Note of the IS3C 10TH GENERAL MEETING, 4 APRIL 2024

Attendees

Wout de Natris - IS3C Coordinator (WDN)

Mark Carvell – Senior Policy Adviser (MC)

Nicolas Fiumarelli - WG1 Chair

Sam Goundar - WG1 Vice-chair

Janice Richardson - WG2 Chair (JR)

Raymond Mamattah - WG4 Chair

David Huberman WG8 Chair (DH)

Ifeanyi Frank Ogochukwu WG3 Chair candidate (FO)

Liz Orembo - WG3 Vice-chair candidate (LO)

Abraham Fifi Selby – WG4 Vice-chair candidate (AS)

Alamante Metasebia Kassa (MK)

Ashik Rajbhandari

Elisha Rajbhandari

Oscar Giudice

Dino Cataldo DellAcio (DD)

Stefan Berres

Fredrik Hansen

Nerro Dankie Nendongo

Note: Mark Carvell, 12 April 2024

Introduction

WDN explained that the main purpose of the meeting was to decide whether to proceed with institutionalising the IS3C dynamic coalition as a foundation following the initial discussion of governance options at the previous general meeting in January 2024 and subsequent research by a sub-group of WG4. Progress reports of all the WG activities would be held over to the next general meeting to be held in May 2024 (date to be confirmed).

Election of Leadership Team candidates

2. Frank Ogochuwkwu and Liz Orembo were introduced as candidates for Chair following the retirement of Mallory Knodel and Vice-chair of WG3 respectively, and Abraham Selby as Vice-chair of WG4 following the passing of Olévié Kouami. The three candidates were elected by approbation with congratulations led by WDN.

Institutionalising the IS3C coalition as a foundation

3. WDN recounted the background to the proposal to reconstitute the coalition as a foundation with an independent board which would oversee the conduct of its mission, and with financial arrangements that would be more conducive to receiving financial support, in particular from governments.

4. JR explained the outcomes of the research on institutional formats considered by the WG4 sub-group and the reasons for narrowing down the format options to either an association or a foundation which provided the required formal structure and the necessary operational flexibility that would not be possible in the case of a charity. The final recommendation of the WG4 sub-group was a not-for-profit foundation which was considered to be better suited for an initiative with a unified structure of diverse but inter-related activities conducted by individual working groups and which requires financial sustainability for the conduct of research activities etc. The sub-group members also recommended that the purpose of the foundation should be broadly defined as relating to cybersecurity but without specificity in order not to constrain the foundation from undertaking new areas of work. With regard to place of registration, it was recommended that this be in the Coordinator's country The Netherlands so that a bank account could be opened up there in the country of registration.

5. MC turned to the purpose and activities of the proposed foundation which he envisaged as building on the existing work of the IS3C dynamic coalition and incorporate the new areas of work now starting to roll out under the overall mission of addressing the gaps in the global deployment of existing security-related Internet standards and best practices. The foundation would take forward this mission as an open multistakeholder platform with a written constitution and governance structure overseen by an independent Board that can exercise due financial diligence. The Foundation will undertake research and develop policy recommendations, toolkits and best practices, and provide mechanisms for promotion and advocacy of its outputs.

6. With regard to the benefits of restructuring the initiative as a foundation, MC said that it would provide a permanent financial basis that will support in particular: 1) extending the scope of research activities to include additional emerging technologies; 2) increasing the number of advocacy activities; and 3) generally enhancing the initiative's global outreach to secure the support and participation of

more representatives of all relevant stakeholder groups, including ICT technical experts, government policymakers, regulators and industry decision-takers.

7. Regarding the foundation's functions and activities, MC said that these would include:

- Undertaking research on the worldwide adoption of ICT security-related standards and best practices for existing and emerging technologies.

- Identifying the common barriers to, and potential drivers for, the adoption and deployment of security-related standards and best practices.
- Monitoring progress in addressing gaps in the implementation of security-related standards.
- Developing guidance and creating practical toolkits including training modules, that support the deployment of security-related standards and ICT best practices.
- Advocacy of security-related standards and best practice
- Engaging all relevant stakeholder groups, including government policymakers, technology developers and industry leaders, in order to promote security by design principles for the development and manufacture of ICT devices, services and applications.

8. It would be important to capture the scope of the foundation in its name. Two suggestions were tabled at the meeting:

Cybersecurity Standards Foundation (CSF)

Internet Standards, Security and Safety Foundation (IS3F)

9. MK set out his proposal for structuring the foundation's responsibilities, activities and support functions following the move from being a coalition under the aegis of the IGF. This comprises an independent advisory board of directors below which would be a set of functional divisions covering the foundation's core foundational tasks:

  i.   research and development
  ii.   advocacy and engagement
  iii. communications and outreach
  iv.   publications and recognition
  v.   education and skills development

10. There would also be an administrative division comprising departments dealing with human resources, finance, legal advice, an admin department to manage events, travel etc, and a department dealing with IT and data requirements.

11. WDN reported the results of his research into the initial upfront and first year funding requirements for establishing the foundation in The Netherlands, which include the following items:

- appointing a notary for the incorporation procedure: € 400 - €1000
- registration with chamber of commerce: € 80
- bank account charge: first 6 months free and € 190 per year thereafter
- employing an accountant after first year: between €10,000 and € 25,000 or more.

