



International Chamber of Commerce

The world business organization

An ICC initiative

BASIS

Business Action to Support
the Information Society

ICC/BASIS Topline input on first Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Athens, Greece [30 October-2 November 2006]

This is an extraction of the topline comments from the feedback document dated 12 January 2007 submitted by the global business community of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), and its initiative, Business Action to Support the Information Society (BASIS) on the first Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Athens [30 October-2 November 2006].

General comments

- ❖ The balance of stakeholders in the advisory group must remain the same with all stakeholders participating on an equal footing.
- ❖ Take stock in February 2007 and begin preparations for all aspects of IGF 2007 immediately.
- ❖ The continued engagement of business, governments, civil society and the technical community in the preparations for the IGF sessions and at the sessions is essential.
- ❖ The emphasis on discussions without negotiated conclusions is an essential principle for the Forum.

Format

- ❖ Build on the successful format and multistakeholder approach of the first IGF in Athens.
- ❖ Finalize topics, speakers, and overall programme well in advance.
- ❖ Make the next IGF meetings more practical and structured, to provide participants with information and best practices on key issues.

Preparations and logistics

- ❖ Ensure moderators and panellists are confirmed much earlier and can be substantively prepared in advance.
- ❖ Ensure sufficient opportunities to build multistakeholder cooperation and communication.
- ❖ Improve preparations and logistics by getting them finalized much earlier, and attending to practical and technical needs.
- ❖ Develop and distribute clear descriptions of the sessions, with a session structure and scenario of how the discussion will flow.

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- ❖ The host country provides essential non-substantive assistance, namely logistical, practical, and organizational support that are critical to the success of the IGF. This is also an invaluable component of building multistakeholder communication and cooperation opportunities. Greece provided the appropriate support in its role as host country and this example should be used in the future.

Substantive focus

- ❖ Focus on issues that can create an enabling environment and thereby help spread the benefits of the Internet to more people.
- ❖ Stress human and institutional capacity building to increase meaningful participation in Internet-related issues at all levels---national, regional, and international.
- ❖ Respond to many developing country representatives [from all stakeholder groups] who felt that the focus in Athens was too much on "North-North" issues. They wanted more focus on how to create an enabling environment to increase use of the Internet in their countries as well as the necessary competencies and skills, and much less on the mechanics of "Internet governance" alone. Business supports such a focus.

Summing up sessions

- ❖ Maintain the approach to the 'summing up' sessions. The report of the secretariat and chair in the mornings, and at the end of the IGF provided a balanced description of the panel discussions and were helpful. This approach should be continued at future IGFs. The host country should have a ceremonial role in the summing up, not a substantive one.

Workshops

- ❖ Reduce the number of workshops to achieve a clearer agenda and ensure the schedule is less packed so that workshops have sufficient attendance.
- ❖ Workshop proposals should be solicited to provide well-defined opportunities for participants to explore in greater detail particular aspects of main topics.
- ❖ Consider distinguishing between "information presentations" and "interactive workshops" to highlight the difference. Both formats can provide different benefits. Interactive workshops would require much more detailed planning.

Useful Links:

ICC/BASIS: <http://www.iccwbo.org/basis/id8215/index.html>

Internet Governance Forum: <http://www.intgovforum.org/>