

**UNESCO General Conference**

**37<sup>th</sup> session, November 2013**

**Resolution on**

**Internet related issues: including access to information and knowledge, freedom of expression, privacy and ethical dimensions of the information society**

The General Conference,

*Having examined* document [37 C/61](#),

*Recalling* 36 C/Resolution 57, 190 EX/Decision 5 (III) and 192 EX/Decision 40,

*Taking into account* the essential role of UNESCO's mandate in the area of the ethical dimensions of the information society and the several events, studies, publications, reports and other activities related to the subject advanced by the Organization since 1995,

*Noting* the report of the Director General on the implementation of the World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS) outcomes contained in 37 C/55 and the final statement adopted at the first UNESCO-hosted WSIS+10 review event in February 2013,

*Bearing in mind* that the [final statement](#) adopted at the first UNESCO-hosted WSIS+10 review event in February 2013 invites all stakeholders to protect privacy and foster dignity to which everyone is entitled in cyberspace and encourages international and interdisciplinary reflection and debate on the ethical challenges of emerging technologies and the information society,

*Committed* to the full implementation in cyberspace of the human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

*Reaffirming* the rights contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the right to freedom of expression and the right not to be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy, family, home or correspondence, and the right to enjoy protection of the law against such interference or attacks, in accordance with article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and articles 17 and 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

*Taking note* of the report A/HRC/23/40 of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression,

*Recalling* the Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/RES/20/8, "The Promotion, Protection and Enjoyment of Human Rights on the Internet", affirming that the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online,

*Noting* that privacy is essential to protect journalistic sources, which enable a society to benefit from investigative journalism, to strengthen good governance and the rule of law, and that such privacy should not be subject to arbitrary or unlawful interference,

*Noting also* that, due to the transboundary nature of dataflow, challenges regarding cyberspace are to be addressed at national, regional and global level through an inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue,

*Stressing* UNESCO's role in the international multi-stakeholder debate concerning Internet-related issues, including access to information and knowledge, freedom of expression, privacy, and ethical dimensions of the information society,

1. *Requests* the Director-General to prepare a comprehensive study of the Internet-related issues within the mandate of UNESCO, including access to information and knowledge, freedom of expression, privacy, and ethical dimensions of the information society, containing possible options for future actions through convening an inclusive multi-stakeholder process which includes governments, private sector, civil society, international organizations and the technical community, to inform her report on the implementation of WSIS outcomes to the 38th session of the General Conference;<sup>1</sup>
2. *Requests* that this process shall be open to all Member States and benefit from UNESCO's accumulated knowledge and past experiences in those issues and involve the relevant existing fora;
3. *Further requests* the Director-General to inform Member States on a regular basis of the progress of the above-mentioned process, including to the Executive Board at its 196th session;
4. *Calls upon* Member States to fully engage in this process and to make every effort, including through extrabudgetary contributions, for financing additional meetings or other activities.

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<sup>1</sup> This process does not constitute any stage of the multi-stage procedure for the elaboration, examination, adoption, and follow-up of declarations, charters, and similar standard-setting instruments adopted by the General Conference and not covered by the Rules of Procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution as indicated in Annex G of the Basic Texts, unless Member States decide otherwise.