IGF Policy Network on Internet Fragmentation

"Avoiding Internet Fragmentation.

Contributing to Operationalising the GDC Commitment?"

PNIF Webinar 3, Tuesday 19 November, 13:00-14:30 UTC

www.intgovforum.org/en/content/*policy-network-on-internet-fragmentation*

IGF Policy Network on Internet Fragmentation

"Avoiding Internet Fragmentation. Contributing to Operationalising the GDC Commitment ?"
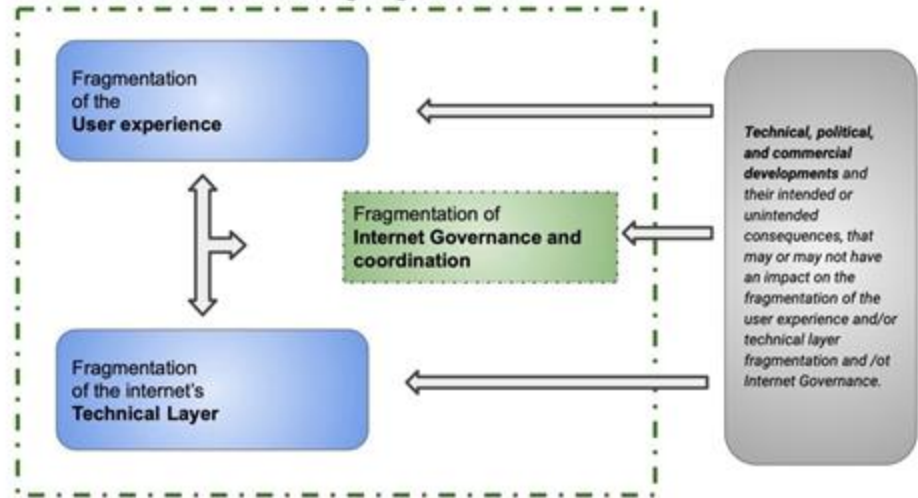
19 November, 13:00-14:30 UTC

Agenda

1. Welcome

2. Introduction and setting the scene / Takeaways from the previous webinars

3. Discussion 1: **Exploring the GDC commitment**

3. Discussion 2: **How can the PNIF effectively contribute?**

3. Summary and Wrap-up

IGF Policy Network Internet Fragmentation (PNIF)

-> IGF intersessional activity

-> aims to raise awareness of actions and measures that risk fragmenting the Internet

-> wants to serve as a platform for fostering holistic and inclusive discussions on how to avoid fragmentation

-> the PNIF developed the *Framework for discussing fragmentation*

PNIF framework for discussing fragmentation

Fragmentation of the **User experience**

Fragmentation of **Internet Governance and coordination**

Fragmentation of the internet's **Technical Layer**

Technical, political, and commercial developments and their intended or unintended consequences, that may or may not have an impact on the fragmentation of the user experience and/or technical layer fragmentation and /ot Internet Governance.

IGF Policy Network Internet Fragmentation (PNIF) in 2024

Webinars tracking the global discussion on fragmentation and exploring ways for the PNIF to contribute to fostering future holistic multisstakeholder dialogue on fragmentation.

Concrete actions as suggested
- ongoing : Inventory of actions and their impact on fragmentation

PNIF session at IGF 2024 in Riyadh - **Thursday 19 December, 9:00-10:15 am** (6:00-7:15 am UTC)

Recap PNIF webinar I :

- avoiding fragmentation is **still a matter of concern** in 2024
- focus on **what one wants to achieve by avoiding fragmentation** and avoid undefined use of the term
- **emphasise the economic benefits** of an unfragmented internet, but difficult to identify concrete indicators
- technically, some extent of fragmentation in inherent to the internet (network of networks)
- increasing fragmentation at the policy and regulatory levels as well as commercial decisions lead to fragmentation

