

Sweden

Response to

ITU, CL-13/168

Invitation for Member States to provide their input on actions that have been undertaken or to be undertaken by governments in relation to various international internet-related public policy issues.

Sweden is pleased to respond to the question posed in the invitation to provide input:

“Recognizing the scope of work of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) on international Internet-related public policy matters, represented by the list of topics in Council Resolution 1305 Annex 1 which was established in accordance with decisions of ITU membership at the Plenipotentiary Conference, the Council Working Group on International Internet Related Public Policy invites Member States to provide their position on following question:

What actions have been undertaken or to be undertaken by governments in relations to each of the international Internet-related public policy issues identified in Annex 1 to Resolution 1305 (adopted by Council 2009 at the seventh Plenary Meeting)?”

It is our view that stakeholders in business, civil society, the Internet technical communities, governments and academic institutions make significant contributions to the development of the internet.

The global Internet governance should continue to develop. The current model with multistakeholder cooperation in various forums for the governance and management of critical Internet resources, the domain name system and IP-addresses, should be preserved and strengthened. Sweden is of the opinion that increased government influence at the expense of the influence of other stakeholders would be a disincentive for the innovation and entrepreneurship that is the driving force for development of the Internet. Increased government influence would lead to increased politicization of technical decisions and bureaucratising established decision-making.

We have seen through the years that the multistakeholder model of governing the internet helps to transform the economy globally, regionally and locally and make it stronger. It also promotes the ability of people to exercise their freedoms and express their democratic aspirations.

Our support for the multistakeholder model is rooted in our firm belief that this is the only model that will continue to generate technological developments and solutions for the future and preserving the Internet's open nature.

Sweden sees a need for a continuous debate among all stakeholders on a range of public policy issues, including

- Safeguarding the open character of the internet,
- Promoting net neutrality and limitations of intermediary responsibility,
- Securing and promoting human rights, in particular freedom of expression online,

- Sharing policies and best practices on improving accessibility and affordability in ICT's, network resilience and reliability,
- Protection of privacy and the free flow of information,
- Promoting an open and enabling online business and trading environment
- Ensuring that the role of the Internet and ICTs is fully recognized and used to reduce poverty, empower the poor and generate sustainable development.

Multilingualization of the Internet Including Internationalized (multilingual) Domain Names

There is a virtuous circle where infrastructure development, growth of local content and lower access prices feed each other. Market demand for local language content is driven by improved access, faster networks (for example, through the establishment of national Internet exchange points) and political support for broad, inclusive use of ICTs in the general public. Stakeholder groups should be aware of the "content divide" where much of the world's content is unavailable to local population. Each stakeholder group can act in their sphere in support to the development of local content. There are useful suggestions available for how this can be done from the OECD, among others.¹

Internationalized domain names, IDN, are important to making domains available in local languages and scripts. ICANN is central to facilitate this through cooperation of all stakeholders, including governments through the Governmental Advisory Committee, GAC. Regional and Local Internet Registries, RIR and LIR, as well as international organizations can have a role in promoting the use of IDN as available.

International Internet Connectivity

Key issues to be addressed by low- and middle-income countries include the establishment of economic policies and regulations that enable competition on a level market playing field with predictability and accountability, leading to better infrastructure, lower prices and increased international exchange. The fourteen principles agreed in the OECD Communiqué on Principles for Internet Policy-Making can be useful in this respect², as can the policy and regulatory best practices developed by the Alliance for Affordable Internet³

IPv6 is one important issue since some new Internet users will not be able to get an IPv4 address and every service that aim to reach all users' needs to be available by IPv6. Sweden have actively promoted the transition to IPv6 on a local, regional, national and international level. Sweden have been active on the international level within RIPE as well as within the ITU IPv6 group. We have made guidelines available in English to be able to spread them through ITU and other fora to support the uptake of IPv6.

International public policy issues pertaining to the Internet and the management of Internet resources, including domain names and addresses

Governments contribute to the work of ICANN through the GAC, along with other stakeholders. More countries should engage in the GAC, and the opportunity to engage in RIR, LIR and technical groups should also be considered. There is a need for better awareness and knowledge about the current internet governance regime especially for governments and agencies with little previous experience of multistakeholder policy environments. Comprehensive training programs at request

¹ <http://www.oecd.org/sti/ieconomy/50305352.pdf>

² <http://www.oecd.org/internet/innovation/48289796.pdf>

³ <http://a4ai.org/policy-and-regulatory-best-practices/>

for officials in low- and middle income countries could be useful to deepen political understanding of the internet governance system. The task of promoting a more active participation can, for instance, be addressed by regional organisations.

The security, safety, continuity, sustainability, and robustness of the Internet

There are many actors participating in developing and ensuring security, safety, sustainability and robustness. It involves several layers of the internet ecology and includes the engagement of the private sector as well as government.

