Input from the Swiss Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM) to the stocktaking consultation conducted by the IGF Secretariat

OFCOM Switzerland thanks for the opportunity to take part in this stocktaking exercise and would like to share the following suggestions for further IGFs:

Political profile:

- **Continue raising the political relevance and profile of the IGF:** We consider that the IGF benefits from a broad approach to "Internet Governance", i.e. allowing and fostering discussions on issues that are of interest for citizens and businesses in their daily lives and that are thus relevant for political debates.

- The personal **participation of the UN Secretary General,** as during the 2018 and 2019 IGFs, should be enshrined as a permanent good practice and could be framed as a "State of the Internet" or "State of Digital Cooperation" Speech. This strengthens the profile and visibility of the IGF and its outcomes.

- In addition, the practice of counting with the **personal participation of the Host Country President of Head of Government** (since IGF 2017) should be maintained for similar reasons, especially regarding visibility in the host country and region.

- The **gathering and active participation of high-level leaders** from all stakeholder groups throughout the meeting, but also in **high-level formats** should be maintained and further developed. Especially, their potential role in filling the gap identified in the HLPDC Report concerning the **follow-up of discussions** held at the annual IGFs should be further explored. Linkages of the high-level meetings with the intersessional work done by Dynamic Coalitions, BPFs and NRIs should be considered and established.

- The innovation represented by the **parliamentarians track and meeting**, with a concluding document (Jimmy Schulz Call) should be continued.

- The **appointment of a Tech Envoy by the UN Secretary General** could help in raising the profile of the IGF. This person should be a senior person that the global IG community knows and trusts and that can facilitate dialogue and cooperation. The appointment of a Tech Envoy by the UN Secretary General is also proposed in Recommendation 5a of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation's report.

- **Further raise the level of political participation** in the IGF, especially from the global south. The efforts from Germany as 2019 host country are highly welcome. In addition, the involvement of national diplomatic missions already present in Geneva, informing them and involving them as early as possible in the preparatory process, could be strengthened.

Outcomes:

- **Continue improving the tangibility and usability of "outcomes" of the IGF meeting** by building on the experience of the "Geneva Messages" introduced in the 2017 IGF and the "IGF Messages" in the 2018 and 2019 IGFs.

- Attention should be paid to their **conciseness, timeliness** (i.e. be published during the last day of the meeting) and multistakeholder elaboration (involving main session or main thematic track coordinators).

- The "messages" **should be put to effective use by all participants** (e.g. by feeding them into any other relevant fora and processes), be included in all reporting activities performed by the MAG and the IGF-Secretariat, and be revisited in forthcoming IGF and NRI meetings.

- The "messages" should duly take into account and be linked with the **results/outcomes from Dynamic Coalitions, BPFs and NRIs**.

Format / Organization

- **Continue with the process of an open call for issues,** as it was first done in preparation for the IGF 2018 in Paris, in order to identify topics of high interest to stakeholder across the world.

- **Enhance in-depth debates on selected thematic tracks.** The Introduction of thematic tracks in the IGFs 2018 and 2019 was welcomed and should be kept and further developed, avoiding duplication of sessions as much as possible.

- The **interactive format of the opening session** first introduced in the 2017 IGF should be maintained and further improved.

- **Further promote dynamic and interactive discussion formats in all sessions**, possibly with a more limited number of panelists – while respecting regional, gender and stakeholder diversity and seeking to include young people. The shortening of the duration of main sessions was highly welcomed and should be kept. The mix of stakeholders within one session could be further enhanced.

- The **close co-operation between former, current and future host countries** in the organization of the IGF should be maintained and further deepened.

Participation / Outreach

- **Enhance the communication about the IGF's specific « added value »** (compared to other events on digitalization): Bottom-up, open, inclusive.

- More efforts by all stakeholder groups should be made in order to increase the outreach to **sectors undergoing deep processes of digitization**, which nonetheless are not yet sufficiently present in the IGF environment. The efforts from Germany in 2019 in this regard are highly welcome.

- We consider that, in particular, a **higher presence of the business community** would be welcome, and therefore, specific outreach actions to involve them in the preparatory work should be envisaged.

- **Youth** should be embedded with agency in all work efforts and tracks.

- Enhance the **dissemination of work by initiatives such as BPFs, DCs and NRIs.**

- The **information sources** at the disposal of the participants during the IGF (such as digital policy summaries, instant "session reporting", "daily reports", etc.) should be further developed and improved, e.g. by strengthening partnerships with, inter alia, GIP, GIPO, IG Schools, etc.

- The **IGF Secretariat could maintain a dedicated site** linking to **partners that provide observatory and helpdesk functions**, which provide updated information on relevant issues, processes and actors; provide capacity-building for interested stakeholders on relevant issues in the field of digital policy; and/or collect and share best practices. Such partners could especially offer support to BPFs, DCs and NRIs.

Synergies with other processes:
- We fully support the further development of the IGF into a stronger, more inclusive and efficient **"IGF+",** as proposed by the **UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation** (recommendation 5A/B on the 'Digital Cooperation Architecture'). In this sense, we understand that many of the suggestions made in this document share the spirit and converge with the goals and proposals of the "IGF+" model.

- Further work is needed for strengthening **linkages to the Agenda 2030 / SDG process**, also using the Geneva international network in this field.

- In this sense, the IGF 2020 in Katowice, where the Climate Change Conference COP 24 in 2018 was held, would be an ideal occasion to **place the interrelation between digitalization and climate change at the top of the IGF policy agenda**, reaching out and involving the communities and stakeholders involved in climate change discussions.

- Efforts to benefit from the **potential of Geneva as an international hub for global governance and dialogue** on a broad range of issues relevant to Internet Governance and digitization should be continued, in order to continue taking advantage of the large international community present in Geneva (including international organizations and international NGOs, scientific and academic networks, etc.). They should be involved as much as possible in the preparatory work.

Biel/Bienne, 10 January 2020