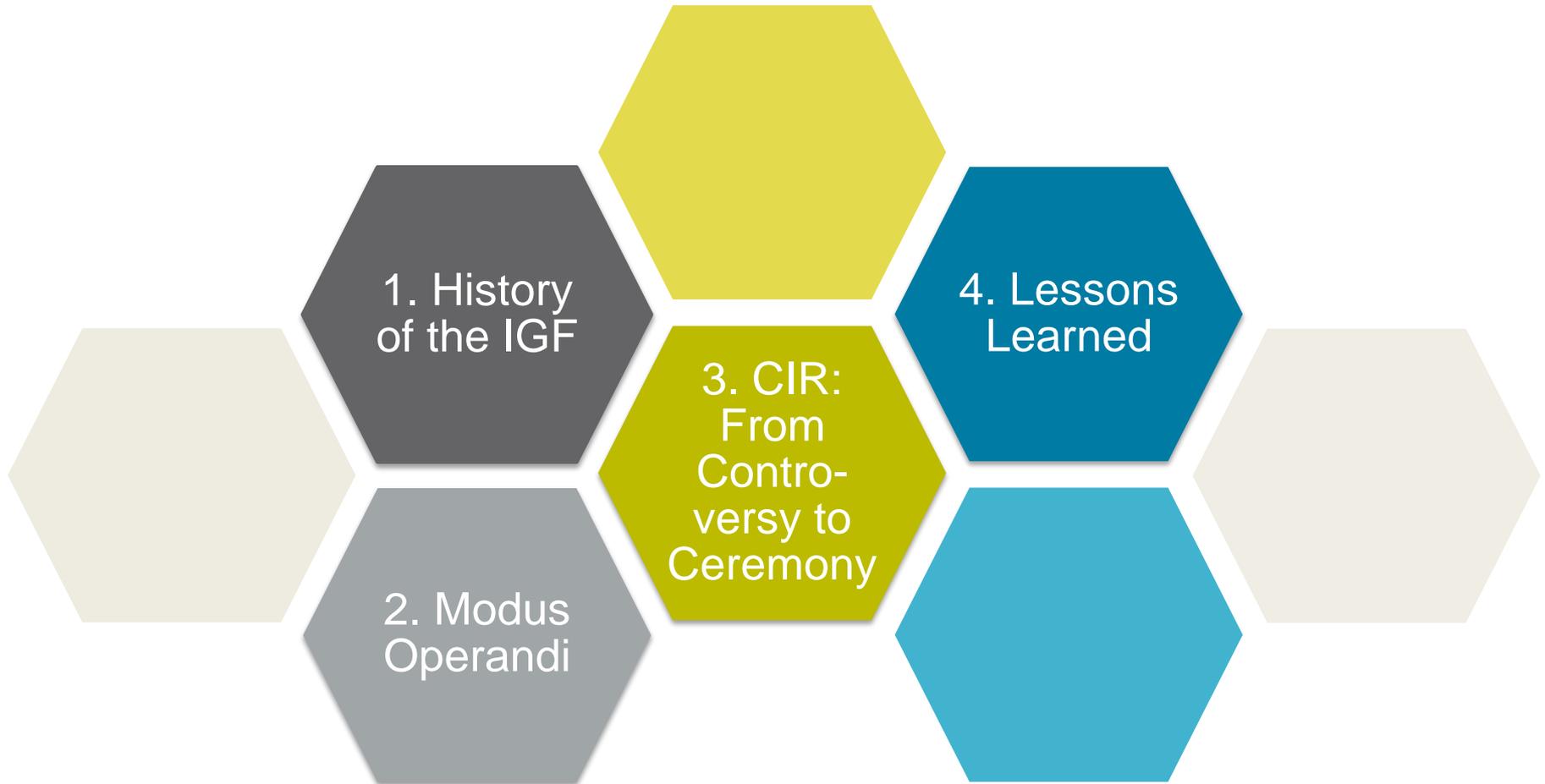# Techno-Political Controversies: Multistakeholder Processes as a Panacea?

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Workshop on Responsible
Research and Innovation (RRI)
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1. History of the IGF

2. Modus Operandi

3. CIR: From Contro-versy to Ceremony

4. Lessons Learned

Internet Governance Issues @ WSIS

ICANN headquarters in Playa Vista, Los Angeles, California.
Photo: Coolcaesar, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

- How and by whom should the Internet be governed?

