



Expert Group Meeting on the
Second Arab Roadmap on Internet Governance - The Next Decade
UN-House, Beirut, 11-12 December 2017



اجتماع الخبراء حول الإصدار الثاني لخريطة الطريق العربية لحوكمة الإنترنت للسنوات العشر القادمة
بيت الأمم المتحدة، بيروت، 11-12 كانون الأول/ديسمبر 2017

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION NOTE

1 BACKGROUND

In 2015, the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** renewed the mandate of the **World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)** for 10 years, until 2025,¹ and called for a close alignment between WSIS and sustainable development processes, as the information and communications technology (ICTs) are cross-cutting and are means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and alleviation of poverty. In 2025, the review of implementation of WSIS outcomes would feed into the review process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As one of the United Nations Regional Commissions (UNRCs), the mandate of UNESCWA is set by the UNGA, and its role within the WSIS process has received a similar extension in 2015. Therefore, UNESCWA continues to play a leading role in the WSIS process and subsequently in the linkages with the SDGs processes. Since the inception of WSIS in 2003, UNESCWA has undertaken various activities that included, among others: Regional meetings; Information society profiling exercise for Arab region with biennial reports covering the period 2003-2015; Regional plan of action for building the information society (2004);² Four training modules in the areas of ICT for development within the ESCWA project entitled "Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders in the ESCWA Region;"³ and the Arab High-Level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Forum (2017), which is the most recent event that sought to link the WSIS with the SDGs in the Arab region.⁴

Reduce p2, link bet AIGF and Tunis Agenda articles 68-82 addressed IG in two paths. Reduce history.

The activities of UNESCWA within the WSIS process has covered the issue of Internet governance from the time it was raised as a key issue in the 2003 and 2005 WSIS phases, following which the multi-stakeholder principle in Internet governance was added and the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) was formed and held its first annual meeting in 2006. In this context, and in partnership with the League of Arab States (LAS), ESCWA launched the joint initiative entitled "Arab Dialogue on Internet Governance" (ArabDIG)⁵ that resulted with a number of outcomes, including: 2009 Study on Internet Governance: Challenges And Opportunities for the ESCWA Member Countries,⁶ and 2010 Arab Regional Roadmap for Internet Governance: Framework, Principles and Objectives.⁷ The Roadmap was adopted by key stakeholders in a meeting of experts in October 2010, together with a Call of Arab Stakeholders: Towards Activating Comprehensive Arab Cooperation for Internet Governance, Regionally and Internationally,⁸ and these were the basis for the formation in 2012 of the Arab IGF as a regional process (2012-2015).

Since the launch of the Arab IGF, four annual meetings were held (Kuwait 2012, Algeria 2013, and Beirut 2014 and 2015) and the conclusion of the fourth Arab IGF witnessed the launch by ESCWA and LAS of the AIGF2020 initiative that aims at analysing and developing the Arab IGF process in its second phase that could extend until 2020. The implementation of the AIGF2020 initiative has worked on producing two main outcomes, a

¹ Outcome of the 2015 WSIS high-level meeting, para 77: <http://workspace.unpan.org/sites/Internet/Documents/UNPAN95707.pdf>

² <http://isper.escwa.un.org/RegionalActionPlans/RegionalPlanofAction/RPoADocument/tabid/68/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

³ For more information, please check the AIGLE online platform: <http://www.escwa-aigle.org/>

⁴ Arab High-Level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: <https://www.unescwa.org/arab-wsis-sdgs>

⁵ For more information: <https://www.unescwa.org/sub-site/arabDIG>

⁶ www.unescwa.org/publications/internet-governance-challenges-and-opportunities-escwa-member-countries

⁷ <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/arab-regional-roadmap-internet-governance-framework-principles-and-objectives>

⁸ Available in Arabic through the URL: <http://css.escwa.org.lb/ictd/1301/16.pdf>

Charter for the Arab IGF 2 that was developed by a working group in 2016 and presented to AHLF in May 2017 and a new Arab Internet Governance Roadmap.

The new or updated version of the Roadmap is under development by a working group of experts that was formed by ESCWA and LAS to review the new draft (2017) before its finalization and adoption at the meeting of experts that is subject of this information note. The update of the Roadmap is considered essential in view of the significant changes in Internet governance since 2010 and the necessity of streamlining the regional efforts on Internet governance towards achieving the SDGs.

2 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the meeting are to present the Second Arab Roadmap on Internet Governance (ARMIG2), discuss its content, and produce a final draft version. Meeting participants will also discuss mechanisms for implementation of the new Roadmap.

To review the new Roadmap before the meeting, a working group of experts from various stakeholders was formed within the implementation of the ESCWA-LAS AIGF2020 initiative for the development of the Arab IGF process. The working group's efforts leading to the draft Roadmap resulting from the meeting would be considered as the second outcome of the AIGF2020 initiative.

3 TOPICS AND OUTCOME

The meeting will cover the main topics of priority in Internet governance for the Arab region, together with the suggestions for improvement of the draft Second Arab Roadmap on Internet Governance and proposed mechanisms for its implementation. The expected outcomes of the meeting would be the final draft of the new Roadmap and a Call from Arab Stakeholders, represented by the participating experts and the AIGF2020 Roadmap Working Group, for strengthening its implementation in relation to the Arab IGF process.

4 ORGANIZATION

The meeting is organized by UNESCWA, in partnership with the League of Arab States, from 11 to 12 December 2017, at the UN-House in Beirut, Lebanon (Committee Room I, B1 level). The ICT Policies Section of the Technology for Development Division (TDD) is leading the efforts within UNESCWA.

5 PARTICIPATION

Participation would mainly include the experts who are members in the AIGF2020 Roadmap Working Group, formed to review the draft Roadmap, together with invited participants from the various stakeholders (Governments, business sector, civil Society, academic and technical community, international and regional organizations, and experts in their individual capacities). Participants include policy- and decision-makers who are interested and involved in the Internet governance process and its related thematic areas, as well as experts working on linkages between Internet governance and sustainable development in the Arab region.

6 LANGUAGES

Arabic and English are the working languages of the meeting, and participants are expected to either know both languages or rely on the translation that is planned for the meeting between both languages.

7 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND CORRESPONDENCES

The web page below provides additional information on the meeting. For correspondences, please sent an email to ESCWA-TDD@un.org and include in its subject a reference to the event's title.

<https://www.unescwa.org/events/arab-internet-governance-roadmap-2-meeting>