

## **ICC BASIS opening remarks at WSIS action lines Forum, 14 May 2012, Geneva**

### **John Davies, Intel, ICC BASIS member**

Excellencies, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen.

I am pleased to provide these opening remarks on behalf of the International Chamber of Commerce and its Business Action to Support the Information Society initiative also known as BASIS. The WSIS's Tunis Agenda established the action lines and recognized the important role of all relevant stakeholders in promoting a people centred inclusive information society. We thank all the WSIS action lines facilitators, ITU, UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD for their continued focus on how the action lines contribute to this shared goal.

This forum will bring useful information about practical experiences at local and national levels to learn from each other about what works, what are the challenges and ideas to address them. Finding ways to expand the successful initiatives must be our shared priority to fulfil the purpose of the action lines.

### **ICC/BASIS background**

The ICC was founded in 1919 with a fundamental goal of serving worldwide business by promoting trade and investment, open markets for goods and services, and the free flow of capital.

The membership spans SMEs to fortune 500 companies, as well as business and trade associations across 120 countries.

BASIS was established in 2006 to continue to bring the voice and views of business to the post-WSIS activities such as the WSIS action lines Forum, the Internet Governance Forum, and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to help build an Information Society that brings the benefits of ICTs and the Internet to even more people around the world.

### **Global business and the post-WSIS activities**

This week, once again, ICC and BASIS members will be actively participating in the meetings. It is important to protect the WSIS action lines Forum and IGF consultation week, and we thank the facilitators for their diligence and commitment this year and looking ahead. We look forward to seeing many of you at the IGF consultations and CSTD meetings as well.

The WSIS action lines Forum is a special opportunity where we can share experiences about initiatives that are helping at local and national levels---where tangible impact and change take place that is beyond policy debates. Implementation of the WSIS action lines is critical to businesses around the world both in developing and developed countries. The action lines, as a key aspect of the WSIS outcomes, should continue to focus on their unique purposes and functions, which are vitally important to the achievement of the MDGs and the continued development of a people-centred information society

### **Impact of ICTs on achieving the action lines' promises**

As we work towards bringing the benefits of the Information Society to more people around the world, the tangible impact of ICTs on economic growth and opportunity is a shared objective. According to an Oxford Economics study undertaken in 2011, governments play a pivotal role in fostering ICT investment and use and there is a positive correlation between countries with friendly ICT policies and productivity output. Simply put, countries with effective ICT policies tend to have higher productivity and countries with ineffective ICT policies tend to have lower productivity.

Innovations such as pervasive mobile services, broadband Internet and cloud computing create unprecedented opportunities and prosperity particularly for developing countries, and the critical role ICTs and the Internet have in transforming all industry sectors toward a sustainable green economy is clear.

Achieving the action lines requires cooperation and dialogue between policymakers, business and other relevant stakeholders to put in place the necessary policy, legal and regulatory conditions that promote investment in ICTs and the Internet. Business support can inspire and inform others about the use of ICTs in key areas such as e-environment, e-education among other applications.

### **Conclusion**

Coming together in Geneva at what has become known as WSIS week in May has become a tradition that is a priority for stakeholders. ICC and BASIS thank the organizing agencies for their support of this important co-alignment of the WSIS action lines Forum and IGF open consultation and MAG meetings. I wish all of us a productive week!