



International Chamber of Commerce

The world business organization

An ICC initiative

BASIS

Business Action to Support
the Information Society

ICC/BASIS intervention to the 23 May 2007 meeting of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)

Geneva, 23 May 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman; my name is Art Reilly representing the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and its initiative, the Business Action to Support the Information Society (BASIS). We very much appreciate this opportunity to speak to the Commission on Science, Technology for Development as you address your substantive theme of “Promoting the building of a people-centric, development-oriented and inclusive Information Society, with a view to enhancing digital opportunities for all people”.

The ICC was pleased to have facilitated business participation and contributions throughout the WSIS process and to have presented business views to the July 2006 UN ECOSOC meeting on continuing the multistakeholder dialogue going forward. We applaud subsequent ECOSOC and CSTD efforts in this regard, such as:

- the decision to allow WSIS-accredited business sector entities to participate during this and the next session of the Commission with a review of the modalities of participation to take place in 2010, and
- the joint meeting yesterday with the Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID) in which the business community is an active and equal partner with other stakeholders.

Yesterday’s Joint meeting of the Commission on Science, Technology, and Development and the Global Alliance for ICT and Development illustrated that business plays a very significant role with regard to science, technology and development. As we heard yesterday, business roles include being:

1. leaders in Research and Development globally extending the boundaries of science and technology,
2. innovators of science and technology-based products, services, applications, and networks that address user needs,
3. users of science and technology as they engage in their commerce and serve their customers, and,

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4. Initiator of science and technology-based development programs and business endeavours that lead to economic and social development including through partnerships with governments, civil society, and intergovernmental organizations in science and technology-based development programs such as education and training related to science and technology.

Business is committed to partnering with others to bring the benefits of the Information Society to people around the world and achieving the Millennium Declaration Goals. ICTs can be an important enabler in expanding our reach and increasing our capabilities in trying to attain our collective 2015 goals. Science and Technology are the foundation of ICT innovation and thus fundamental to development. The private sector welcomes the CSTD efforts to provide business with an opportunity to have a voice and to contribute to the CSTD work in a focused, and meaningful way.

The business comments which we will present now are also available in a document at the back of the room and on the CSTD and ICC websites. These comments address the range of issues under consideration by the CSTD including:

- the proposal for a multi-year work programme (dated November 2006),
- the formulation of its working methods, and
- the development of recommendations to progress commitments and actions from the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS Geneva 2003, Tunis 2005).

Multi-year work programme

In considering the multi-year work programme for WSIS follow-up, CSTD should first recognize that WSIS has an integrated multistakeholder implementation programme, unlike past Summits and thus models from other Summits may not be as constructive. In addition, since the WSIS outcomes and processes cover a range of issues involving many other organizations and entities, the CSTD role should be that of an effective focal point to assist the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in its oversight of the follow up to the WSIS outcomes without duplicating the efforts of others. The CSTD could, for example, play an important role in helping ECOSOC review and assess progress in implementation of the WSIS outcomes by ensuring that relevant information is brought together in an effective manner.

To achieve this, ICC/BASIS makes the following Recommendations relative to the multi-year programme:

- Recommendation 1: CSTD should outreach to business and other stakeholders to request input on activities and contributions related to these outcomes with a deadline for input.



- Recommendation 2: Information gathered about the WSIS outcomes and processes [Financing ICTs, WSIS Action Lines, Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and benchmarking activities] that are provided to ECOSOC should be reviewed by the CSTD to enable monitoring of progress.
- Recommendation 3: CSTD should consider an approach that differs from that used for the Commission on Sustainable Development. The CSD model of taking a single, narrow theme per year may not provide the most effective follow up for WSIS given the many WSIS themes and the desire to achieve the MDGs by 2015. Perhaps, each year CSTD might identify a specific WSIS topic for a ½ day or 1 day event for detailed discussion. However, overall follow-up on all of the outcomes each year will also be important to offer an assessment of progress in order to achieve the all the MDGs. For example, at each year's meeting the CSTD could hold a thematic session as outlined in the November 2006 proposed plan of work. CSTD might also hold 1-2 day sessions on the reports of, for example, each action line, where the reports could be presented and considered. The CSTD could then review all of them and provide an overall commentary report on how these activities are progressing across all action lines and activities.
- Recommendation 4: Based on annual CSTD assessments, decisions can then be made about any subsequent CSTD work programme. The 2013-2015 time period could, for example, be devoted to taking up the issues or activities that appear to need the most attention to achieve the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and having focused sessions on those themes.

