MESSAGE FROM BOB HINDEN

Dear Members, Chapters, Staff, Partners, and Friends,

It’s been an amazing year for the Internet Society. In late December 2013 the Board announced that we appointed a new CEO, Kathy Brown. She followed Lynn St. Amour who had announced she had decided to step away after being the CEO for more than 12 years, and who created the Internet Society we all know so well. I have an immense amount of gratitude to Lynn for her dedicated service to the Internet Society and how she handled the transition to a new CEO.

Kathy started as Internet Society CEO and President on the 6th of January. Not very surprisingly, the world in which we work did not pause, and if anything, everything seemed to accelerate. Looking back it feels a lot longer than a single year. Some of the events where Kathy and ISOC had important roles include:

- Internet Hall of Fame in Hong Kong
- NETmundial meeting in São Paulo
- World Summit on Information Society (WSIS)
- IGF Istanbul
- ITU Plenipotentiary in Busan
- ISOC Board meetings in Hong Kong, London, and Honolulu
- Plus almost countless IETF, ION, ICANN, and INET meetings

Leadership roles inside of the Internet Society have changed, resulting in what I think is a much stronger organization. The Internet Society is now in a better position to address the issues that face the Internet in the coming years. The new leadership team builds on what was done before and greatly strengthens the Internet Society.

The Internet has reached the point where it is an important force in the world, and governments and corporations around the world have noticed. It almost seems like everyone wants to control the Internet, but they don’t understand how or why the Internet is successful. As a result, the challenges facing the Internet are growing. This includes governments who want to capture the operation and management of the Internet, corporations who ask users to trade their personal information for free service, governments who spy on Internet users traffic, countries blocking access to Internet sites, and increasing amount of attacks on companies, users, governments, and physical infrastructure by governmental and non-governmental actors. All while the work to bring the Internet to everyone is hardly done.

We all have much to do to keep the Internet open and bring its benefits to everyone in the world. This is not the first set of challenges the Internet has faced, nor will it be the last. While I am very concerned about the challenges, I am also very optimistic that these will be overcome and the Internet will continue to grow to be the open global communication platform for everyone.

Bob Hinden
Chair, ISOC Board of Trustees