The Number Resource Organization (NRO)

Formed by the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) to formalise their cooperative efforts, the NRO exists to protect the unallocated Number Resource pool, to promote and protect the

Number Resource Organization
Statement on Internet Governance

To the Representatives of the Governments of the World:

After several years of intense discussions on all aspects of the information technology revolution, we have reached this important landmark, the Tunis Summit.

The work has been hard and we believe that it is time to actively assess the points on which it is possible to reach agreements, to ensure that the Tunis Summit does produce tangible and valuable outcomes.

The Number Resource Organization has deep respect for all positions: those with which we can identify the most; as well as those that seem furthest from our own ideas. We believe that all stakeholders and all governments have the right to defend their points of view on this issue, but beyond our respect for this right, we believe that it is time to recognize that there are matters on which agreement is not possible, and matters on which agreement is possible during the remaining period of the Summit.

There is clearly no agreement on a radical overhaul of current Internet Governance arrangements, or on the creation of purely intergovernmental mechanisms for Internet oversight. Not only is there no agreement among governments, but it is clear that the greater part of Civil Society and Private Sector organizations are united in opposition to such measures. Although we understand that the Summit is a negotiation mechanism amongst governments, after the sustained efforts made by other stakeholder sectors it is of the utmost importance that their positions are effectively considered. We believe after four or more years of intensive debate, agreement on most controversial   issues will not be obtained in the short term, by creating a new committee, a new working group, by continuing the discussion in other arenas, or by holding new meetings or summits within the WSIS context.

In addition, the NRO believes that the No-Agreement scenario is the worst possible scenario.

We see with optimism that there is a very broad support base for an evolutionary approach towards Internet Governance, based on the existing organizations, recognizing the right of all stakeholders to be fully involved in the system, as was established in Article 48 of the declarations of principles in December 2003.

The most important steps of all are beyond the Tunis agreements.

The most fundamental of these is the implementation of the principles agreed to in 2003 in Geneva within all international and intergovernmental organizations, as well as national organizations, that have a role in Internet Governance.

These principles, now known as the "Geneva Principles", have established a "before" and an "after" in the evolution of Governance systems, even beyond those specifically related to the Internet. Our organization is aware of the importance of this matter and has also taken note of all the concerns that were duly expressed by governments and other stakeholders. That we all act with a sufficient level of openness and transparency, taking into consideration these concerns, will constitute the most significant success of this Summit. We confidently hope that this will be a vision broadly shared after Tunis.

Therefore, we believe that the creation of a suitably structured global forum for discussing and debating the issues involved in the manner of the Geneva principles would be a very significant step forward.

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The creation of a non decision making global coordination forum, as has already been proposed by many parties in this process, together with the establishment of a series of principles that will allow us to evolve, in the short term, towards a Governance system with a more balanced participation of all stakeholders, more international and independent of any particular government, is a very important basis of agreement that must not be underestimated. These joint measures will constitute in themselves a landmark in the history of the Internet.

The NRO would like to publicly thank all the expressions of support that have been received in relation to the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) and the system that they have established for the administration of Internet addresses. The NRO is proud to witness the broad level of satisfaction that this system generates among the international community. This provides a strong motivation to double our efforts and continue working for the common good.

We conclude by once again urging all governments and stakeholders that are participating in this Summit to continue working so that the large number of agreements that clearly exist may be reflected in the final documents. This is the best contribution that we can make to the international community at this time.

The Number Resource Organization, NRO, is the coalition of Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) and at this moment it is in the process of being legally incorporated in Uruguay under the legal framework that this country offers for international non-governmental organizations.