

GLOBAL INFORMATION SOCIETY WATCH 2017

*Internet governance from the edges:
National and regional IGFs in their own words*



GISWatch 2017
SPECIAL EDITION

Internet governance from the edges: National and regional IGFs in their own words

Global Information Society Watch 2017 Special edition
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Project coordinators

Maud Barret Bertelloni
Deborah Brown
Anriette Esterhuysen

With the contributions of

Cathy Chen
Flavia Fascendini
Anja Gengo
Lori Nordstrom

Publication production

Cathy Chen and Flavia Fascendini

Proofreading

Valerie Dee
Lori Nordstrom

Graphic design

Monocromo
info@monocromo.com.uy
Phone: +598 2400 1685

Cover illustration

Matias Bervejillo

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Global Information Society Watch 2017 special edition:
Internet governance from the edges: NRIs in their own words

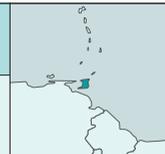
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This report is a special companion edition to Global Information Society Watch 2017: National and Regional Internet Governance Forum Initiatives (NRIs), which can be downloaded from <https://www.giswatch.org/2017-local-and-regional-internet-governance-forums-igfs>

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO MULTISTAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP (TTMAG)

Trinidad and Tobago

Dr. Sanjay Bahadoorsingh • sanjay.bahadoorsingh@mag.tt • <http://mag.tt>



NRI founding stories and development

*What is the story of the founding of your NRI?
What were its inspiration, its objectives?*

The Trinidad and Tobago Network Information Centre (TTNIC) manages the registration and maintenance of all domains that end in the .tt suffix. The Trinidad and Tobago Multistakeholder Advisory Group (TTMAG) was formed out of consultations with internet stakeholders on the .tt country code top-level domain (ccTLD) held by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in 2009. A multistakeholder management model was preferred by most stakeholders, which subscribed to the General Principles of Internet Governance. A Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) was considered a fair and legitimate way to develop ccTLD policy. Given customer and stakeholder requests to update the .tt user experience, the MAG was also suggested as a way to have the TTNIC continue to focus on technical excellence, and have the MAG deal with marketing, policy and other less technical issues. TTNIC discussed with many stakeholder organisations, and accepted volunteers to form the Interim MAG. The Interim MAG determined the initial structure and the terms of reference of the MAG, registered the company, and confirmed the stakeholder organisations participating, towards forming the formal TTMAG. The formal TTMAG was constituted in September 2015. Stakeholders included: the government, internet users, academia, the technical community, civil society, business/SMEs.

The purpose of the TTMAG is to be an independent entity for the promotion and development of best practice policy standards for the .tt ccTLD and the local internet ecosystem in the interest of the internet community, with the following objectives:

- To serve the needs of any specific, cohesive community of interest and the local internet community in the context of internet evolution, particularly in education, internet infrastructure development, internet standards and experimentation, public policies and regulatory coordination regarding internet content and services, and contributing to internet governance.

- To promote activities consistent with .tt ccTLD's role and purposes in Trinidad and Tobago.
- To generally encourage the above objectives through projects and initiatives to increase awareness and local participation.
- To represent the local internet community at conferences and meetings.

How did it develop and what difficulties did you experience along the way?

History of .tt towards TTMAG :

- Delegated to Patrick Hosein by Jon Postel in 1993.
- .tt subscribed to a multiple stakeholder ethos, including UWI, technical community, and internet users in the ccTLD management generally in an informal way.
- The company TTNIC was created in 1995 to administer the ccTLD.
- The government of T&T became interested in re-delegation since 1997.
- Several government-initiated multistakeholder consultations to discuss the “way forward” took place from 1997 to 2010.
- The government attempts to re-delegate .tt to itself since 1997. Last, most serious attempt in 2009. This consisted of research projects that considered the various kinds of governance models existing, the environments, including economic, political governance etc., the size of academic institutions in the country etc. Consultations held with stakeholders from academia, tech, ISP, business, civil society, government.
- Results of the consultation led to a consensus by the stakeholders that they preferred not to have a government-led system. The multistakeholder management model was preferred by most stakeholders because of the lack of trust from stakeholders in government-only systems.
- Subscription to the General Principles of Internet Governance. Given that NIC.tt was focused on technical excellence, but there were customer and stakeholder requests

to update user experience, a MAG was considered a fair and legitimate way to develop ccTLD policy. Determined that a multistakeholder board model to determine policy and to manage everything except technical issues should be formed with the following stakeholder groups: government, internet users, academia, technical community, civil society, business/SMEs.

- The formal TT MAG was constituted in September 2015.

How do you imagine your NRI and its activities in the future?

