



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ICANN Leader Says Multi-Stakeholder Model of Internet Governance Under Threat

The President and Chief Executive Officer of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) says all Internet stakeholders need to strive to keep Internet governance out of the hands of intergovernmental organizations. And if they fail, he warns, there could be unfortunate consequences.

“Most Internet users – businesses, service providers, non-profits and consumers – would be shut out of the governance debate,” said Rod Beckstrom. “Make no mistake: if we do not address this now – effectively together – the multi-stakeholder model that enabled so many successes will slip from our grasp.”

Beckstrom made the comments today during the opening ceremony of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Vilnius, Lithuania.

The ICANN CEO said, “If governance were to become the exclusive province of nation states or captured by any other interests, we would lose the foundation of the Internet’s long-term potential and transformative value.”

He told the attendees that the multi-stakeholder models represented by both ICANN and the IGF allow for global inclusivity and openness, making the Internet a “fertile field for innovation and competition, an engine for economic growth.”

Beckstrom said ICANN’s signing of the *Affirmation of Commitments* with the U.S. government, “recognized that no single party should hold undue influence over Internet governance,” and added that the agreement acknowledges the success of the ICANN model and commits to keeping the organization a private, not-for-profit organization.

The IGF was formed by the United Nations and in mentioning that the U.N.’s General Assembly will decide the future of the organization in the coming months, Beckstrom said all stakeholders should encourage their respective governments to continue to embrace the time proven and effective multi-stakeholder model.

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To read Rod Beckstrom’s entire speech before the IGF, go here:
<http://www.icann.org/presentations/beckstrom-opening-igf-vilnius-14sep10-en.htm>.

To learn more about the IGF conference, go here: <http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/>.

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About ICANN: *ICANN's mission is to ensure a stable, secure and unified global Internet. To reach another person on the Internet you have to type an address into your computer - a name or a number. That address has to be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN coordinates these unique identifiers across the world. Without that coordination we wouldn't have one global Internet. ICANN was formed in 1998. It is a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation with participants from all over the world dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers. ICANN doesn't control content on the Internet. It cannot stop spam and it doesn't deal with access to the Internet. But through its coordination role of the Internet's naming system, it does have an important impact on the expansion and evolution of the Internet. For more information please visit: www.icann.org.*