, and promoting cybersecurity norms, prevention of attacks and responsible behaviour. The UN established two intergovernmental processes on cybersecurity – the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, and the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. After years of stalemate on cybersecurity at the intergovernmental level,



these two processes present the opportunity to advance global agreement on the rules that apply to state behaviour in cyberspace regarding international security, and ways to increase trust, capacity, accountability and transparency and help build patterns of responsible behaviour. The IGF comes a week before a multistakeholder intersessional meeting of the OEWG and two weeks before the GGE has its first substantive meeting. As such, it will be an important opportunity for stakeholders to exchange information and strategise.

The Global Commission on the Stability of Cyberspace (GCSC) recently launched its final report, which offers a cyberstability framework, principles, norms of behaviour, and recommendations for the international community and wider ecosystem. APC will be participating in the presentation during IGF of the GCSC report “Advancing Cyberstability” and an Open Forum on Conflict Prevention, Cooperation and Stability. We will also be participating in the session “Network disruptions across borders: a new cyber response”, which will address whether a network disruption is a justifiable response to a cyberattack, what the rules that govern the extent of the disruption are, who should take part in the development of these norms and laws, and in which forums.

3.5 INTERNET GOVERNANCE

APC works for internet governance processes that are accessible, democratic, transparent, accountable and inclusive, which includes strengthening the IGF as a platform to improve coordination and cooperation in global internet governance. We see the value of the IGF being more than an annual meeting, and actively engage in intersessional work – in particular the Best Practice Forums (BPFs) on gender and access, local content, and cybersecurity) – and national and regional IGFs, including as a co-convenor of the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), Africa and Asia-Pacific regional IGFs. We also value the capacity-building aspect of the IGF and the opportunity to exchange our experiences as the organiser of the African School on Internet Governance (AfriSIG) and will participate in the sessions of the Dynamic Coalition on Internet Governance Schools.

Digital cooperation: This year's IGF will have a main session on digital cooperation, which will reflect on the proposed mechanisms for global digital cooperation put forward by the report of the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation released in June. As input to the main session, APC provided feedback on the High Level Panel Report. We believe that a more empowered IGF should be at the centre of digital co-



operation in the UN system and more widely. After years of facilitating multistakeholder dialogue, the IGF is best placed to facilitate further work on internet policies and norms. However, we feel there are fundamental issues that are not addressed by the proposed “IGF Plus” model, such as how this model will be financed and how it can attract greater participation from governments and the private sector, among others. This proposed model does not contemplate the role of the national, regional and youth IGF initiatives, which APC members engage in actively, sometimes as co-organisers, and which are key to strengthen and democratise internet governance at national and regional level. Nor does it address the connection of the IGF Plus model with other UN discussions. Furthermore, to strengthen the IGF and its role, far more diverse voices should be at the table to ensure these discussions are inclusive and reflect the needs of groups facing digital exclusion. In particular, there is a need for enabling more meaningful participation from the global South and traditionally excluded people such as women, queer, trans and gender-diverse people, sex workers, youth, indigenous people, religious and ethnic minorities, rural populations and elderly people. This year’s meeting in Berlin will be an important opportunity for the internet governance community to discuss these and other questions related to the future of the IGF.

Inclusive internet governance: APC and members are organising and participating in a number of sessions focused on inclusive internet governance. For example, APC will be participating in a side event, Many Worlds, Many Nets, Many Visions,

organised by the Humboldt Institute for Internet and Society (HIIG). This event will feature the presentation of a publication on visions on an internet without discrimination to which APC contributed. APC will also participate in the pre-event NETmundial+5 on the legacy and implications of this conference for internet governance. In addition:

- Point of View is organising the session of the Dynamic Coalition on Gender and Internet Governance
- CIPESA is organising a workshop entitled Inclusion online, diverse knowledge: new rules?
- Colnodo is involved in the NRIs main session on emerging technologies and inclusion, security and human rights.