  - Authority over Critical Internet Resources (CIR)

  - Role of US-Government

  - Industry-led management of critical Internet resources (ICANN)

- Controversy led to founding of IGF

WSIS Outcome: Multistakeholder Forum

The international management of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations.

We ask the UN Secretary-General, in an open and inclusive process, to convene, by the second quarter of 2006, a meeting of the new forum for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue—called the *Internet Governance Forum*.
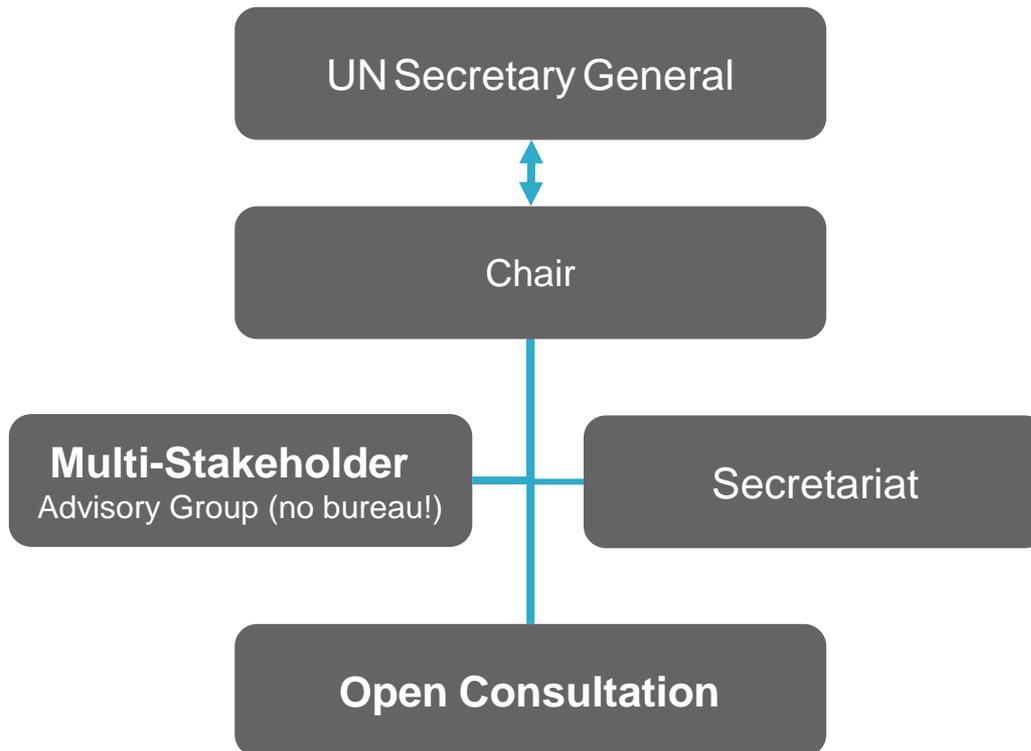
We ask the UN Secretary-General to examine the desirability of the continuation of the Forum, within five years of its creation.

We underline the need to maximize the participation of developing countries in decisions regarding Internet governance, which should reflect their interests, as well as in development and capacity building.

Mandate of the Internet Governance Forum: Facilitation

- **Discuss public policy issues** related to key elements of Internet governance (…);

- **Facilitate discourse** between bodies dealing with (…) the Internet and discuss issues that do not fall within the scope of any existing body;

- **Interface** with appropriate inter-governmental organizations (…);

- **Facilitate the exchange of information** and best practices (…);

- **Advise all stakeholders** in proposing ways and means to accelerate the availability and affordability of the Internet in the developing world;

- **Strengthen and enhance the engagement of stakeholders** in (…) IG mechanisms (…);

- **Identify emerging issues**, bring them to the attention of the relevant bodies and the general public, and, **where appropriate, make recommendations**;

- **Contribute to capacity building** for Internet governance in developing countries, (…);

- **Promote and assess**(…) the embodiment of WSIS principles in IG processes;

- **Discuss**, inter alia, issues relating to critical Internet resources;

- **Help to find solutions** to the issues arising from the use and misuse of the Internet(…);

IGF: Structure

UN Secretary General

Chair

Multi-Stakeholder
Advisory Group (no bureau!)

