

Press Release

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Inaugural Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APrIGF) Continues with Lively Discussions on Critical Internet Resources, Diversity, Civil Society and Internet's Future

Hong Kong, June 16 — The IGF (Internet Governance Forum) initiated by United Nations in 2006 is a global platform for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on prevailing and emerging issues on Internet governance. The Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum aspires to provide a platform for focused discussion of issues related to the Asia Pacific region to seek commonalities and future collaboration, especially on issues with cross-border significance such as cyber-security, managing of critical global Internet resources, and the tolerance for diversity on the Internet.

One of the sessions today: Emerging Issues: Role of Civil Society in Internet Governance attracted special interest from the Internet community. Mr. Charles Mok, Chairman of Internet Society Hong Kong served as the moderator. Ms. Christine Loh, CEO of Civic Exchange, Mr. John Fung, Director of Information Technology Resource Center and other representatives from civil society around Asia Pacific convened along with participants from over 20 countries to explore the question of the role of civil society in Internet governance. The United Nations IGF approach expects that civil society should have a key role in Internet governance discussions, a role placing civil society as a stakeholder on par with government and the business sector. That is the theory. In practice however, is the civil society really a major stakeholder in Internet governance discussions in Asia? The civil society certainly played an important role in the development and innovative use of the Internet, in the consideration of Internet governance, including legislation, the concern is not just a matter of representation but also the larger concern over whether future innovations may be stymied.

Today is the last day of the 3 day APrIGF Roundtable. The Hong Kong IGF Conference starts tomorrow on June 17. The Hong Kong IGF Conference will feature discussions more focused on local Internet issues.

The Government Chief Information Officer of the HKSAR, Jeremy Godfrey will open the Hong Kong IGF Conference. Mr. Markus Kummer, Executive Coordinator to the IGF

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Secretariat, UN will present an introduction and update to the global UN IGF initiative and its relevance to Hong Kong; Mr. John Galligan, Director of Internet Policy, Microsoft Asia Pacific will explain how Cloud Computing offers enhanced choice, flexibility, operational efficiency, and cost savings for governments, businesses, and individual consumers in Asia, and to take full advantage of these benefits, reliable assurances regarding the privacy and security of online data must be provided. Other local non-government organizations representatives will also discuss children protection and disability rights online. (For the Conference agenda, please visit <http://rigf.asia/asia-pacific-regional-igf-aprigf-roundtable-agenda>)

All 3 component events combine to become a platform for regional collaboration and, albeit organized independently of the global IGF, will report its discussion to **the Global IGF to be held in September 14-17 in Vilnius, Lithuania**. This adds to the significance of the APriGF in that the ideas, recommendations and other outputs from the event will be used as inputs for the coming global IGF meeting.

For more details, please visit:
<http://rigf.asia/>

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About Internet Governance Forum

According to Internet World Stats, with over 780 Million Internet users, Asia Pacific is already the region with the largest online population. Yet the penetration rate for Asia is only at around 20%, which signals continued rapid growth ahead.

Building on the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals, and the mandate given at the Second Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in Tunis in 2005, the IGF (Internet Governance Forum) is a United Nations activity initiated in 2006 as a global platform for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on prevailing and emerging issues on Internet governance so as to foster the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of Internet. The annual Forum was previously held in Greece (2006), Brazil (2007), India (2008), and Egypt (2009).

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