- PNIF should continue to contribute to a **holistic framing and understanding of fragmentation**
- PNIF should collect and provide **empirical information on the impact** of fragmentation from different perspectives
- PNIF could collect **existing research and datasets** on the impact of fragmentation
- PNIF to help establishing a **structured discourse among governments** on fragmentation

SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE
OUTCOME DOCUMENTS
September 2024

Pact for the Future,
Global Digital Compact,
and Declaration on Future
Generations

Global Digital Compact

Objective 3. Foster an inclusive, open, safe and secure digital space that respects, protects and promotes human rights

Subsection Internet governance

29. We commit to:

  (a) Promote an open, global, interoperable and reliable Internet and take concrete steps to maintain a safe, secure and enabling online environment for all (SDG 9);

  (b) Support the Internet Governance Forum, including through continued efforts to increase diverse participation from Governments and other stakeholders from developing countries and the provision of voluntary funding also to this end (SDGs 9 and 10);

---

²¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

47

  (c) Promote international cooperation among all stakeholders to prevent, identify and address risks of fragmentation of the Internet in a timely manner (SDG 16);

  (d) Refrain from Internet shutdowns and measures that target Internet access (SDG 16).

Digital trust and safety

Recap PNIF webinar II :

- the GDC commitment is an **acknowledgement by UN Member States of the risk of fragmentation**

- commitment is open to interpretation an requires further clarification

- only the **actions of governments and stakeholders** will demonstrate if there is a genuine commitment

- **significant lack of intergovernmental engagement and focusses dialogue** on the the issue

- fragmentation debate would benefit from more attention for the advantages and benefits that are at are at risk if the internet fragments

- PNIF to invite Office of Teck Envoy **to clarify interpretation of art 29(c) and context for implementation**

- stakeholders can use IGF/PNIF to **facilitate and encourage focussed discussion** on internet fragmentation in support of policy discussions

- PNIF to help establishing a **structured discourse among governments** on fragmentation, e.g. by breaking down the broad political view in concrete angles and aspects

- PNIF to consider establishing a **reporting mechanism to support the operationalisation of the GDC commitment** by
        - contributing to GDC follow-up (Art 72)
    - compile its own report on aspects of art.29(c) and their developments in the year after GDC
    - engage with other processes (CSTD, WSIS+20)

Discussion 1: **Exploring the GDC Commitment**

- *What does the GDC commitment mean to you?*
- *How should we interpret it?*
- *What can we expect?*
- *How will MS follow up ?*
- *….*

The aim of this discussion should be to come up with a list of questions and issues that need to be clarified in relation to article 29(c) of the GDC and its follow up .

Discussion 2: **How to contribute to operationalising the GDC commitment?**
How can the PNIF effectively contribute to future holistic multistakeholder discussion on fragmentation? *(as a follow up to the GDC, and including but not limited to the WSIS+20 review)*

1) How to contribute to operationlising the commitment to *29. (c) Promote international cooperation among all stakeholders to prevent, identify and address risks of fragmentation of the internet in a timely manner?*

1) Establishing a reporting mechanism to support the operationalisation of the GDC commitment

- Art 72 on the GDC follow up: what do we know already ?
- report on aspects of art.29(c) and their developments in the year after GDC:
  -> how to realise ?
  -> what should be in ? Possible outline?
  -> who to contribute, lead, support ?
- Other activities ?

Action item from webinar 1: PNIF empirical inventory of actions & decision and their impact of fragmentation

Aim of the inventory

- Undertake empirical work to document government and corporate actions and their (intended and/or unintended) impact on Internet functionality.
- Help governments and corporate actors understand and mitigate the effects of their decisions, and help to improve future policymaking.   One means is by identifying triggers or indicators under the categories
- Convert real-world examples into a clear and cohesive narrative of what happens. Be specific, concrete and illustrate the impact of government and corporate actions.

How to submit cases ?

       Webform : https://forms.gle/HyzeyAg34dRCZXoy7

PNIF webpage

www.intgovforum.org/en/content/policy-network-on-internet-fragmentation