

OMAC Roundtable #10

Meeting Summary

16 November 2022



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Topic of OMAC Roundtable #10

The ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 (PP-22), wrapped up in Bucharest after three weeks of elections and intense negotiations over the direction of digital transformation. Among the most discussed issues were the reference to Internet organizations in resolutions, the role of ITU over Internet public policy issues, as well as cybersecurity and digital divide issues.

The Internet Society team of experts attended PP-22 and together with organization members advocated for maintaining the status quo of the Internet.

While for the Internet Society and its community, the outcome of the conference can be considered positive, there are still issues and challenges that will need attention.

The 10th OMAC roundtable, which took place under the theme *Post-Plenipotentiary 2022*, gave organization members an overview of the critical issues discussed at the PP-22 and identified some of the challenges as well as threats observed during the conference.



The session also addressed how organization members together with the Internet Society can collaborate to mitigate challenges and continue to promote and defend the Internet.

Main Points of the Discussion

Overview of the main issues and outcomes from PP-22:

- **Internet Resolutions:** A separate Ad Hoc group was created during the first week of the conference to discuss and negotiate the resolutions related to Internet issues (101, 102, 133, and 206). The consensus was difficult to reach on some of the most controversial points (e.g., the footnote to Internet organizations in resolutions 101 and 102).
 - **The Role of ITU in Internet Governance:** The attempts to gain more control over "Internet" issues via resolutions (101, 102 and 133) to increase the role of ITU in new Internet issues were unsuccessful, and most of the pressing issues in these resolutions resulted in "No Change".
 - **Reference to Internet Organizations:** Proposals aimed at moving the reference to the IETF, the Internet Society, and other Internet organizations from the footnote into the main body to acknowledge the role of these institutions better and clarify the role of ITU in facilitating members to better interact with existing fora (RIRs, ICANN, etc.) was not accepted.
 - **No Change over OTT:** Resolution 206 on OTTs has been approved with no changes.
 - **Internationalized Domain Names:** Consensus was reached among Members States on the role of the ITU regarding country code top-level domain names in the study of internationalized (multilingual) domain names (resolution 133). In this resolution, the footnote that refers to Internet organization remained unchanged.
- **Cybersecurity:** Among the main controversial issues were the introduction of emerging technologies with specific identifiers and vulnerability databases, policy, regulatory, and technical deliverables from one side, and the CITELE proposal to include the role and the contribution of civil society in promoting confidence and security in the use of ICT. At the end, resolution 130 was adopted by avoiding the issues that deadlocked the discussions for days, in particular the mention of support for women and other groups, fixing a date for WTPF, explicitly mentioning multi-stakeholderism and the GCA (Global Cybersecurity Agenda).
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Efforts to publish a new resolution on AI were unsuccessful at both WTSA-20 and WTDC-22. At PP-22, this shifted as proposals for a new resolution were submitted. This change in position enabled the convergence for an acceptable position focusing on collaboration in capacity building and fostering an enabling ecosystem, particularly for developing countries.

- **Digital Divide:** How to bridge the connectivity gap was another big topic at the conference. Concretely, there were several discussions and negotiations about the concept of **complementary access networks** which was finally introduced in one of the resolutions (139). This is a **big win** for the Internet Society's work on Growing the Internet, as community networks.
- **New IP-related Discussions:** While no new text related to New IP was discussed or adopted in any PP-22 resolutions, there were attempts to promote this proposal. In this regard, after conversations with some delegations, the Internet Society has been invited to make an official intervention against a proposal to create a new question at SG5 on the standardization of "GreenIP".
- **Open Networks/Open RAN:** The concept of open networks has been brought in separate new resolutions to WTSA-20 and WTDC-22. Concentrated effort at PP-22, by the Internet Society, among other stakeholders, enabled to achieve agreement on a compromise text that avoids reference to controversial points, such as "adoption" by operators and "O-RAN" as a specific implementation.

Key Take Away

- For the Internet Society and its community, the outcome of the conference is considered to be positive. However, there are still some issues and challenges that will need attention.
- There is an apparent push from some governments to increase their role over the Internet. This situation calls for close monitoring and follow ups.
- Some proposals that were put forward during WTDC-22 and PP-22 could still emerge in various other study groups that are part of the ITU, including the idea of a new "green IP."

Next Steps

- The Internet Society will keep monitoring future discussions that will be emanating from the various study groups as part of its effort to continue defend and protect the Internet.
- The Internet Society believes that building human capacity is one of the essential components needed to address the current Internet threats. Therefore, it calls on all organization members to get involved in the Internet Society fellowship programs to develop the next generation of Internet leaders that understand the impacts of policy/technology in the Internet ecosystem. Let us know how you want to benefit from these fellowships:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OM_Insights

Useful Dates

- WTSA: 2024, India
- WTDC: 2025, Thailand
- Plenipotentiary: 2026, Qatar

