



Joint Declaration on Internet Rights by the Minister of Culture of Brazil and the Undersecretary for Communications of Italy

The Minister of Culture of Brazil, Gilberto Gil, and the Undersecretary for Communications of Italy, Luigi Vimercati, during the Second Meeting of the IGF, in Rio de Janeiro, express their belief that a set of principles is necessary to allow a democratic and inclusive development of the Internet. Thus, they agree to facilitate together the process of defining an Internet Bill of Rights with a view to frame and enforce fundamental rights in the Internet environment.

The proposal of an Internet Bill of Rights was first conceived at the outset of the World Summit for Information Society, in Tunis, 2005. The consensus gathered around this proposal, encompassing governments, civil society and non-governmental organizations, led to the formation of a Dynamic Coalition, which held its first workshop during the 2006 IGF in Athens. In September 2007, the Italian Government organized a Dialogue Forum on Internet Rights, in Rome, to discuss in a multi-stakeholder environment the general concepts and methods that should guide this work.

During the Rio IGF Meeting, as a result of the debate that took place in the workshop of the Dynamic Coalition, the Internet Bill of Rights has been defined as an on-going process that builds upon existing fundamental rights, promotes their enforcement, and fosters the recognition of emerging principles.

These rights and principles - deriving from Internet policy discussions - include, among others, privacy, data protection, freedom of expression, universal access, network neutrality, interoperability, global reachability of all Internet nodes, the use of open formats and standards, public access to knowledge, and the right to innovate, as well as market-oriented principles such as the right to a fair and competitive online market, and consumer rights in general.

In the framework of the IGF mandate and of the WSIS outcome, the discussion and realization of this Bill of Rights process is crucial. In this regard, we support the proposal made by the Dynamic Coalition that the debate on the framing and enforcement of Internet rights be one of the major themes in future IGF Meetings, starting from the next IGF Meeting in 2008.

Against this background, Minister Gilberto Gil and Undersecretary Luigi Vimercati consider of crucial importance to hold a preparatory meeting prior to the next IGF and will make efforts to this end. Accordingly, they invite all stakeholders to join the process set by the Dynamic Coalition for the Internet Bill of Rights and to support its recognition as one of the main themes of the Internet Governance Forum.

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