



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

REVIEWING AI'S GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: PHASE 1 – SUMMARISING THE PRESENT SITUATION & CHALLENGES

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS ONLY

AI Index: ORG 10/002/2010 (for the full document see ORG 10/001/2010)
To: All sections and structures
From: IEC
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SUMMARY

This short executive summary summarises the key points in “Reviewing AI’s Global Governance: Phase 1 – Summarising the present situation and challenges” (ORG 10 001 2010) and is intended for wide distribution.

DISTRIBUTION

This document is sent to all sections and structures.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The IEC encourages sections and structures to discuss these proposals well in advance of the Chairs Forum meeting on 18-20 June. Please ensure that your feedback is sent to the GGT (clairesmitholu@amnesty.org) by 1st July, and ensure that your chair can provide feedback on behalf of your section/structure at the Chairs Forum meeting on 18-20 June.

All feedback responses will be posted on the intranet site at:

<https://intranet.amnesty.org/wiki/display/IEC/4.2+Global+Governance+Taskforce>

For Chairs, the Chairs Interactive Forum is also available as a discussion forum.

Reviewing AI's global governance: Phase 1 – summarising the present situation and challenges EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Introduction

The *Global Governance Taskforce* was appointed by the IEC in October 2009 to review AI's global governance following the 2009 ICM. This paper summarises the current system; outlines tensions, gaps, challenges and problems related to this system, and summarises key points from previous studies of AI's governance. It will be discussed up to and at the June 2010 Chairs Forum meeting, and is intended to provide an agreed basis for developing proposed solutions to the identified tensions. These solutions will be developed and discussed in September – November, enabling the IEC to produce ICM resolutions on them by January 2011. Further discussions will then take place in the first half of 2011, culminating in a final paper and set of recommendations in June 2011.

2. Why are we having another governance review?

The 2007 ICM decided that AI should have a governance system that develops clear strategic and operational priorities, aligns them with our competences and resources, and builds an effective democracy that strengthens the voices of rights-holders. The 2009 ICM made some changes to AI's governance (e.g., in extending IEC terms in office to four years, giving representation to international members, creating an international nominations committee, and specifying minimum standards for national AI governance) and reiterated the importance of these goals.

This review focuses on the *global* aspect of AI's governance, i.e., on the governance of the work we do together. This means looking at how the different national and international entities of AI relate to each other and are accountable and responsible to each other. In particular, this review focuses on the governance relationships between (i) the international movement as a whole (represented by the ICM); (ii) the elected international board (the IEC); and (iii) independent national AI entities. The move towards "joined-up operations" between national and international AI entities, and the wish expressed at the 2009 ICM to create a stronger mechanism to redistribute AI's resources from the countries in which they are contributed to the countries in which they are most needed, both pose particular challenges for governance that we need to address.

3. Definitions

"Governance" and related terms can be defined in many different ways. This paper outlines several interpretations and proposes that for AI the key features of governance are: direction-setting (in leading change, spotting opportunities, and determining AI's overall strategies), supervision and authority (of Chief Executives, plans and budgets), accountability to a range of stakeholders, and satisfying the legal obligations imposed on boards.

4. The current global governance system

AI's present system is more international than global because it has very limited mechanisms for governing bodies to oversee the work that AI entities do together. Pressure for a truly global

governance system has emerged in the last 2-3 years because of the increase in joined-up operations between AI entities. This increase has been encouraged by the 2008 Operations Review and taken shape through the work of the interim Global Management Team (iGMT), which brings together more than a dozen section directors and senior IS staff to coordinate priorities and workplans. Other relevant developments include the creation the European Regional Space and the AI Language Centre. Furthermore, the “Assessment to Distribution” proposals agreed by the 2009 ICM foresee much closer working relationships between all parts of AI in the near future. These changes, and the on-going experiments in creating new AI entities to fuel the movement’s growth in new territories, all put pressure on AI’s governance to devise a truly global system to provide oversight, strategic direction, and accountability for the best use of AI’s resources.

5. AI’s current priority, strategy and management systems

At present, AI’s overall strategies are agreed by the ICM, and then priorities within these are set by AI’s managers, taking into account the resources, expertise and finance available to the movement. In 2009/10, for the first time, the IS Operational Plan (ISOP) was closely based on a “Global Priority Statement” (GPS) that has been jointly agreed by the IS senior leadership and all of AI’s section directors. This ISOP was then approved by the IEC.

The implementation of these priorities and the work of the iGMT will build on the proposed operations and management system suggested by Accenture Development Partners as part of the AI Operations Review. As different parts of AI work increasingly closely together on joint projects and share resources to achieve common goals, the need for a global governance system will grow.

6. Key points from previous reviews

There have been many previous studies of AI’s governance, including the Committee on Long-Range Organizational Development (1985), Participlan (1989), the Decision-making and Accountability Working Group (1997), the International Committee on Governance (2003), and the International Committee on Strengthening Democracy (2007). Although there have been many overlaps between these studies, there have also been different emphases. CLOD considered decision-making as it related to development; Participlan was concerned with organisational health; DAWG focused on decision-making and accountability; while the ICSD saw its challenge in terms of democracy. By contrast, the 2009 ICM decisions ask the IEC to examine the problem through the lens of “global governance” – the overarching structure that would enable our new globally-focussed operations to be successful. “Governance” was not a widely used term in earlier reports, and appears to be the aspect of previous discussions that has been the least developed and most controversial. Certainly, its recurrence on the agenda suggests the ICM has been little satisfied with the results.

A number of common threads have persisted through these various studies and reports, and continue to be identified. These include the need for more flexible, responsive decision-making processes; for better balance in where decisions are made across AI entities; and for greater horizontal links between AI entities, at regional and thematic levels.

Reviewing the history of AI’s debate on decision-making, and the previous studies, raises several questions that will be worth considering if we are to create successful solutions. In particular,

- Why are our decision-making processes still perceived as slow and unresponsive?

- Why have the processes that have been established for greater linkages not resulted in stronger, more coordinated work between sections on regional or thematic concerns?
- How can tensions between centrally-led planning and devolved, flexible, empowering decision-making processes be managed?
- How can AI develop the “courage of its convictions” in relation to governance change?

7. Questions for feedback

The Global Governance Taskforce seeks feedback on five key questions:

- (1) Have we described AI's present systems correctly?
- (2) Is our approach to defining governance appropriate for AI?
- (3) Have we identified the main, relevant learning points from previous studies?
- (4) Have we identified the developments in AI that give urgency to this review?
- (5) What are the gaps and tensions in our current governance that we need to address most urgently?
- (6) What are the main implications for AI's governance of growing AI in some countries without building the traditional section/structure model in them?
- (7) Were there additional points raised at the 2009 ICM that we have overlooked?