

Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)

CCBI/ICC general intervention regarding the Internet Governance Forum

GENERAL INTERVENTION: 16 February 2006 AS DELIVERED

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Introduction

Thank you Chairman Desai, thank you Markus Kummer

I am pleased to provide initial comments on the IGF on behalf of CCBI and ICC members.

The global business community welcomes these consultations and the opportunity to provide input both online and in person at these meetings. We call attention to the inputs from CCBI and ICC in December 2005 as well as February 2006 which are on the IGF and ICC websites.

The business members in the CCBI have appreciated the opportunity presented by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process to discuss how to bring the benefits of the Information Society to people around the world. Many business leaders believe that the post-WSIS processes present continued opportunities to build even better ties to other Information Society stakeholders.

We have outlined other fundamental principles regarding Internet governance in our written inputs on the IGF.

Today, we want to focus on four important areas:

One, the Multistakeholder principle

Two, the role and mandate of the IGF

Three, the IGF process

And

Four, supporting the IGF

One: Multistakeholder participation on an equal footing

The first and foremost principle for business is that the IGF must be multistakeholder, ensuring full involvement of all stakeholder groups including business on an equal footing in all aspects of the IGF—starting from consultations through establishment, to operational planning and events. We know there is widespread support among governments, civil society, academic and technical communities and other stakeholders for this principle---as has already been stated in interventions this morning.

Two: the Role and Mandate of IGF

Consistent with the mandate articulated in paragraph 72 of the Tunis agenda, the IGF should emphasize the development oriented aspects of Internet governance, such as enhancement of capacity building to increase meaningful participation in Internet related issues by all stakeholders, particularly from developing countries.

The Tunis Agenda (paragraph 72) gives the IGF a mandate to promote the expansion and continued development of the Internet through information exchange and sharing of best practices.

To maximize that goal, and in line with the other relevant paragraphs of the Tunis Agenda, the IGF should do the following:

- only address issues that would truly benefit from international multistakeholder dialogue;
- work with existing fora to improve awareness and exchange of information on topics already being considered;
- avoid duplication of the work underway in existing organizations;
- be consistent with the aim of promoting the security and integrity of the Internet;
- not compete with or impede the technical management and technical coordination of the Internet or critical Internet resources;
- The Tunis agenda is clear that the IGF does not have decision making or policy making authority.

Three: the IGF process

The third important area is the IGF process.

The IGF should:

- Operate in a flexible manner to facilitate open discussion among all participants. Therefore adherence to rigid rules used in intergovernmental negotiation processes is inappropriate;
- Provide the opportunity for all stakeholders from all countries to participate on an equal basis in the consultations and at IGF event(s);

- Involve all stakeholders on an equal footing in all operational planning for the IGF;
- Utilize online tools to make the event more inclusive with no stakeholder group excluded from the discussions of the IGF; and
- Operate in a cost and operationally efficient manner.

I would now like to comment on the purpose of the first IGF event in Athens, CCBI has recognized the importance of having all stakeholders in the Internet come together. In Athens, we should concentrate discussions on a topic or a limited set of topics important to development of the Internet and its success in bringing the benefits of the Internet to more people. We should also limit the discussion to those topics that could truly benefit from further outreach, information exchange and human capacity building. To be effective, the first event in Athens and any IGF events in the future should not be an attempt to open discussion of a plethora of issues.

Further consultations-- both online and in-person-- for all stakeholders should be planned promptly. CCBI, and potentially of others, cannot provide responses regarding many IGF issues until several fundamental IGF attributes are properly established.

Furthermore, we call upon all of the stakeholders to be sensitive to the limited resources of all stakeholders. The development of the IGF should bear in mind the extent of human and financial resources required to establish and participate in it. This is especially true since these same resources could alternatively be applied to implementing the development goals of the WSIS. Consistent with this principle, we appreciate the fact that the proposed schedule for the event in Athens is for a 2-3 day timeframe. This would provide adequate time for a true exchange on the agenda topic.

In addition, meetings on the IGF and other relevant topics could be organized back to back to reduce travel and other costs.