Sweden has implemented EU rules (the “Telecoms Package”), covering security requirements, security breach notification and personal data breach notification, into Swedish law. Sweden has financed numerous studies, projects and PPP:s in order to strengthen the robustness of electronic communications, including the Internet, on a national level.

Combating Cybercrime

Cybercrime is dealt with through the Budapest Convention. Sweden would like to build further on this convention and has proposed to tie the ITU to the Budapest convention on Cybercrime through a MoU – thereby ensuring that the ITU recognizes that this global convention is the one ITU Member States should adhere to when developing national cybercrime legislation.

There is a legislative proposal for full accession and ratification to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime currently being considered by the Swedish government.

Dealing effectively with spam

There are several global initiatives dealing with spam, such as The Messaging, Malware and Mobile Anti-Abuse Working Group (MAAWG) and the (LAP) London Action Plan. Sweden sees no need to start new fora, but to support the on-going initiatives.

Dealing with spam is not an international public policy issue. It is an issue for commercial spam-filters and their use on local levels. It may also be a national legal matter (legislation on commercial communications) and should be dealt with under the national legal framework. Also, it should be noted that both technological developments and fast changing user behaviour, with many users moving from e-mail to social networks or other online services, is quickly making the issue of spam less relevant .

Issues pertaining to the use and misuse of the Internet

There is no international public policy issue under this heading that is not dealt with under the two preceding headlines.

Availability, affordability, reliability, and quality of service, especially in the developing world

International organisations such as OECD, ITU-D have a role into facilitating effective markets and deployment of broadband of increasing capacity in the developing world. Likewise, development agencies, such as the UNDP and the World Bank have a role in contributing to the establishment of infrastructure and policies conducive to growth and innovation in low- and middle-income countries. Several new important initiatives, such as the Alliance for Affordable Internet, are also tackling the underlying issue of anti-competitive and restrictive policies. This is an issue dealt with under WSIS Action Line 2 and 3 and could become an important part of the governance discussions of the post-2015 Development Agenda.

IPv6 is one important issue for availability where Sweden has been active on the international level within RIPE as well as within the ITU IPv6 group. We have translated our guidelines to be able to spread them through ITU and other fora to support the uptake of IPv6. Sweden has promoted the usage and uptake of DNSSEC on a local, regional, national and international level to increase the reliability of DNS. Private Swedish internet companies is working actively with setting up IXP:s in developing countries and exchanging best practice.

See also the reply on international internet connectivity.

Contributing to capacity building for Internet governance in developing countries

All international organisations and forums for discussions or practice of internet governance have a responsibility to ensure broad and competent representation from all countries, especially from low- and middle-income developing countries. There is a need for better awareness and knowledge about the current internet governance regime, especially for countries and ministries with little previous experience of the multistakeholder decision-making environment. There is also a need to support nascent civil society actors in this field in order to generate deeper national debates on internet related issues. Financial support mechanisms for supporting the participation of representatives of governments, civil society and the technical community in ICANN, GAC, IGF, IETF and other relevant forums should be improved. Regional organisations have a role in promoting active participation. Capacity building for Internet governance should be included in existing international development programmes for programmes that seek to strengthen civil society, industry and the institutional capacity of governments.

Developmental aspects of the Internet

To achieve fair and sustainable global development, everyone must have access to the technologies that define present-day realities. Internet access is key to increasing the opportunities for poor people to exercise their freedom of expression and information. Sweden generally emphasises the significance that ICT can have for development and for promoting the enjoyment of human rights, and is using ICT actively as a tool for sustainable development.

Sweden is working for increased access to, and use of, information and communication technology with the aim of increasing knowledge, dissemination of information and participation regardless of physical boundaries, and with particular focus on increasing the use of ICT by women and other groups that do not currently participate fully in the information society. Building local capacity for innovation, development and entrepreneurship in the IT sector in low and middle-income countries is an important area.

Within development cooperation, priority is given to ICT and the internet's positive effects on poverty reduction, combating corruption, democratic development and participation. Access to an open and free internet plays a significant role in creating economic growth and contributing to the creation of open, innovative and resilient social structures in low and middle income countries. There are many examples of people raising themselves out of poverty where access to and use of ICT have been a contributing factor. Sweden supports a number of initiatives in these areas at bilateral, regional and global level.

Respect for privacy and the protection of personal information and data

Privacy and the protection of personal information and data is an important aspect for trade-relations and -agreements, as most of all trade—including goods and services, entails cross-border transfer of data.

Sweden has implemented the EU rules on privacy and personal data protection.

Protecting children and young people from abuse and exploitation

Sweden supports industry self-regulation. The ITU working group on child online protection can have a role to follow up and publish which social networking providers have policies and corrective actions that aims to protect children and young people from abuse and exploitation.

Sweden participates in and supports the Financial Coalition of banks against child pornography that counteract sexual abuse images of children by preventing payments in the financial systems. The Swedish government supports the private led project where network providers in voluntary cooperation with police block access to child porn websites. Sweden continuously follows the development in the area.