- Expand .tt domain use and sales
- Work to support the creation and work to support the creation and growth of: local content, local e-commerce, local hosting, local ICT development, support other regional ccTLDs, consultancy services, TT Internet events - such as TTIGF
- Increased participation in international and regional policy fora.

NRI internal governance and initiatives

Who are the people involved in your NRI and how do they contribute to it?

Current members of the TT MAG:

Academic: The University of the West Indies (UWI), University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT)

Technical: Trinidad and Tobago Computer Society (TTCS), The Internet Society (ISOC)

Civil society: Rotary Club

Government: National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST)

Business: Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI), Trinidad and Tobago Network Information Centre (TTNIC).

Chairman: Dr Sanjay Bahadoorsingh – Academic Community Representative (UWI)

Vice Chairman: Dev Teelucksingh – Technical Community Representative (TTCS)

Corporate Secretary: Cintra Sooknanan

Treasurer: Rabindra Jaggernaut – Business community representative (TTCSI)

Technical Officer: Dev Gosine – Civil society (Rotary Club)

Director: George Gobin – ccTLD (TTNIC)

Director: Tracy F. Hackshaw – Technical community representative (ISOCTT)

Director: Professor Patrick Hosein – ccTLD representative (TTNIC)

Director: Jacqueline A. Morris – Academic community representative (UTT)

Director: Ajmal Nazir – Technical community representative (TTIX)

Director: Robert Martinez – Government representative (NIHERST)

Have you experienced difficulties in ensuring all stakeholder groups participate fully and more or less equally?

You will always experience this challenge in any environment.

Do you measure gender balance in your NRI? Did you undertake measures to encourage gender balance?

TTMAG has developed a by-law relating to the conduct of the affairs of the company to which all members follow. TTMAG does not discriminate, ridicule or promote inequality in any form. The following is an extract from the TT MAG by-laws, section 4.3.: “TTMAG shall not in any way condone, conform, consent or contribute to any act, statements or display that which may represent, identify or facilitate, whether overt or covert, known or unknown, to that which may discriminate, ridicule or promotes inequality, alienation, or otherwise, to any individual, organisation, member, geographic zone, or affiliate group as it relates to the TT MAG regulations or bye-laws.”

Two members out of 11 are females.

How was your last forum organised, what were the topics chosen and the outcomes of discussion? How was it financed?

Details are provided in the report.¹⁸

In kind and financial partnerships with: IEEE Trinidad and Tobago Section, Internet Corporation

¹⁸ igf.tt/wpcontent/uploads/2017/08/TTIGF-2017-Report.pdf

for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), Internet Governance Forum Support Association (IGFSA), Internet Society Trinidad and Tobago Chapter (ISOC-TT), Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI), Trinidad and Tobago Computer Society (TTCS), Trinidad & Tobago Internet Exchange Limited (TTIX), Trinidad and Tobago Network Information Centre (TTNIC).

Are there controversial topics that have been difficult in your NRI and if so, why?

Net neutrality and OTT services financial impacts on consumers remain controversial.

Perspectives on the role of NRIs in internet governance

What is your take about the role of your NRI in internet governance processes, at the level of your country, region and globally?

The role is critical and very influential locally and regionally especially since the TTMAG is the first

official MAG in the Caribbean. The TTMAG continues to assist and guide, where possible, in the regional community, encouraging formation of other NRIs. On a global scale, the TTMAG continues to be a conduit to channel best practice while fostering wider and deeper networks within the wider communities.

How do you perceive your role and position towards other NRIs, the IGF and the IGF Secretariat?

The TTMAG is committed to work with all who are passionate about the promotion and the development of best practice policy standards for domain usage and the local internet ecosystem in the interest of the internet community.

Internet governance from the edges: National and regional IGFs in their own words

National and Regional Internet Governance Forum Initiatives (NRIs) emerged in response to the success of the first two global Internet Governance Forums (IGFs). The Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, the outcome document of the final phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), alongside the call for the creation of the IGF, served as the foundations for the model of bottom-up, multistakeholder internet governance. The first NRIs were set up in 2007 and 2008, and there are now close to a hundred initiatives, comprising national, sub-national, regional and youth initiatives, which organise autonomously and cooperate with the global IGF Secretariat. The importance of NRIs has increased throughout the years, as they have grown in number and their work has expanded in scope. They have acquired such relevance within the IGF that an NRI session was included in the IGF 2016 and 2017 main sessions agendas.

This year, APC has taken the initiative to compile two editions of Global Information Society Watch (GISWatch) focused on the work of NRIs. While the main 2017 GISWatch annual report provides independent and analytical perspectives on the role of NRIs in internet governance broadly, the present companion edition, *Internet governance from the edges: National and regional IGFs in their own words*, aims to give voice and visibility to the stories of each NRI, share their experiences and achievements, and highlight their perspectives on internet governance.

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