



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

IPDC THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION

Agenda item: Discussion: Thematic Debates for 29th IPDC Council session

INFORMATION NOTE

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Resolution 43 of the 36th UNESCO General Conference in 2011, the Communication & Information Sector is charged to promote dialogue amongst Member States on issues related to freedom of expression and journalistic safety. An already-existing part of meeting this mandate is the role of IPDC Council serving as a forum for what are known as “IPDC thematic debates”. To provide for such discussion, and for a factual basis for it, the Secretariat proposes certain topics and process. The Bureau is requested to discuss these proposals, and to adopt a decision to be taken forward for the 2014 Council session.

IPDC THEMATIC DEBATES

A “thematic debate” is a regular part of the IPDC Council agenda, and it is assumed that this will be the case for the 29th IPDC Council proceedings in 2014. Proposals about topics and a process were made in a document presented to the 28th Council session, but which was not discussed due to limited time. The purpose of this current document is to request the Bureau to select a topic which will inform the 2014 thematic debate. The document also suggests that the 57th (2015) Bureau meeting could decide on a recommendation to the 29th Council on the process for subsequent debates.

Past thematic debates at the Council have been on journalistic safety, community media, good governance and media development, and international partnerships. Other topics have been the role of the state in media development, and mainstreaming gender in media.

These topics are informed by UNESCO’s wider C4 and the C5 programme of the Division for Freedom of Expression and Media Development in which the IPDC is located. The debates feed into IPDC’s work, such as in its support for projects and its Special Initiatives. Decisions regarding the thematic debates need to bear in mind budgetary issues as regards securing inputs from all regions of the world. The Bureau may need to set aside funding in 2015 of approximately US \$8000 for:

- A document/report/paper for discussion to be prepared.
- Costs of bringing speakers to address the debate during the IPDC Council.
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1. PREPARATION FOR THE THEMATIC DEBATE AT THE 29th (2014) COUNCIL SESSION:

The 57th IPDC Bureau in 2013 is requested to discuss the following debate topics, and recommend one for the Secretariat to prepare for the 29th (2014) Council session:

- Knowledge-driven media development.

This subject relates directly to the *Streamlining IPDC* document being tabled at the Bureau. The debate would be about UNESCO's knowledge role in the broader field of media development, and how this could improve the status of media development in broader development matters.

- Online privacy and freedom of expression.

This subject has received attention from UNESCO through a publication in 2012, titled "Global survey on internet privacy and freedom of expression" (www.unesco.org/new/internet-privacy-and-foe). The complexities of developing policies that protect privacy without limiting freedom of expression is the vantage point. If this subject were chosen, it would be an opportunity to raise awareness amongst Member States, and it could lead to IPDC supporting projects such as online safety where the two rights come together.

- Developing standards for principles for ethical leadership in news media institutions

IPDC has played a strong normative role in regard to matters such as defining "media development" in terms of the Council-endorsed *Media Development Indicators*. Working with credible groups such as the Global Reporting Initiative, African Media Initiative and the Ethical Journalism Network, IPDC could contribute to norms for media executives and owners. While many ethical principles have been elaborated for journalists, the field is novel as regards their principals. At the same time, the professional quality of journalism is very much a function of the ethics of media proprietors and executives.

- Supporting new sustainability models for news media.

This matter is raised in the *Streamlining IPDC* document tabled at the Bureau. There is growing worldwide concern about the viability of media institutions producing journalism as they lose the support of advertising which in turn is being drawn to non-journalistic platforms like social networks. The culture of free information is also hurting news media institutions. This debate would assess whether IPDC can use its resources and knowledge networks to disseminate good practices as regards sustainability in a changing communications context, and to support innovative experiments around business models for quality media.

2. PROPOSED ITEM FOR DISCUSSION AT THE 58th (2014) BUREAU MEETING:

A RECOMMENDATION TO THE 29TH COUNCIL (2014) CONCERNING THE PREPARATION FOR THE THEMATIC DEBATE AT THE 30th (2016) COUNCIL MEETING:

The 2014 Bureau will be requested to propose topics and a process to the 29th IPDC Council, as regards the 2016 thematic debate. This decision will then be submitted as a recommendation to the 29th IPDC Council meeting for its consideration.

Recommended process for thematic debates:

- The 58th (2014) Bureau will mandate the IPDC Secretariat to propose three specific topics to the 2014 IPDC Council (29th session) which are possibilities for the Thematic Debate at the 30th (2016) Council session.
- The 30th (2014) IPDC Council will discuss these three topics and select one to be the Thematic Debate at the 30th Council session in 2016. The Secretariat will then present a concept paper and provisional agenda for discussion and decision at the 60th (2016) IPDC Bureau ahead of the Council meeting.

- On the basis of the Bureau’s guidance, the IPDC Thematic Debate will then take place at the IPDC Council in 2016.

Recommended subjects for the 2016 Council debates:

- A number of options for topics will be presented to the 58th (2014) Bureau meeting

	2013	2014	2015	2016
IPDC Bureau	Proposes debate for 2014 Council			
		Proposes debate and process <i>post</i> -2014 for the 2014 Council		
IPDC Council		Holds 2014 thematic debate		
		Decides process and topics for 2016 debate		
IPDC Bureau			Discusses Secretariat preparations for 2016 debate	
IPDC Council				Holds 2016 thematic debate