

## **ICC BASIS Intervention on Enhanced Cooperation**

### **As delivered at 14 December 2010 consultation in New York**

Thank you Mr. Under-Secretary General, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am speaking today on behalf of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and members of its BASIS initiative, which stands for Business Action to Support the Information Society. ICC BASIS comprises companies and business associations from across sectors and geographies.

As an initial matter, we would like to take the opportunity to thank the Economic and Social Council for the open, transparent and inclusive manner in which the enhanced cooperation consultation is being conducted. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in this process and we note that a number of other businesses and private sector organizations submitted comments and are here today.

The enhanced cooperation process should be consistent with the key principles set forth in the Geneva Declaration and the Tunis Agenda. Paragraphs 68-71 of the Tunis Agenda clearly direct that “all relevant organizations” should commence a process toward enhanced cooperation and “all stakeholders” should be involved in that process. This principle of inclusiveness is critically important to achieving enhanced cooperation.

ICC BASIS believes that continued cooperation between governments and other stakeholders is the most effective framework for addressing Internet development and policy issues. Over the past five years, the private sector has invested heavily in the expansion of Internet infrastructure and services, and the number of Internet users around the globe has nearly doubled to 2 billion users, as others have noted. The multi-stakeholder Internet Governance process has helped to create an environment that encouraged this rapid growth and expansion, which is contributing to progress on the Millennium Development Goals.

We recognize that many challenges remain and that the process should reflect the dynamic nature of the Internet and the Information Society. The private sector is committed to continuing its active participation in the enhanced

cooperation process, as well as our own efforts to expand outreach and inclusion. For example, since the conclusion of the Tunis Summit, ICC BASIS and its members have supported capacity building and other aspects of the WSIS process. ICC BASIS also has worked to expand the diversity of private sector participation, including efforts to expand participation by small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) and businesses in developing countries.

Moreover, enhanced cooperation should encourage greater cooperation among existing organizations, not create a new process. Enhanced cooperation already is being facilitated across the spectrum of relevant organizations including those that are intergovernmental, those that are private-sector led and those that are multistakeholder. Therefore, we believe today's consultation is an important step in the process, not the start of a new process.

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is an excellent example of enhanced cooperation. The IGF, as currently structured, has provided a unique forum for greater cooperation and collaboration among many governments, organizations and stakeholders. This, in turn, has encouraged new collaborative efforts, such as the emergence of regional and national IGF meetings.

The focus going forward should be on strengthening these efforts and building on what has been achieved during the past five years. The UN Secretary General's outreach to organizations associated with the Internet and requests for regular reports has helped to maintain the momentum of the enhanced cooperation process.

Finally, ICC BASIS would like to put forward three specific recommendations for pursuing enhanced cooperation:

*First*, enhanced cooperation should promote greater collaboration, information sharing and cross-participation among existing organizations.

*Second*, governments and relevant international organizations should make their Internet-related policy and decision-making activities transparent and inclusive.

*Third*, at its broadest level, the overarching goal of enhanced cooperation should be to expand participation in the WSIS process and Internet Governance generally.

Thank you.