



International Chamber of Commerce

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An ICC initiative

BASIS

Business Action to Support
the Information Society

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ICC/BASIS input on WSIS action lines C1 and C7

10 July 2006

General comments

Business recognizes that the objective of the Tunis Agenda and the WSIS Geneva Plan of Action is to promote partnerships, initiatives and activities that further the objectives of the action lines. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on WSIS action lines C1 and C7 and the recognition of the important role business continues to play in both in terms of investing in the Information Society and by providing innovative products and services that will contribute to advance many of the goals established by these commitments.

Action Line Linkages and Involvement of Key Organizations

- Reviews of the action lines conducted both by business and by various UN organizations have identified significant linkages, overlaps, and redundancies among the eleven action lines.
- With respect to Action Lines C1 and C7, and the list of themes and sub-themes that have been identified:
 - Expert organizations that are leading or addressing the themes or sub-themes should be spearheading coordination on their issues of expertise. For example, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is the main organization addressing intellectual property issues, and thus the most effective and efficient approach would be to have WIPO, for instance, lead or at a minimum be given the opportunity to lead on this sub-theme.
 - We should remain cognizant of the limited resources of all stakeholders, in particular those of participants from developing countries and ensure the most effective implementation of these action lines. In our opinion, such effective implementation would primarily stem from constructive ways of engaging stakeholders in these action lines at the national, regional and international levels rather than centralizing their implementation in UN-agency facilitated international groups.
 - By giving primary responsibility to the organizations that are already addressing particular issues, the focus of implementation of the action line will be to build upon existing work, partnerships, and programmes and not duplication or re-creation efforts.



For the same reason we also caution against holding a large number of individual meetings on each action line and the addition of many sub-themes can lead to unnecessary meetings.

Online Information Sharing

Business supports the facilitation of information sharing relative to the action lines, focusing on the true exchange of experiences and also on forming new partnerships. We believe that such facilitation can best be accomplished by use of an online platform and other online tools that enable all stakeholders to share their activities related to the action lines. Reducing the time and costs needed for travelling would also maximize the impact despite limited human and financial resources. All stakeholders who are already involved in activities related to the action lines, regardless of whether they are able to attend planning meetings, can bring their activities into the fold and also make others involved in that particular action line or sub-items aware of what they are doing.

Business is confident that such an approach would ensure that the objectives of the WSIS Tunis Agenda can be met in an efficient and effective manner, as it would avoid in-person meetings to exchange this information which would lead to a diversion of resources from the critical goals of progressing actions to promote the Information Society.

Further, business believes that the follow-up and implementation activities need to be consistent with the principles of neutrality and full inclusiveness of all stakeholders. The use of online tools and an online platform would facilitate the work on the action lines, and the moderators or facilitators could be responsible for motivating input and outreach to all stakeholders. It would also allow direct input, thus preventing the facilitators and moderators from having to try to conceive of gathering and facilitating all of the activities being done by all stakeholders.

Having mechanisms that allow business, civil society, technical community, and intergovernmental/governmental entities to utilize the information and have "places" that provide links to what is going on relative to a particular action item or action line extends the outreach for such information and contributes to a more-inclusive, people-centric Information Society.
