

ICC BASIS input on WSIS review process

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and its BASIS initiative, Business Action to Support the Information Society, welcome the opportunity to contribute to the consultation on the WSIS review process. ICC BASIS and its cross-sectoral membership of businesses and associations from around the world have been active contributors throughout the Summits in Geneva and Tunis and in the post-WSIS processes and forums.

The WSIS and the post-WSIS processes have proven the benefits of the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders in discussing, implementing and making progress on the WSIS goals and a people centered Information Society. All relevant stakeholders include governments, business, civil society, the Internet technical community, international and intergovernmental organizations. We believe the process associated with this review of the WSIS outcomes should continue to include all relevant stakeholders on an equal footing and in a substantive manner. All relevant stakeholders have been actively engaged in a broad range of activities, processes and forums which continue to implement the WSIS goals. Thus, we believe a review of the outcomes will benefit from their full participation in all aspects.

As stakeholders devote their time, energy and resources to continue to implement the WSIS outcomes, we encourage all to remain sensitive to the limited financial and human resources of ALL stakeholders while considering how this review should happen, and what will be the best use of limited resources.

We note an idea that was put forward by the Government of Finland during the UN Group on the Information Society (UNGIS) meeting regarding this review process. The proposal was to utilize the WSIS action lines Forum in 2014 or 2015 by focusing it on WSIS review and making this the event where all stakeholders can take part in this assessment. WSIS review needs to take place in a fully multistakeholder context, without constraints of UN participation rules; hence, the WSIS action lines Forum would be an appropriate venue for this review. We strongly encourage and support the equal participation in the WSIS review of all the UN agencies that have leadership of WSIS action lines.

We also raise the possibility of a main session at an Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in the coming years that would focus on “taking stock” of the IGF’s own contribution to implementation of WSIS goals. This would also ensure a widespread understanding of the separate and distinct mandates and focus of the WSIS action lines Forum and the IGF, respectively.

Given the limited resources of all relevant stakeholders, we are pleased that lengthy preparatory committee meetings are not being envisioned for the WSIS review process. Every effort should be made to ensure that the valuable resources of all stakeholders are

put to the best, and most effective, use possible. The use of online tools to ensure inclusive participation in an effective and efficient online preparatory process would be the most useful way to take stock of the implementation progress, allowing the investment of resources instead in actual initiatives that will progress further the WSIS goals. Additionally, enabling remote participation and archiving of information eases continued engagement by all current and future stakeholder groups. In today's environment, a burdensome preparatory process and stand-alone event would not be in the interest of any stakeholder group.

Thank you for your consideration of the views of global business on this important matter.

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 120 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

About BASIS

ICC created BASIS to raise awareness among the public, governments, civil society, intergovernmental organizations and technical community of what business requires to continue contributing to the development of the Information Society. It serves as the voice of business in the global dialogue on the Information Society, following two World Summits on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005).

To promote the environment in which business around the world will continue to thrive as an innovator of information and communication technologies, BASIS participates in UN-linked forums set up to continue the dialogue, such as the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and the WSIS follow up and implementation processes, and the UN Global Alliance for ICTs and development (GAID).

To help shape the agenda and participate in these global discussions, BASIS relies on the policies developed in the ICC Commission on E-business, IT and Telecoms as the foundation for its efforts.

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 WSIS.

BASIS members include business organizations such as the TechAmerica, World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA), Africa Investor, Global Information Infrastructure Commission (GIIC), Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren), and the Association for Competitive Technology (ACT) as well as several ICC national committees and companies from across sectors and geographies.

For further information regarding BASIS, the founding partners, members and activities, visit: www.iccwbo.org/basis