12. JR pointed out that it would be important to ensure the foundation's articles of incorporation do not legally tie the foundation to the IGF given that there was no guarantee that the IGF's mandate under the UN would continue following the General Assembly's review in 2025 and subsequently. The foundation would be run independently of the IGF. The legal articles should set out briefly the purpose of the foundation and the appointment of the board. The specific functions of the foundation and its organisational structure would be covered in separate documentation.

13. Regarding the organisation of the foundation's activities, LO (supported by FO) suggested that some of the functions should be merged in a leaner structure until substantive funding is secured and enough volunteers are appointed to take charge of individual departments. MK agreed that the proposal for the structure of functional departments was provisional and conditional on sufficient funding being secured and the capacity achieved to appoint people to take on specific responsibilities.

14. WDN underlined the independence of the board members who would serve on a voluntary unpaid basis and if any member wished to undertake a specific responsibility for any foundation work, he/she would have to declare that and step aside from any deliberations or process undertaken by the board related to that work.

15. The future relationship with the IGF was touched on in the discussion. MC said that it would be important for the foundation to continue engaging in the IGF in view of its value as a global stakeholder network that affords substantive opportunities for promoting outcomes and partnering etc. FO suggested that the foundation could consider formalising that relationship with a memorandum of some kind.

16. DD representing the IGF's Dynamic Coalition on Blockchain Assurance and Standardization (DC-BAS) informed the meeting that DC-BAS was keen to include security within its scope of work and looked forward to cooperating with IS3C and in due course the foundation on this issue.

17. WDN polled the members attending the meeting on whether to proceed with transition of IS3C into a foundation. There were no objections and it was agreed to proceed to incorporate the foundation. WDN announced the following immediate next steps:

i. The draft text developed by the sub-group with the name options and purpose for incorporation would be issued to the membership for comments and any suggested amendments, with responses requested by close of 12 April.

ii. Identifying people to invite to be members of the Board (3 or 5 members to be appointed).

iii. Individual donations would be invited from IS3C members to cover the initial financial cost of e1200 for incorporation the foundation.

WdN thanked the WG 4 sub group for their work.

IS3C Workshop proposals in 2024

18. MC reported the status of applications for IS3C workshops in international fora during the remainder of 2024.

19. As in previous years, for the annual IGF in Riyadh there are opportunities to request a thematic day zero session on 16 December and hold a Dynamic Coalition session in the main programme which would be the opportunity to present progress reports by all the WGs with a look forward to the work plans for 2025. There is also the opportunity to participate in the Dynamic Coalitions main session at the IGF organised by the IGF's Dynamic Coaltions Coordination Group (DCCG).

20. Consideration was being given to focus IS3C's thematic presentation at the IGF on a new policy area. WDN has initiated discussions with Consumers International (a network of over 200 consumer organizations in 100 countries) as a potential IS3C partner on consumer advocacy of security standards. This may include holding a joint session on day zero on that theme.

21. IS3C will also participate in the Dynamic Coalitions' intersessional meeting which will be held during the IGF Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) meeting in Geneva in June. This will be an opportunity to promote awareness amongst MAG members of DC outcomes that are expected to be announced in Riyadh.

22. WG2's ongoing discussions on collaboration with the Polish national research institute on information technology NASK on education and skills may lead to holding a joint IGF Open Forum on that theme.

23. IS3C will hold a pre-event session during the European regional IGF EuroDIG on 17 June in Vilnius, again potentially focussing on consumer protection in partnership with Consumers International. It was also possible that IS3C would participate in the event's sub-topic sessions on cyber resilience and standard-setting on 18 June.

24. IS3C has not previously participated in IGFUSA. A topic proposal has been submitted for this year's annual meeting of IGFUSA which may lead to participation for the first time in this leading national US forum.

25. Turning to African fora where IS3C has not yet had the opportunity to raise its profile in particular with regard to the coalition's focus on capacity building and sustainable development, MC noted that dates had not yet been announced for this

year's African IGF. He requested colleagues based in Africa to keep the leadership team informed of potential opportunities in any key African Internet fora.

Grant applications

26. DH presented a short overview of the ICANN grant programme which is open for applications until 24 May. The programme funds initiatives that contribute to the evolution of the domain name system, open standards, inclusion and capacity building across geographical regions. ICANN requires that the applicant must be a charitable organisation and have work and outputs scoped out for two years.

27. LO reported an IS3C sub-group's initial discussion of potential project interest relating to an ICANN grant application, including procurement as it relates to the domain name system, IoT addressing and universal acceptance in view of its priority as an ICANN public policy issue.

28. WDN pointed out that it will be necessary to identify a partner that is a charity which is a requirement for the ICANN application (while not-for-profit, the proposed foundation will not legally be a charity). On next steps, WDN explained that members would be invited shortly to a meeting to develop the grant application.

29. WDN reported that an application to the regional Internet registry for the Asia Pacific region APNIC (Asia Pacific Network Information Centre) has been submitted for a grant to undertake further work on IoT security and to deliver four capacity building workshops in the Asia-Pacific region. The response was awaited.

IS3C's Communications Strategy

30. WDN said that it was important to prepare an updated core script for members to use for promoting awareness of IS3C, its research activities, progress in delivering outcomes and future work plans. AS explained that WG4 intended to update IS3C's website and expand the social media presence (in addition to LinkedIn). WDN said that he would consult the leadership team in order to set a date for presenting the updated communications strategy.

Date of next meeting

31. A poll of members will issue shortly to set the date of the next IS3C General Meeting during May 2024.