

Support Organization to Facilitate Funding of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

Draft Statutes for Approval

At its last meeting in Hong Kong on 7-8 April, the Internet Society Board of Trustees was given a progress report on the preparatory work to set up a Swiss-based support organization to facilitate IGF funding. This followed the decision in principle at its meeting in Buenos Aires on 22-23 November 2013 to set up such an organization and to increase the annual support to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) from \$50,000 to an amount not to exceed \$200,000 for 2014, as determined by ISOC's CEO. The increase in contribution was contingent on the IGF maintaining its multistakeholder character and the Board of Trustees approving the organization documents of the support organization. The overarching objective is to achieve stable and sustainable funding for the IGF.

After discussions with our lawyer and Swiss authorities, we have concluded that the best way forward is to opt for the legal status of an **Association** under Swiss law, due to a very light legal overhead structure and ease of formation.

Draft **Articles** for **The IGF Support Association** (the **IGFSA**) are attached to this note for acceptance by the Internet Society Board of Trustees.

The purpose of the Association is set forth in Article 3, namely "to promote and support the global IGF as well as the national and regional IGF initiatives."

Among the activities lists that Association shall:

- "provide funds to maintain and strengthen the IGF Secretariat and national and regional IGF initiatives;
- seek and promote exchange and collaboration with national and regional IGF initiatives;
- identify new sources of funding and facilitate funding of the IGF;
- make contributions to the IGF Trust Fund administered by the United Nations;
- award fellowships for participation of IGF meetings, including preparatory meetings."

Led by Markus Kummer, ISOC will seek to gather initial **Members**, inviting current donors to the IGF Trust Fund as well as all previous Host Countries and the Members of the IGF's Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) to be founding members. Members will hold an initial **General Assembly** for the Association, preferably on Day 0 of the IGF meeting in Istanbul on 1 September 2014. With this meeting, the Association would automatically assume a legal personality under Swiss law. Minutes of that meeting with the names of the Members appointed to an **Executive Committee** would suffice for opening a bank account and assuming legal responsibility for the IGF Support Association (IGFSA).

Of the US\$200,000 maximum contribution approved by the Board of Trustees, up to US\$100,000 may be contributed to the UN IGF Trust Fund, while a similar amount may go to the Association for funding IGF related activities not covered by the Trust Fund (leaving the final distribution to the discretion of the CEO).

In addition to providing funding, ISOC would contribute initial support in establishing the Association (including formation legal expenses), soliciting initial Members and contributors, and establishing certain operational (secretary) duties to help support the Association for a period of time.