Four: Supporting the IGF

Lastly, on matters related to supporting the IGF:

We see a fully multistakeholder bureau taking any and all operational and programme decisions by consensus, in consultation with all stakeholder groups regarding the IGF. The host would take the logistical decisions necessary on the ground, and a secretariat in cooperation with those providing logistical support should put the operational decisions of the bureau into practice and facilitate the participation of all stakeholders.

The topic identified for an IGF event should be agreed to by consensus among the stakeholders. A bureau that is in fact multistakeholder, with all participating on an equal footing, as we have described earlier, would be the place for the topic, agenda and programme to be developed.

We look forward to providing additional input as the discussions continue today and tomorrow.

Thank you for your attention.

Fundamental principles related to Internet governance

- a) *Ensure the stable, secure and consistent functioning of an end-to-end Internet;*
- b) *Ensure full and effective multi-stakeholder involvement (including governments, the private sector, the technical expert and academic community, civil society and relevant international organizations) in policy shaping and development at the national, regional and international levels, recognizing the shared responsibility of all stakeholders, each within their respective roles and responsibilities;*
- c) *Foster innovation and development;*
- d) *Promote the free flow of information and the continued evolution toward internationalization¹ of Internet content and software;*
- e) *Preserve private sector and technical community leadership in the technical management of the Internet;*
- f) *Ensure that policies and guidelines are developed through a bottom-up approach;*
- g) *Promote development of and expanded access to the Internet in order to facilitate the bridging of the digital divide [for example: capacity building, education and training, and workforce skills];*
- h) *Remain sensitive to limited financial and human resources; and*
- i) *Create the necessary policy, legal and regulatory enabling environment to attract investment in ICTs and the Internet, stimulate infrastructure development, promote entrepreneurship, and foster innovation and creativity.*

¹ Internationalization includes development of content in more languages, and multilingualism of the domain name system. There is great value in expediting progress toward multilingualism in both content on the World Wide Web, and in the use of non ASCII character domain names. However, CCBI cautions that it is important to acknowledge that true progress must take into account the technical and other complexities of implementing internationalized domain names, including agreement on official language tables. Success in this area rests in substantial part on working with all organizations currently engaged in developing solutions including the browser /software development community.

WHAT IS THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF BUSINESS INTERLOCUTORS (CCBI)?

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) was held during the week of 8 December 2003 in Geneva, culminating in the Summit segment on 10-12 December 2003. The second part of this Summit took place from 16 to 18 November 2005 in Tunisia.

Principals of the Summit host countries and executive secretariat invited the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) to create the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI) as a vehicle through which to mobilize and coordinate the involvement of the worldwide business community in the processes leading to and culminating in the Summit. ICC and the CCBI group led the private-sector effort to provide substantive input into the first phase of the Summit, and mobilized the private sector to participate in the preparatory phases and at the Summit itself.

The business community has decided to maintain a role for CCBI with regard to follow-up from the WSIS and its outcomes.

Among the organizations actively involved in the work of the CCBI, in addition to ICC, are: Asociacion Hispanoamericana de Centros de Investigacion y Empresas de Telecomunicaciones, Brazilian Chamber of Electronic Commerce, Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD; The Computer Society of Kenya, Global Business Dialogue on Electronic Commerce; Global Information Infrastructure Commission; Latin-American Information Technology Association; United States Council on International Business; World Information Technology and Services Alliance; French Publishers Association; International Publishers Association, CABASE, E-COM LAC.

For further information regarding CCBI, please consult the WSIS website at: <http://www.itu.int/wsis/index.html>
the CCBI website at www.businessatwsis.net
or ICC's website at: <http://www.iccwbo.org/policy/ebitt/id2343/index.html>
or contact wsis@iccwbo.org

ABOUT ICC

ICC is the world business organization, a representative body that speaks with authority on behalf of enterprises from all sectors in every part of the world. ICC promotes an open international trade and investment system and the market economy. Business leaders and experts drawn from the ICC membership establish the business stance on broad issues of trade and investment, e-business, IT and telecoms policy as well as on vital technical and sectoral subjects. ICC was founded in 1919 and today it groups thousands of member companies and associations from over 130 countries.

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