DYNAMIC COALITION ON INTERNET AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DCICC)

Report of the Meeting during IGF 2014

4 September 2014

Brief Substantive Summary of the Meeting

The Dynamic Coalition on Internet and Climate Change (DCICC) held its seventh physical meeting on 4 September 2014 at the ninth annual IGF Meeting in Istanbul, Turkey. The meeting was facilitated by Mr Tomas Lamanauskas (ITU).

After approving the agenda of the meeting the floor was given to H.E. Hasanul Haq Inu (Minister of Information, Bangladesh), and Mr Giacomo Mazzone (EBU) for the opening remarks.

H.E. Hasanul Haq Inu (Minister of Information, Bangladesh)

Bangladesh is one the world's most affected country by climate change. H.E. Hasanul Haq Inu described the impacts of climate change on the environment, economic activities and livelihoods in his country. He shared experiences and lessons learnt on how Bangladesh is coping with climate change using ICTs. In particular, he mentioned the importance of early warning systems and disaster management plans to save lives. He also stated that Bangladesh is taking into consideration the need for low carbon ICT solutions in its current broadband strategy, as ICT will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve sustainability goals.

Mr Tomas Lamanauskas (International Telecommunication Union)

Mr Lamanauskas presented the leading role that ITU, as the UN specialized agency responsible for ICTs, is playing in developing policies, regulatory frameworks, innovative solutions, and international ICT standards that enable environmental monitoring, promote adaptation and mitigation to climate change, reduce energy consumption and foster sustainability. ITU does this through its world conferences on developmental policies, international standardization, and the international treaties on the use of the radio spectrum and the satellite orbit, and international telecommunications, as part of its mandate to secure a sustainable future. In closing, Mr Lamanauskas noticed that sustainable development cannot become a reality in isolation and stressed the need of multi-stakeholder collaboration to improve ICT sector's environmental performance as well as to promote ICT applications to make non-ICT sectors more resource efficient.

Mr Giacomo Mazzone (European Broadcasting Union)

The broadcasting is moving towards a totally digital era. The transition towards digitalization of broadcasting has deeply revolutionized both the chain of production and the chain of transmission of the broadcasting signal. This digital transition has also an impact on carbon emissions from the broadcasting sector. On one side the digital transmission is contributing to reduce the energy consumption, while on the other side the multiplication of the platform and the one to one access are increasing carbon emissions. Broadcasters are therefore exploring new ways to reduce the impact of their services on the environment while ensuring an "anytime, anywhere, anyhow" performance. Because it is based into a massive transfer from the typical broadcasting signal (one-to-many) into a multiplicity of one-to-one signals, that needs an enormous quantity of servers, covering the whole

planet. So he asked ITU for carefully studying the impact of this phenomenon in the frame of the research activities on climate change and ICT industries.

Mr Mazzone also recalled the essential role that broadcasting is playing to cope with disaster recovery and management by ensuring communications. And in this spirit, remembered to the Coalition that in 2015 there will be the summit in Sendai organized by the UN on disaster recovery and that would be important for the DCCC to contribute to make of this event a success.

Discussion

Mr Tomas Lamanauskas (ITU) opened the floor to the audience for discussion. Some oral presentations were made including two contributions from the United States civil society that stressed the need to raise awareness on the relationship between ICTs and Climate Change and, in particular, on how ICT can help rural communities to cope with climate change. A Japanese academic representative mentioned the crucial role of the Internet and ICT for climate monitoring and tsunami prediction in Japan, as well as how the local government is promoting the use of cloud computing in order to reduce carbon footprint in Tokyo.

During the round table, the following hot topics were also discussed and garnered special attention:

- Need to provide global responses to environmental challenges and threats posed by climate change;

- Necessity to consider adaptation and mitigation issues as strongly linked;

- Importance of data collection and environmental monitoring;

- Crucial role of the spectrum for disaster management (need for special frequencies and ensuring long-term existence of the free-to-air broadcasting signals);

- Key role of the Internet and ICT in disaster management;

- Importance of broadcasting (mainly radio broadcasting, but also including TV) during blackouts, in disaster management and recovery, to ensure communication;

- Need for broadband plans to consider low carbon solutions;

- Use of cloud computing to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions, but carefully identify appropriate locations (cold locations ?) so that the problem is not simply moved from rich countries to less developed;

- Importance of raising awareness at community level, including in rural areas, on the role of the Internet and ICTs to cope with climate change.

Conclusions

The DCICC held a productive meeting. Participants from different regions presented their experiences and best practices of how providing access to the Internet, as well as harnessing ICT infrastructure and services, can spur economic growth, enable a sustainable use of natural resources, and support climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies.

The hot topics discussed gained consensus for follow up actions via email and the participants decided to continue sharing information via the DCICC mailing list in order to further advance the work of the DCICC and strengthen this multi-stakeholder collaborative initiative.

Nonetheless, after the meeting, it was suggested through the DCICC mailing list to hold the next DCICC meeting during the WSIS Forum as the IGF Forum seems not to attract the key stakeholders in this area. It was also suggested to request IGF secretariat to allocate time in the agenda of the next IGF meeting in order to report on progress made by DCICC.