

To:

Mr. Frédéric Riehl, Vice Chair, Commission on Science and Technology for Development
(frederic.riehl@bakom.admin.ch)

CC:

H.E. Ms. Sherry Ayittey, Chair, Commission on Science and Technology for Development
(c/o Mongi Hamdi: mongi.hamdi@unctad.org)

9 December 2010

Subject:

Letter from stakeholders re: Working Group on Improvements to the IGF membership

We are surprised and deeply concerned about the decision taken by an extraordinary meeting of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) Bureau on Monday. As we understand it, the meeting decided that the Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), mandated by resolution (2010/2) of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), will be composed exclusively of member states.

This ECOSOC resolution, which was initially negotiated during the CSTD in May 2010 by or in the presence of many of the signatories below, invites "the Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to establish, in an open and inclusive manner, a working group to seek, compile and review inputs from all Member States and all other stakeholders on improvements to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), in line with the mandate set out in the Tunis Agenda".

These words are a clear reference to the paragraph of the WSIS Plan of Action (Geneva 2003) that led to the establishment of the very successful Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG) and ultimately the creation of the IGF itself.

We asked the Secretary-General of the United Nations to set up a working group on Internet governance, in an open and inclusive process that ensures a mechanism for the full and active participation of governments, the private sector and civil society from both developing and developed countries, involving relevant intergovernmental and international organizations and forums, to investigate and make proposals for action.

We therefore expected that the composition of the Working Group would be strongly inspired by the methodology adopted for setting up the multistakeholder WGIG, as stated in the CSTD Vice-Chair's recommendation in his report on the meeting he convened on 16 September 2010, and we were dismayed to learn that would not be the case.

The format decided by the Bureau of the CSTD is contrary to both the report and the spirit of the ECOSOC resolution and is therefore disappointing.

In any event, it is not up to the Bureau of the CSTD to make a decision on this matter. This is not a Working Group of the CSTD, but rather a Working Group to be convened by the Chair of the CSTD as instructed by the ECOSOC resolution.

The CSTD Chair entrusted you with the mission of implementing the request made to her. In light of that and the above information we urge you to retract the decision of 7 December, and to establish an appropriately constituted Working Group consistent with the WSIS formulation

ensuring “the full and active participation of governments, the private sector and civil society from both developing and developed countries, involving relevant intergovernmental and international organizations and forums”.

Because little time remains before the 17 December meeting, we respectfully request that you respond at your earliest possible convenience, preferably by 14 December, so that we may make plans to participate in the Working Group meeting if appropriate.

Sincerely yours,

Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC)

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Contact: German Valdez (german@apnic.net)

Association for Competitive Technology

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Australian Domain Name Administration (AuDA)

<http://www.auda.org.au/>

Contact: Chris Disspain (ceo@auda.org.au)

East African Internet Governance Forum

<http://www.eaigf.or.ke/>

Contact: Lillian Nalwoga (lillian@cipesa.org) or Alice Munyua (alice@apc.org)

International Chamber of Commerce - Business Action to Support the Information Society

<http://www.iccwbo.org/basis/>

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Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

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Internet Governance Caucus

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Internet Society

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NetChoice

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