



Kofi Annan
Secretary-General
Of the United Nations
UN Headquarters, New York

Open Letter

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

On behalf of the Internet Number Resource Organisation (NRO) and with the greatest respect, I would like to request participation in the United Nations Secretary General's Working Group on Internet Governance, which was stipulated by the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), of December 2003.

The NRO represents the four Regional Internet Registries of the world, which together manage the distribution of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses globally. We feel strongly that the Working Group on Internet Governance must admit the direct participation of the very small number of key Internet technical and administrative bodies, in order to ensure a balanced and informed outcome that incorporates the views and needs of the global Internet community.

It is critical that policy makers - both in the public and private sectors - have a sound understanding of how the Internet has developed and what has made this development so successful. Clear understanding of the unique way in which the Internet's technologies and resources are developed and co-ordinated will ensure the future stability, growth and global reach of the Internet. To this end we offer ourselves as expert resource persons, and as direct representatives both of a critical Internet administrative process, and of a community which relies on this process.

By way of background, the RIRs are independent, not-for-profit organisations which work regionally to meet the numbering needs of the global Internet community, through allocation and registration of IP addresses and related resources. RIRs operate in an open self-regulatory manner, facilitating direct participation by any interested party and ensure that the policies for management of Internet number resources are defined by all those who need and use them.

The RIRs ensure that number resource policies are consensus-based and that they are applied fairly and consistently. The RIR framework provides a well-established combination of bottom-up decision-making and global co-operation that has created a stable, open, transparent, and documented process for developing number resource policies. The goal of the RIRs is to ensure the fair distribution, responsible management and effective utilisation of number resources necessary to maintain the stability of the Internet.

The RIR system of bottom-up industry self regulation has been in place for more than a decade, and is seen as highly successful and efficient.

While the RIRs are participants in today's ICANN processes, the system in which we operate predates ICANN by many years, having been established during 1992/1993 by action of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). While ICANN is certainly capable of representing many aspects of global Internet processes, we feel that our direct participation both as technical experts and as direct representatives of a critical set of process cannot be matched by other parties.

Finally, we would like to stress that representatives of RIRs have participated in WSIS processes during the past 2 years, attending regional preparatory meetings, official Prepcoms, and the December Summit. In addition we have organised and participated in numerous parallel meetings and information sessions. We have taken an active interest in WSIS processes, with a genuine aim to assist in the production of realistic, responsible and meaningful outcomes. We have been invited to and will attend the coming meeting "Global Forum On Internet Governance" which is being organised by the UN ICT Task Force.

We commit ourselves strongly to the processes of the Working Group on Internet Governance, and to its eventual success. We would be pleased if you could respond to this request at your earliest convenience and if you could inform us of any further information you might need. It would also be much appreciated if you could send us any information regarding the Working Group, including its likely schedule of activities, and participants who may have already joined.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions in regard to our application or to the Regional Internet Registries in general.

Yours faithfully,



Paul Wilson
Chair
Number Resource Organisation

More information about the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs)

There are four Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) existing today. They provide number resource allocation and registration services that support the operation of the Internet globally. The Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) currently consist of APNIC, ARIN, LACNIC and RIPE NCC. In addition to these, an RIR for the African region, AfriNIC, is currently in formation.

The RIRs now co-operate formally under the umbrella of the Number Resource Organisation, NRO, established in October 2003. For more information about these organisations, see:

APNIC	http://www.apnic.net	LACNIC	http://www.lacnic.net
AfriNIC	http://www.afrinic.net	RIPE NCC	http://www.ripe.net
ARIN	http://www.arin.net	NRO	http://www.nro.org