Position of the Board of Internet Society – Italy Chapter on the creation of a multi-stakeholder approach to Internet Governance in Italy

9 February 2019 – Unofficial translation

ISOC Italia proposal for the creation of a multi-stakeholder approach to Internet Governance in Italy

Premise

The Internet Society (ISOC) is a global organization, founded in 1992, whose mission is to ensure that the Internet remains transparent and open to all. ISOC, which is responsible for the organization of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), the primary Internet standardization body, believes that the success of the Internet is rooted in the way the network was born and raised as an open platform for innovation and sharing of ideas. ISOC has the profound conviction that the Internet cannot be regulated from above and believes that its governance should be based on inclusive processes and guided by consensus.

These processes, called multi-stakeholder approaches, provide that anyone interested in the future of the Internet can make its voice heard about how the network should operate. A great multi-stakeholder example is the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), an annual event where anyone who cares about the future of the network can share their good governance practices on the Internet with other participants. ISOC Italia, the Italian section of ISOC, has promoted and supported the organization of the Italian IGF since 2008.

Proposal

The issue of Internet governance is central to ISOC's mission because the methods through which the network is governed have a direct impact on future opportunities, both in the economic and social fields.

To promote this issue, also at national level, ISOC Italy intends to deepen its openness towards anyone who has something to say about the development of policies that regulate the Internet.

To increase the impact and relevance of the multi-stakeholder approach, ISOC Italia proposes to join forces with those of other Italian Internet players, directly and jointly maintaining a leading role in the development of the Internet Governance agenda. Clearly, in this scenario the Government represents a fundamental pillar, which will have to play its role in maintaining the security and stability of the Internet and in supporting its development and innovation.

To achieve this goal, ISOC Italia proposes to create a "coalition of the willing" open to representatives of four pillars of society:

a) State and public sector powers
b) civil society,
c) private sector,
d) academic, research and technical community bodies.

Access should be open to anyone who recognize themselves in a category and intend to contribute to dialogue.

The coalition's work will be led by a Multi-Stakeholder Committee for Internet Governance in Italy, whose functions should include those already described in a formal request presented to the government (Digital Transformation Team and Ministry for Economic Development) in March 2017, that is:

- work with a collaborative spirit to contribute to the definition of Italian positions in international forums dealing with issues of Internet Governance (global IGF, ICANN, Internet Society, ITU, OECD, UNESCO);
- to express opinions on the initiatives of the Parliament and of the Government concerning the management of the Internet in Italy, both at the specific request of the government, and independently;
- to elaborate studies and evaluations of initiatives of other countries, even if in contrast with our national policies;
- set public consultations on sensitive issues of the moment and evaluate the results;
- to ensure a permanent coordination structure for national congress initiatives, starting with the annual meetings of IGF Italia.

The Committee must have a multi-stakeholder composition, with members coming from all the pillars of the society. The decision-making process will be bottom-up, to reflect the needs of the different communities, making use of public consultations to ensure visibility of the activities and to encourage participation, so that the agenda is based on the contributions received from the community.

The guiding principles of the Committee's activities must be those of the global IGF, or:

- openness and transparency
- inclusiveness
- bottom-up initiative
- multi-stakeholder approach
- non-commercial approach

The Committee must appoint a Chairperson from among its members, with the task of coordinating the work and acting as spokesman for the various communities. In the past, until his death, this function was authoritatively carried out by Prof. Stefano Rodotà. The new Chairperson will have to ensure independence and authority. Ideally the candidate chairperson should have operated in more pillars of the society, with the aim of ensuring the widest representation.

In order to inform and ensure connection with the community, support tools must be established such as mailing lists and web pages open to all, as well as social media accounts. These tools will have to be managed in such a way as to ensure openness, transparency and inclusiveness.

The Committee will be responsible for defining rules for associating the name of IGF Italia with events that are consistent with the basic principles of the national and global IGF.

Initial work plan in view of IGF Italia 2019

This proposal, originated by the Board of ISOC Italy, is published and shared with all the other actors of the Italian Internet community to solicit comments and adhesions.

Once a first core of the Multi-Stakeholder Committee for Internet Governance in Italy has been defined, the definition of the priority themes to be included in the program, in multi-stakeholder logic, will begin.

The Committee must solicit as soon as possible, preferably by March 2019, candidates for the function of local host of the IGF Italia 2019 event, after having agreed on the format of the event (one or two days, with possible parallelism of the sessions).

The IGF Italia 2019 must be completed no later than October 15, 2019, to allow an appropriate report at the global IGF 2019 in Berlin, scheduled for the third decade of November.

To achieve these initial goals, the Committee will have a limited number of physical meetings. The draft documents will be shared one week before the meetings to allow for proper review and comments.

Appendix: Examples of entities involved in the multi-stakeholder approach to Internet Governance

State and public sector	Examples: Ministries involved in Internet Governance, central government agencies, local administrations, Parliament.
Civil society	Examples: non-governmental organizations, trade unions, Internet user rights associations, association relations with Parliament, associations active in the field of education and new professions, third sector.
Private Sector	Examples: representative organizations of manufacturing and service companies, Over-The-Top (OTT) operators, small and medium enterprises in the Internet and services sector, companies Industry 4.0
Academic, research and technical community institutions	Examples: Internet Society, professional societies, academic institutions active in Internet Governance research, public research institutions with specific interests in Internet Governance, national register of domain names