



International Chamber of Commerce

The world business organization

An ICC initiative

BASIS

Business Action to Support
the Information Society

CSTD opening ceremony 21 May 2007

Talking points for Guy Sebban, ICC Secretary General

- Excellencies, distinguished delegates, representatives from business and civil society, ladies and gentlemen,
 - On behalf of the global business community represented by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), and its initiative, Business Action to Support the Information Society (BASIS), I would like to express my appreciation to CSTD Chairman, Ambassador Štefan Morávek, Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the CSTD for inviting me to provide remarks as this meeting of the CSTD begins.
 - As recent World Bank figures show, we are making progress in reducing global poverty, and business has been playing a key role in this task, by boosting economic growth and creating jobs - something that is now well understood here at the UN.
 - But there is still a long way to go to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and to meet one of the goals in particular – building a more inclusive information society and providing access to information and communications technologies, one of the world’s most powerful drivers of economic growth.
 - To that end, the World Summits on the Information Society---with ITU as the lead UN agency, served an important purpose, by gathering together civil society, business, technical experts, governments and intergovernmental organizations to address these goals.
 - This can only be achieved through the concerted efforts of all of these actors.
- Business role:
- Business played an important part at the WSIS summit, supplying its expertise and experiences, and contributing to the global dialogue. Business is essential to this process, since it is a key investor and innovator in these technologies.
 - The Tunis Agenda, the outcome of the WSIS in Tunis, is the background for today’s discussion –how to keep the momentum going on.

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- Business is a major supporter of the WSIS outcomes – and of the need to continue the multistakeholder participation in the forums which emerged from the WSIS
- Business is also a key partner in creating an enabling environment where these technologies can be developed – which need the right policies and legal approaches for investment and competition to flourish.
- UNCTAD research has shown that ICTs had a positive impact on growth in developing countries, using ICTs skills and investment as the basis for the measurements [From UNCTAD background paper, using ICTs to achieve growth and development]
- UNCTAD also found high and significant returns on ICTs across sectors, especially in developing countries, and indicated the potential for job creation and development resulting from the adoption of ICTs by small companies in developing countries.
- These findings underscore the impact business can have in helping to fully utilize ICTs for growth and development, given the right conditions.

How the business community is organized:

- Since the conclusion of the WSIS in Tunis in 2005, the International Chamber of Commerce has created a vehicle to continue to bring business experience and participation to the global forums on the Internet and ICT issues, Business Action to Support the Information Society, or BASIS. ICC has a lot of experience and expertise in these technologies and has for decades offered practical intelligence through the policies and tools developed by its Commission on E-Business, IT and Telecoms.
- BASIS is a vehicle for companies, and a grouping of business associations and federations who have decided to work together to share their experience and priorities with other stakeholders.
- BASIS has also assumed a major role in these forums. We sat down with leaders of Silicon Valley companies, through the UN's Global Alliance for ICT and Development, to find ways to further engage the industry on how to more effectively bring these technologies to developing countries.
- We are actively engaged in the Internet Governance Forum, where we are urging an emphasis on human and institutional capacity building and greater skills development as a way to ensure the benefits of the Internet for more people, and broader participation in Internet governance issues. ICC/BASIS actively participated in the first IGF in Athens and applauded this first effort as a real success. We will bring business expertise and perspectives to the IGF in Rio later this year.
- The important role of tracking and serving as a catalyst for the WSIS outcomes is the mission of ECOSOC, with input from the Commission on Science and



Technology for Development, and the organizers of the various outcomes from the UN agencies such as ITU and UNESCO and other stakeholder groups particularly regarding the implementation and WSIS action lines.

- CSTD can serve an important function by helping to assemble all the undertakings and assist the UN's Economic and Social Council in reviewing progress.
- As we all know, and our distinguished representatives from national governments who are with us today know well, when it comes to implementation of the fundamental commitments from WSIS, the national governments have a critical role to fulfill.
- Together, all stakeholders will play an important part in making further progress to put the words of the WSIS commitments into deeds, to bring the benefits of the Information Society to more people around the world.

I wish you great success for the meetings this week. Thank you for your attention.