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Call for Proposals

Global Internet Governance Academic Network (GigaNet)

First Annual Conference

Divani Apollon Palace & Spa Hotel

Athens, Greece

29 October 2006

The Global Internet Governance Academic Network (GigaNet) is an emerging scholarly community initiated in Spring 2006. Its four principal objectives are to: support the establishment of a global cohort of scholars specializing on Internet governance issues; promote the development of Internet governance as a recognized, interdisciplinary field of study; advance theoretical and applied research on Internet governance, broadly defined; and facilitate informed dialogue on policy issues and related matters between scholars and Internet governance stakeholders (governments, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society).

In this context, the GigaNet plans to organize conferences to be held on site prior to the annual meetings of the new Internet Governance Forum (IGF). The first such conference will be held on 29 October 2006 in Athens, Greece prior to the inaugural IGF meeting <www.igfgreece2006.gr>. The final program, when available, will be posted on the IGF website <www.intgovforum.org> and on the websites of relevant academic organizations. Attendance at the conference will be free of charge and open to all registered IGF participants.

This is a call for proposals from scholars interested in speaking on one of the three round table panels to be held at the conference. The panels are described in the preliminary program below. The Program Committee will select four to five speakers per panel drawing on the following materials to be provided by applicants: 1) a one page maximum description of the proposed presentation indicating its specific relevance and value-added to the panel in question's thematic focus; and 2) a one page summary curriculum vitae listing in particular the applicant's current institutional affiliation(s), advanced degrees, scholarly publications relevant to Internet governance, and web sites, if available.

These materials should be emailed directly to the respective panel chairs listed below by no later than **Monday, 25 September**, midnight GMT. The Program Committee will notify applicants of its decisions via email by 4 October. The selected speakers will give ten-minute presentations, after which there will be open discussion with audience members. While this is not required, speakers are welcome to provide a written text or Power Point presentation to be linked off of the conference web page.

Preliminary Program and Roundtable Panel Descriptions

9:30-9:45 *Welcome and Overview*

Wolfgang Kleinwächter, University of Aarhus, Denmark

9:45-11:15 *Theorizing Internet Governance: The State of the Art*

Chair: Peng Hwa Ang, Singapore Internet Research Center

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In recent years, scholars have begun to analyze Internet governance issues using the theoretical tools of their respective academic disciplines. While issues surrounding ICANN have attracted particular attention, there also has been significant work done on the international governance of digital international trade and intellectual property, privacy, security, speech, and other topics. Such research often has been rather specialized and geared toward the distinct audiences interested in each issue-area, which limited intellectual cross-fertilization. These topics are related, and Internet governance should be seen as a broad but coherent field of study that merits elaboration and support. Mapping the landscape of relevant theoretical perspectives is an important first step toward this end.

The purpose of this panel is to consider questions such as: What aspects of Internet governance are uniquely interesting and worthy of scholarly analysis? How has Internet governance been addressed by scholars in the social sciences, humanities, law, and other disciplines, and which theoretical approaches seem to be the most promising for which issues and dynamics? Do these efforts point to the emergence of a coherent research agenda and the cumulative development of new knowledge? Are there barriers---intellectual, institutional, and other---that might have to be overcome to advance that agenda? How can Internet governance develop into an interdisciplinary scholarly field that is taken seriously by academics and also capable of providing useful inputs to the Internet Governance Forum and other policy development institutions? What lessons can be learned, if any, from other fields defined by the object of inquiry/dependent variables rather than by shared theories and independent variables, e.g., "communication studies," "information studies," and "women's studies"? Are there national or cultural differences in the ways scholars approach these matters, and if so how might these be reconciled?

11:15-11:30 *Coffee break*

11:30-13:00 *"Enhanced Cooperation" and Interaction among Stakeholders
in Internet Governance*

Chair: Milton Mueller, Syracuse University, USA

Email: info [at] internetgovernance.org

In addition to creating the Internet Governance Forum, the Tunis Agenda calls for "enhanced cooperation" among governments. This language originated with the European Union's June 2005 criticism of US unilateral control of ICANN. The EU claimed that the WSIS statement constituted, "a worldwide political agreement providing for further internationalization of Internet governance, and enhanced intergovernmental cooperation to this end" and that, "Such cooperation should include the development of globally applicable principles on public policy issues associated with the coordination and management of critical Internet resources."

The purpose of this panel is to consider questions such as: What are the causes of US-EU tensions over Internet governance? What institutional form might such a "new cooperation model" for deliberations among governments take? How viable is the distinction between "day-to-day management of the Internet and "public policy?" What, more generally, is the role of national governments in Internet governance in relation to other stakeholder groups? What implications might "enhanced cooperation" have for civil society and multistakeholder participation? How might such a philosophy lead to changes in the structure or processes of ICANN? Proposals outlining any other approach that provides insight into this aspect of the political battles over Internet governance are welcome.

13:00-14:30 Lunch break

14:30-16:00 The Distributed Architecture of Internet Governance

Chair: William J. Drake, Graduate Institute of International Studies,
Geneva, Switzerland
Email: drake [at] hei.unige.ch

As the WSIS agreements recognized, Internet governance involves much more than ICANN or the collective management of naming and numbering. Internet governance also includes the development and application of internationally shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programs in a variety of other issue-areas, e.g. technical standardization, cybercrime and network security, international interconnection, e-commerce, e-contracting, networked trade in digital goods and services, digital intellectual property, jurisdiction and choice of law, human rights, speech and social conduct, cultural and linguistic diversity, privacy and consumer protection, dispute resolution, and so on. These activities take a variety of forms and are pursued in a heterogeneous array of settings, including governmental, intergovernmental, private sector, and multistakeholder organizations and collaborations. In parallel, the international regimes and related frameworks they establish vary widely in their institutional attributes, e.g. the collective action problems addressed, functions performed, participants involved, organizational setting and decision making procedures, agreement type, strength and scope of prescriptions, compliance mechanisms, power dynamics and

distributional biases, etc. But while there is now broad recognition that the architecture of Internet governance is highly distributed, there has been little systematic scholarly analysis or policy dialogue about its precise nature and implications.

The purpose of this panel is to explore and clarify some of the lingering ambiguities, including questions such as: Which governance mechanisms are relatively more or less important in shaping the Internet's evolution and use? How well do these mechanisms cohere, and are there tensions and gaps between them? Are there crosscutting issues that merit consideration from analytical and programmatic standpoints? Are there generalizable lessons to be learned by the distinct communities of expertise involved in different issue-areas with regard to best practices and institutional design? Does the distributed architecture pose any challenges with respect to the effective participation of less powerful stakeholders and the global community's ability to govern in an effective and equitable manner? Looking beyond formalized collective frameworks, under what circumstances, if any, may private market power or spontaneously harmonized practices constitute forms of Internet governance? What is the current role of governance mechanisms for international telecommunications, and what might that role become in a future marked by convergence and potentially non-neutral next generation networks?

16:00-16:15 Coffee break

16:15-17:45 GigaNet Business Meeting

Moderator: Avri Doria, Luleå University of Technology, Sweden

17:45-18:00 Closing