

Today's session, Global Collaboration Plenary - Where are we now? generated discussion on the ideals underpinning the Internet Governance Forum, that is, multi-stakeholder dialogue where all stakeholders can come together to make their voices heard about the Internet they want.

Markus Kummer, ISOC's VP of Public Policy, pointed out that the key role the IGF will play going forward is to enable access to the Internet for the 'next billions' of users who will come online, the majority of them likely to be from the Asia Pacific region. He argued, and other panelists agreed, that this open, multi-stakeholder governance model has made the Internet what it is today.

This model has enabled developing economies in the African and Pacific regions to engage with government, civil society, and other interested parties to enhance their understanding of topical issues such as IPv6 deployment openly, sharing relevant best practice information. Both Hisham Ibrahim from AfriNIC and Salanieta Tamanikaiwaimaro, from the Fiji Cyber Security Working Group stressed that powerful collaboration, outreach, and inclusiveness helped to bring about these discussions in a more harmonious way.

One of the key criticisms or benefits of the IGF is its non-decision making ability. To some, it's a weakness, but to others, it's a strength, that allows the robust free exchange of views without the pressure of coming to a negotiated position. There are some instances where decisions can be made, such as public policy issues at intergovernmental fora, but there are also occasions where a non-decision making model, such as the IGF, is more beneficial. While governments may be uncomfortable with this sort of engagement, the robust nature of the IGF's ability to debate issues and have rich discussions is overriding.

The next IGF will be held in Nairobi, Kenya from 27 to 30 September, with the theme being 'The Internet as a catalyst for change, access, development, freedoms, and innovation'. As we go forward into a new IPv6 world with many billions more being connected, it is these themes of innovation and change that will come to the fore.

Another subject of discussion was generated by Kuo-Wei Wu, CEO of NII-EPA on the results of IPv6 connectivity from World IPv6 Day, in particular, the divergent statistics of Asia Pacific connectivity on IPv6 Day – which showed the highest IPv6 penetration out of all the regions, to the big decrease of v6 connectivity that occurred only two days after when many sites turned off IPv6.