

Recent Developments in the Field of Internet

Since our pilot bulletin in May 2011¹, several new developments proved our conclusions that the role of the international organizations and certain governments in the field of the Internet is increasing. The first weeks of September were clearly marked with the publication of several documents, each of them with the possibility to influence the development of the Internet, and to cause a serious impact on the current model, which governs the Internet.

India, Brazil, South Africa call for a new UN-agency

First came the recommendations from the IBSA² meeting on Global Internet Governance, which [took place](#) on September 1-2. [The document](#) is here.

Main topic: the current model of governance of the Internet is not a good one, but a new model is needed.

Suggested solution: create “urgently” a new body in the UN system to “coordinate and evolve coherent and integrated global public policies pertaining to the Internet”.

The explanation of this language can be found both in the text itself, and in the desire of the authors for the new body to replace or *at least* control all the existing organizations, among them ICANN, ISOC (as the legal home for the IETF), the [RIRs](#), the regional top-level domain administrations (such as [APTLD](#), [CENTR](#), etc.), as well as the [UDRP](#) (“*should... integrate and oversee the bodies responsible for technical and operational functioning of the Internet, including global standards setting... undertake arbitration and dispute resolution... and be responsible for crisis management*”). The IBSA

proposal was criticized during the annual IGF in Nairobi, and an Indian official [elaborated](#) that it was misunderstood, and this statement will be edited, etc.

Some days later [a draft Resolution International code of conduct for information security](#) was proposed at the

66th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

It is signed by Russia, China, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (all members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; the only one missing from that group is Kazakhstan – an interesting sign, which requires more research). The proposed UN Resolution is intended to create an “**International code of conduct for information security**”. In the resolution, among others, there's a provision, which urges every country to pledge “*To cooperate in combating criminal and terrorist activities that use information and communications technologies, including networks, and in curbing the dissemination of information that incites terrorism, secessionism or extremism or that undermines other countries' political, economic and social stability, as well as their spiritual and cultural environment*”

Russia alone produced on Sept. 22nd [a different document](#), which is, however, very close in some aspects to the content of the UN draft resolution. The paper is called

1 If you have not received it, please, email us for a copy.

2 India, Brazil, South Africa

CONVENTION on INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION SECURITY (CONCEPT)

This document is built after discussions within the country, which did not include , however, some of the proposal, listed in the published version. The Russian paper explains some of the terms, existing in cyberspace, and define

“the main threats to international peace and security in the information space”

Among the main threats, *“actions in the information space aimed at undermining the political, economic, and social system of another government, and psychological campaigns carried out against the population of a State with the intent of destabilizing society”* and *“the denial of access to new information and communication technologies, the creation of a state of technological dependence in the sphere of informatization, to the detriment of another State”*.

These three documents, coming one after the other, combined with several more, which showed up in the summer (for example, see the [presentation of DONA](#) – the Digital Objects Numbering Authority, and [the report](#) from the DONA meeting at the ITU in May), including the [transcript](#) of the beginning³ of the meeting between Russia Prime Minister V. V. Putin and ITU Secretary-General Hamadoun Toure, clearly show that a number of countries⁴ have decided to push forward either the ITU becoming the global Internet-dog (it is very unlikely that a new UN-agency will get traction), in

an attempt to limit the participation of civil society and business in the way the Internet is developed⁵.

The Internet-related business from US and EU has yet to address these new developments, but it is likely that it will continue neglecting the ITU and the UN, in the (perhaps narrow-minded?) belief that the EU/US administrations will take care of the issues. However, unlike previous attempts for control over the Internet, this time the conversations are at the highest possible political level, and they contain some ideas, which are speaking for themselves.

Not only the US business, but non-profits, citizens, which are concerned with the ever-lasting attempts of governments to control the free flow of information and ideas should be worried. Especially in the context of [statements](#) by UK prime minister David Cameron that *“Free flow of information can be used for good. But it can also be used for ill.”*

News are coming from all over the world, and they are not always good for the secure, free and open Internet. At the same times, concerns need to be addressed, and it is best to make this in a dialog with interested parties, including governments which want to be engaged. Readers must be aware also of attempts made at different levels, which bring nuances in the stories, coming from Russia. For example, [this PC World article](#) claims that there is progress in the Russia-US relations in Cyberspace, which contradicts with [this harsh statement by](#) a top-level US State Department official, stating exactly the opposite (and which sounds more credible than the magazine story).

- 3 See for example what topic was suggested by Mr. Toure for the discussion with PM Putin: *“...establishing international control over the Internet using the monitoring and supervisory capabilities of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)”*.
- 4 See also the [contribution from China](#) to the working group on preparation of the 2012 World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT), suggesting inclusion of new articles on network and information security to the [international telecommunications regulations](#).
- 5 As [stated](#) on Sept. 23, 2011 by Russian deputy-minister of communications, *“Internet regulation must be based on intergovernmental agreements”*