

Draft ISPCP Internet Fragmentation Policy Position

January 8, 2024

- The ISPCP recognizes and shares the concern that there are significant geopolitical activities driving the potential for “*internet fragmentation*”, a term for which there is currently no commonly agreed upon global definition.
- The ISPCP recognizes the current ICANN working definition of Internet fragmentation that separately identifies three forms of Internet fragmentation including:
 - *Technical Fragmentation*: Conditions in the underlying infrastructure that impede the ability of systems to fully interoperate and exchange data packets and of the internet to function consistently at all endpoints.
 - *Government Fragmentation*: Government policies and actions that constrain or prevent certain uses of the Internet to create, distribute, or access information resources; and
 - *Commercial Fragmentation*: Business practices that constrain or prevent certain uses of the Internet to create, distribute, or access information resources;
- The ISPCP believes that ICANN’s technical remit limits its scope for addressing internet fragmentation issues to those that fall under the definition of “*technical fragmentation*”.
- The ISPCP supports the development of emerging services and will support ICANN in identifying those emerging issues that have the potential for causing technical internet fragmentation so that we can work together on solutions that ensure the ongoing security and interoperability of the global internet.
- The ISPCP supports the ICANN multistakeholder model as an effective means to maintain the security, stability, and resilience of the Internet DNS and meet the needs and expectations of global customers and partners of the IANA services while maintaining the openness of the global Internet.
- The ISPCP supports the adoption of global standards via globally accepted, industry led, voluntary Internet standard development organizations, including the IETF.¹

Resources:

- World Economic Forum: [Internet Fragmentation: An Overview](#)
- Council on Foreign Relations: [Confronting reality in Cyberspace: Foreign Policy for a Fragmented Internet](#)
- Lawfare: [In Defense of the Global, Open Internet](#)
- Internet Governance Project: [The Knake-Mueller Wager: Will China Form an Alternate DNS Root?](#)
- [Internet Governance in an Age of Cyber Insecurity](#)

¹ See, “[RFC 9518 – What Can Internet Standards Do About Centralisation](#)”, December 19, 2023

- Council on Foreign Relations: [Internet Fragmentation: An Overview](#)
- ISOC: [Protecting the Internet as we know it – Three things you can do to stop the Splinternet](#)