Working methods

With regard to CSTD working methods, ICC/BASIS makes the following recommendations:

- Recommendation 5: Clear schedules, calendars, and notification to stakeholders of issues under consideration should be provided to ensure that CSTD evaluations can have the benefit of the expertise and information on activities of all stakeholders.
- Recommendation 6: All stakeholders should be given adequate time to provide substantive input, and effective and constructive ways should be employed to include stakeholders in meetings. I might note again that CSTD efforts at this meeting with regard to this and other working methods recommendations are most welcome by the business community as an initial step and we have some suggestions for further improvements.
- Recommendation 7: The CSTD working methods should remain sensitive to the limited time, human and financial resources of all stakeholders.



- Recommendation 8: Coordination and clustering with other WSIS-related meetings should be employed whenever possible to maximize participation in the CSTD activities related to WSIS follow-up.
- Recommendation 9: The utilization of online tools will maximize stakeholder input and respond to the need for sensitivity to resource limitations faced by all.
- Recommendation 10: The CSTD's working methods in assisting ECOSOC in the follow-up of the WSIS activities should promote coordination and cooperation, and avoid duplication of efforts among entities.

Development of recommendations

With regard to development of CSTD recommendations, ICC/BASIS offers the following:

- Recommendation 11: Since all the issues and outcomes addressed by the WSIS require the participation and activities of business, along with governments and other stakeholders, business and other relevant stakeholders should be included in the development of any recommendations regarding how to progress certain outcomes or issues.

Strengthening the multistakeholder approach

Many of the recommendations and comments above outline ways to effectively include business and other stakeholders in meetings. Other stakeholders, who are not members of the CSTD, can best contribute if they understand the input and perspectives of member representatives from governments. Thus the ability for other stakeholders to be present during discussions amongst the CSTD members is vital.

Business and other stakeholders can make the most constructive contributions to the discussions in the CSTD if they have the opportunity to intervene on each agenda item as it comes up instead of, for instance, only being given the opportunity to provide general statements during one period.

In summary, Mr Chairman, the ICC/BASIS is pleased to be here on behalf of business. We welcome the initial steps that the ECOSOC and CSTD have taken to promote participation and contributions by all stakeholders in your efforts and have offered a number of Recommendations for your consideration going forward. We look forward to working with all of you to promote the achievement of the Millennium Declaration Goals and to bring the benefits of the Information Society to all.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



What is Business Action to Support the Information Society (BASIS)?

ICC created BASIS to serve as the voice of business in the global dialogue on the Information Society, following the two World Summits on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005). BASIS participates in UN-linked forums set up to continue the dialogue, such as the Global Alliance for ICT and Development, the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and the WSIS follow-up and implementation processes.

BASIS builds on the activities and network of the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI), which ICC formed to coordinate participation by world business in the processes leading up to and at the Summits in Geneva and Tunis.

To promote the environment in which global business will continue to thrive as an innovator of these technologies, BASIS mobilizes business to help shape the agenda and participate in these global discussions. The initiative aims to unite the business community, to raise awareness among the public, governments, civil society, intergovernmental organizations and technical authorities of what business requires for continued contributions to the development of the Information Society. BASIS relies on substantive policies developed in ICC's Commission on E-business, IT and Telecoms (EBITT) as the foundation for its efforts.

For further information regarding BASIS, the founding partners, members and activities, please consult the BASIS website at: www.iccwbo.org/BASIS

About the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)

The International Chamber of Commerce is the largest, most representative business organization in the world. Its thousands of member companies in over 130 countries have interests spanning every sector of private enterprise.

A world network of national committees keeps the ICC International Secretariat in Paris informed about national and regional business priorities. More than 2000 experts drawn from ICC's member companies feed their knowledge and experience into crafting the ICC stance on specific business issues.

The United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and many other intergovernmental bodies, both international and regional, are kept in touch with the views of international business through ICC.

For more information please visit: www.iccwbo.org