

WTPF: Internet Issues on the Table at Next ITU Conference

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April 10, 2013

The [World Telecommunication Policy Forum \(WTPF\)](#) [2] is just over a month away, so now is the time to examine key issues on the agenda and consider ways to get involved. At the WTPF, the [International Telecommunication Union \(ITU\)](#) [3] will bring together governments and Sector Members to discuss telecommunications regulation and information and communication technology (ICT) policy issues from a global perspective. This year's theme is Internet-related public policy issues. WTPF produces non-binding opinions that are adopted by consensus. These opinions will inform future discussions at the ITU, including the [Plenipotentiary in 2014](#) [4] where Member States may consider redefining the role of the ITU in Internet governance.

Discussions at WTPF will be guided by a [Secretary-General's Report](#) [5] and a series of [draft opinions](#) [6]. CDT, together with Access, has produced a [briefing document](#) [7] summarizing key topics that will be addressed at the event. Challenging and important Internet policy issues raised in the Report and draft opinions include:

- The role of the ITU in Internet governance and the scope of its mission;
- The definition of two terms, “enhanced cooperation” and “multistakeholderism,” that speak to how different groups ought to be involved in the governance discussion;
- The concept of end-to-end Quality of Service, which would change fundamental mechanisms of the Internet, possibly to the detriment of users and service providers;
- The importance of human rights in the context of discussions about ICT regulation and policy;
- Strategies for increasing affordable Internet access for users around the world, particularly in developing countries; and
- The appropriate level of transparency and civil society participation in the WTPF and other ITU activities.

Members of civil society can provide important perspectives on these key Internet policy issues, and we are eager to see others' comments, reactions, and analysis on these topics, as well as thoughts on other WTPF agenda items. Looking to the event itself, our friends at Access have put together a [document](#) [8] that outlines the opportunities for civil society to participate in the WTPF. Members of civil society may [apply](#) [9] to observe the event as public attendants – the deadline for applications is April 12th. Civil society may alternately participate through national delegations, either in person or remotely. A few members of civil society, including CDT's Matthew Shears, will attend as the Secretary-General's “special guests” after acting as advisors to the planning process through the [WTPF Informal Experts Group \(IEG\)](#) [10]. Finally, we hope that the Secretary-General will offer live webcasting to the public, so that a broader and more diverse audience can observe in the event.

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- [WTPF](#)
- [ITU](#)

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