Secretariat

Open Consultation

- Mandate for 2 x 5 years, ending in 2015

- Funding based on donations (governments, private sector)

- No membership, open for everyone

IGF: Format & Process

- Annual meetings*

- Experimental process aiming to enable public debates and participation

- Workshops proposed and organized by participants

- Stock-taking sessions to get public feedback on past meetings and suggestions for future meetings

- Regional & national IGFs

* c.a. 1500 participants

Niel Harper presenting the ISOC ambassador briefing during the 7th IGF in Baku. Photo: InternetSociety, Flickr, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

CIR: From Controversy to Ceremony
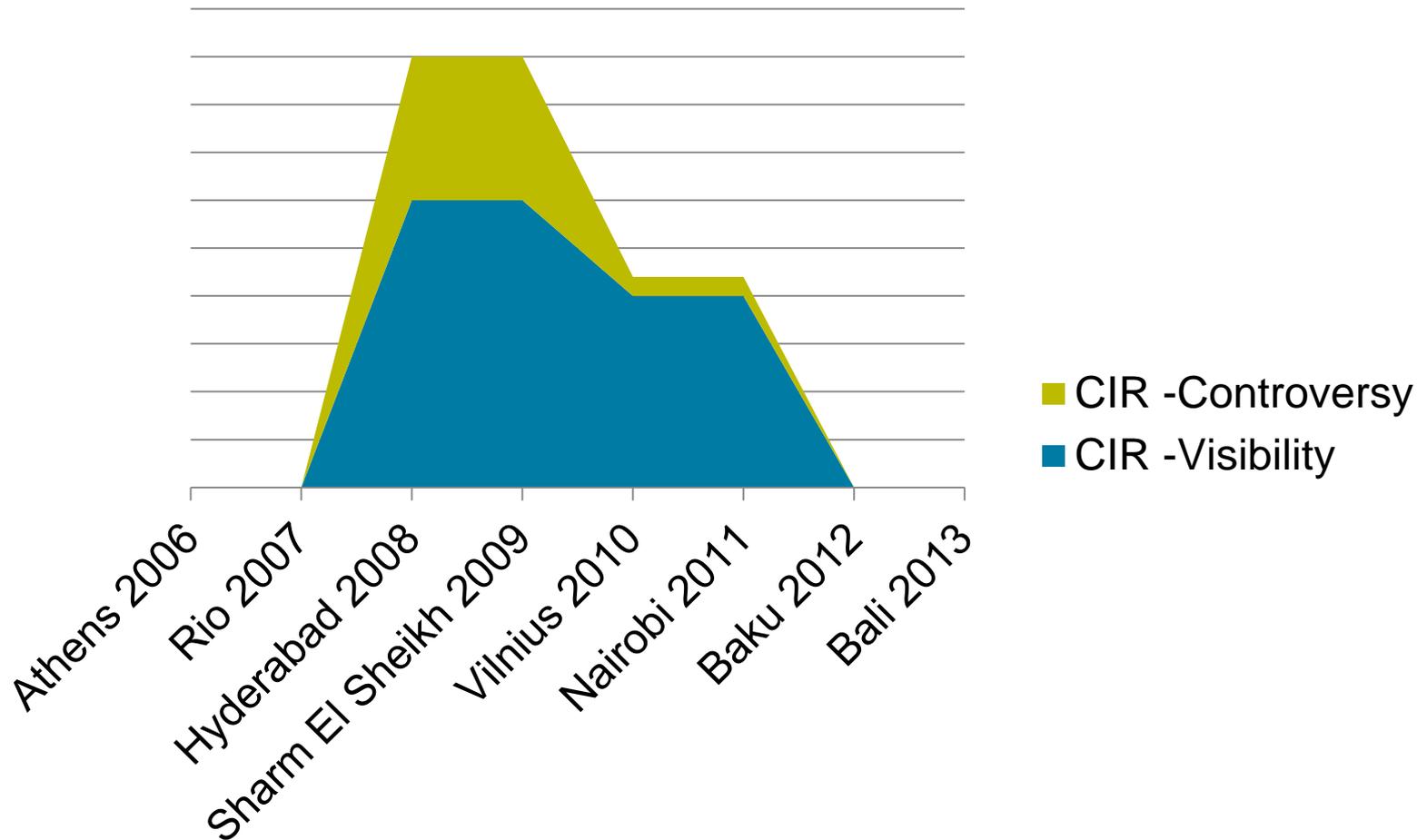
CIR: Back to Controversy outside the IGF

Lessons learned

- IGF successfully *branded* multi-stakeholder processes

  - and is now locked into the success of its truncated model*

- MS now confers legitimacy to policy making in the CIR area

- Price: modest form of politicization

- IGF offers a forum for policy initiatives originating outside of IGF

* no formal output allowed beyond the chairman's summary

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Thank you!