Jari Arkko's comments at the High Level Meeting Preceding the Internet Governance Forum

September 1, 2014

Honorable Ministers, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. I am proud to be working with you all this week on important topics relating to the Internet. I would also like to give my personal thanks to our hosts for organizing the meeting in this amazing city.

My organization, the Internet Engineering Task Force or IETF works on the core technology for the Internet, on such things as HTTP, BGP, or DNS. Or improvements in the security and privacy of the Internet. We also work hard on a number of Internet Governance issues, such as the transition of NTIA's role in IANA. By the way, we are making good progress on that. I feel very optimistic about completing our part of the transition plan soon. I would also like to say that it has been wonderful seeing the whole world work on this together. So many people care about getting this right. I know many of you are in this room, so thank you.

But today I wanted to speak about the focused topic in this meeting, capacity building for economic development. I want to bring up two observations.

First, while my organization's roots are in the pure technical work, we have realized how connected technology and policy issues are. We also see that the Internet should be for everyone, and we need to understand Internet technology needs from all parts of the world. Reaching out to different types of participants is now a key priority for us. For instance, together with ISOC, we have a policy guest program that draws in participants that are focused on policy issues. We have fellowship and mentoring programs for participants from around the world. We are meeting in new areas. And our over-the-Internet working style allows participation with limited resources or time.

But this is just the beginning. I believe we all need to be connected better. Be even more aware of other organizations that have technical solutions or who discuss problems in the Internet. This is my call for you, me, all of us: we need to be even more connected. And I think this IGF meeting is a great place to do exactly that.

My second observation is about the role of the Internet in driving innovation and economic development throughout the world. The Internet allows us all to create new things very easily, from videos to community discussion forums to fundamental new innovations. The Internet supports what I call permissionless innovation. The observation that I want to make is that the technology continues to become more easily usable by everyone. You no longer have to be a TV station to distribute your video. I think we will see a similar development in other areas. For instance, at the IETF we work on web-based real-time communication, which enables any web server to be a voice call provider. Security technologies such as TLS enable anyone to build secure networks, even on top of untrusted

connections. When we talk about capacity building, we should take into account that what used to require expertise and major corporations is quickly becoming possible for the individuals. And that is a good thing.

Thank you,

Jari Arkko,
IETF, Chair