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Internet Governance Project Newsletter
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...current events in Internet Governance and the activities of the Internet Governance Project.
<http://www.internetgovernance.org>

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[1] FIRST INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM IN ATHENS NEARS
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In only two weeks, the UN's experiment in multistakeholder dialogue on Internet governance will be held in Athens. We extend our thanks to the hard-working Forum Secretariat and its Advisory Group, which has pulled together this unique event in a short period of time with minimal resources. Ideally, the forum will provide a space where civil society, business and governments can critically assess the global institutions that affect the Internet (mainly the WTO, WIPO, ICANN and policies of the US and EU with extraterritorial effects), identify new and emerging issues, and develop new horizontal alliances and mobilizations.

As noted in our previous newsletter, a lot of the most useful dialogue will take place in the Workshops proposed and run by participants. Both of the Workshops proposed by IGP were accepted, and we recommend an additional two as especially worthy of note (all times listed are Athens, Greece):

* Freedom of Expression and Internet blocking and filtering *
* October 31, 17:30 - 19:00 *

Sponsored by IGP and UNESCO, the workshop theme is governmental Internet content regulation by means of legally mandated or directly implemented filtering and content blocking. It will explore current legal efforts, such as the Global Online Freedom Act proposed in the USA or Code of Conduct proposals emanating from the EU, to regulate the interactions of private Internet service providers, equipment manufacturers and hosting companies with the governments that regulate and censor content. Participants include US State Department Ambassador David Gross, Microsoft's Fred Tipson, ONI's Ron Deibert, Reporters Sans Frontiers Julien Pain, Jeanette Hofmann of IGP and Mogens Schmidt of UNESCO. In the previous time slot (15:30-17:00), a Workshop on content regulation and Internet pornography from feminist perspectives, organized by APC, will be held.

* New Technical & Policy Challenges in DNS Root Zone Management *
* November 1, 17:30 - 19:00 *

Sponsored by IGP, Brazil, and the Third World Network, this panel will explore how current developments pose a number of new problems for root zone management that need to be discussed. The workshop will focus on three of these issues: 1) the attempt to build security into DNS through the DNSSEC protocol, which raises major policy issues surrounding the "signing" the root zone; 2) new applications such as IDNs, IPv6 and ENUM; 3) proposals to multi-lateralize root zone oversight.

* Exploring a Framework Convention on the Internet *
* October 31, 13:30 - 15:00 *

Sponsored by IT for Change, Bangalore; Hivos, Netherlands; Panos institute, West Africa; Third World Institute, Uruguay; and Foundation for Media

Alternatives, Philippines. This workshop picks up on an idea of a "Framework Convention" < <http://internetgovernance.org/pdf/igp-fc.pdf> > promoted by IGP's John Mathiason during the WSIS, namely that of negotiating global policy principles for the Internet by means of a framework convention.

* Harnessing the Power of the Internet to Provide Access to Knowledge and Encourage the Free Flow of Information *
* November 1, 11:30 - 13:00 *

Sponsored by a large group of NGOs including CPTech, EFF, IPJustice, APC and FSFE, and by Google and Sun, this workshop explores the ability of the Internet to promote access to knowledge.

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[2] GIGANET PROGRAM
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The Global Internet Governance Academic Network will be holding a symposium October 29, the day before the Athens Forum meeting, at the Divani Apollon Palace & Spa Hotel. This conference will feature some of the world's top academic researchers on internet governance and provide a space for unconstrained dialogue about some of the deeper issues around global Internet policy. For the full program, link here: < <http://internetgovernance.org/pdf/GigaNetProgram.pdf> > Attendance is free and open to all IGF attendees.

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[3] CARIBBEAN INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM
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The Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU), in partnership with IGP's Lee McKnight and Derrick Cogburn, are holding an on-line Internet Governance Forum (IGF) November 1-3, 2006. The regional event will overlap with the global Athens Forum and be linked to Athens via online collaboration tools. For the program link here: < http://www.c-t-u.org/Internet_governance_forum2006/CIGF%20-%20CIF%202006%20Overview%20and%20Agenda.doc >. For registration, link here: < http://mrp.uwi.tt/internet_governance/ >

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[4] NEW ICANN-DOC AGREEMENT
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The day before the old ICANN MoU expired, the U.S. Commerce Department released a new 3-year "Joint Project Agreement" < http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/domainname/agreements/jpa/ICANNJPA_09292006.htm >. ICANN's news release claimed that it was a dramatic change in the relationship, and many media outlets blindly reproduced this line. IGP doesn't think so. Granted, we see some welcome verbal concessions to the overwhelming number of public comments urging the U.S. government to stop meddling in the Internet's administration. But we also see the U.S. government exploiting its control over ICANN by telling it what policy to enforce on the privacy of domain name registrants. Although ICANN CEO Paul Twomey was forced by stakeholder pressure to insist that ICANN's "bottom up" process is not bound by these US instructions, we still want to know what that paragraph is doing in an allegedly "non-prescriptive" charter. You can read our complete analysis of the new ICANN-Commerce Department Joint Project Agreement here < http://internetgovernance.org/news.html#ICANNoldwine_093006 >.

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[5] DOES SHE KNOW SOMETHING WE DON'T? EU COMMISSIONER RESPONDS TO NEW JPA
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EU Commissioner for Information Society and Media Viviane Redding welcomed the "US government's declared intention to grant more autonomy to ICANN and to end its governmental oversight." We must have missed that part of the agreement: as far as we can tell the new JPA does not introduce any guarantee that the

relationship will end in 2009.

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<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/1297&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en> >

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[6] CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON ICANN
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You can't do a much better job of reporting on the House and Senate hearings on ICANN than Kieren McCarthy did - so we point you to his blog here < <http://kierenmccarthy.co.uk/2006/09/21/are-the-icann-senate-hearings-just-a-waste-of-time> > Also, see the blog of Media Access Project's Harold Feld, which sheds light on inside the beltway Internet governance politics < <http://www.wetmachine.com/totsf/item/600> >. We note that IGP's critique of the U.S. government's oversight of ICANN was picked up by Harold Feld and Tim Ruiz of GoDaddy registrar in their testimony.

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