Data governance: A key topic at the IGF this year will be the importance of data for digital transformation, and how access to and sharing of data have become critical for innovation, but also its governance challenges, and the tensions between open data and data protection. On this issue, APC will participate in a workshop on “Data and Digital Intelligence as People’s Resources: Reclaiming Freedom and Control in a Data-based Society”, organised by Just Net Coalition, Friedrich Ebert Foundation and Bread for the World on 23 and 24 November. The workshop will be devoted to examining the political economy of data, alternative models of economic governance of data, and strategies for actors to regain control over personal and collective data and digital intelligence.

4. SCHEDULE OF APC'S ACTIVITIES AT IGF 2019

A full list of events that APC and its members are participating in during the IGF is available at: <https://www.apc.org/en/news/apc-igf-2019-schedule-events>

5. FOLLOW APC ONLINE AT IGF 2019

Twitter: @APC_News and @GenderITorg

Our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/APCNews/>

Media contacts: flavia@apc.org in English, Spanish or Portuguese (off-site), and leila@apc.org in English and Spanish.

Find in-depth resources on our [publications page](#).

For updates on gender and ICT policy, visit GenderIT.org, and contact katerina.fialova@apcwomen.org or tigist@apcwomen.org (on-site).

6. APC MEMBERS AND STAFF AT IGF 2019

6.1 APC MEMBERS

Alison Carmel (7amleh, Palestine/Israel), Arturo Enzo Bregaglio (Asociación Trinidad, Paraguay), Pavel Antonov (BlueLink, Bulgaria), Shubha Kayastha (Body & Data, Nepal), Daniel Mwesigwa and Lillian Nalwoga (CIPESA, Uganda), Yunusa Zakari Ya'u (CITAD, Nigeria), Julián Casasbuenas G. (Colnodo, Colombia), Vladimir Garay and Juan Carlos Lara (Derechos Digitales, Chile), Anulekha Nandi and Osama Manzar (Digital Empowerment Foundation, India); Andrew Lowenthal and Darika Bamrungchock (EngageMedia, Indonesia and Australia); Liz Probert (GreenNet, United Kingdom), Bia Barbosa and Olivia Bandeira (Intervozes, Brazil); Miru Lee (Jinbonet, Korea), Hija Kamran (Media Matters for Democracy, Pakistan), Myo Min Aung (MIDO, Myanmar), Florencia Roveri (Nodo TAU, Argentina), Leandro Navarro and Magdalena (Pangea, Catalunya), Bishakha Datta and Smita Vanniyar (Point of View, India), Avis Momeni and Sylvie Siyam (PROTEGE QV, Cameroon), Brenna (Riseup, United States), Kemly Camacho (Sulá Batsú, Costa Rica); Maricarmen Sequera and Belén Giménez (TEDIC, Paraguay), Dorothy Mukasa (Unwanted Witness, Uganda), Ahmed Swapan (VOICE, Bangladesh), Avri Doria (United States, individual member).

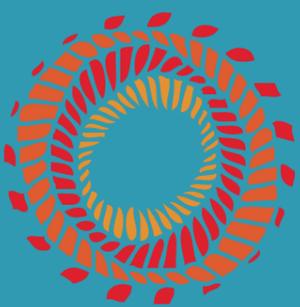
6.2 APC STAFF AND ADVISORS

Adolfo Dunayevich, Anriette Esterhuysen, Chat Garcia Ramilo, Carlos Rey-Moreno, Deborah Brown, hvale vale, Karel Novotny, Karen Banks, Katerina Fialova, Kathleen Diga, Koliwe Majama, Leila Nachawati, Maja Kraljic, Maja Romano, Mike Jensen, Natalia Tariq, Nico Pace, Roxana Bassi, Shawna Finnegan, Tigist Hussein, Valeria Betancourt and Verónica Ferrari.

ABOUT APC

The Association for Progressive Communications is global membership-based network of organisations and individuals who work collaboratively on the internet and ICTs for social justice and sustainable development. APC has 61 organisational members and 35 individual members in 73 countries, primarily in the global South. APC has been an active participant in the IGF since its inception.





APC
ASSOCIATION FOR
PROGRESSIVE
COMMUNICATIONS