



International Chamber of Commerce

The world business organization

ICC Statement on

Information and Communication Technologies and the Internet for Economic Growth and Social Development

*On the occasion of ICC 35th World Congress
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International Chamber of Commerce

38, Cours Albert 1er, 75008 Paris, France

Telephone +33 1 49 53 28 28 Fax +33 1 49 53 28 59

Web site www.iccwbo.org E-mail icc@iccwbo.org



An Enabling Environment for ICTs

ICC has long recognized the economic and social benefits of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the Internet. In order for ICTs and the Internet to reach their full potential as engines for economic growth and social development, ICC encourages all governments to develop an enabling environment that promotes competition and private sector investment. In turn, the private sector will continue to play its critical role in building and deploying the necessary infrastructures and innovating and developing applications and content.

Several fundamental elements of such an enabling environment are:

- intellectual property rights protection;
- stable and predictable legal systems;
- trade liberalization;
- education and capacity building;
- technology neutrality; and
- a regulatory framework which promotes competition and fosters entrepreneurship.

The Internet

ICC welcomes the discussions on Internet Governance within the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS 2003 Geneva, 2005 Tunis). The WSIS process has confirmed that governments from all regions of the world and all levels of development are embracing the Internet and the benefits it brings to economies, societies and individuals.

ICC also believes that issues related to the management of the Internet must exploit its decentralized nature and historical creation. The standards development process and technical coordination of the Internet's names and numbers system is one of collaboration and cooperation among expert organizations, often driven by a multi-stakeholder led private sector process with input from governments. This process has served the global community well, resulting in the fastest deployment of a technology in history. Given the success of this private sector led process to date, ICC supports it as the best approach for managing the Internet standards development and technical coordination in the future. We look forward to working with all governments to ensure that they can participate meaningfully and be full partners in these processes.

Public policy is the rightful domain of government discourse and action. Policies related to the Internet are both national and international. Domestic policy matters should be developed by governments in consultation with all stakeholders. Often, self-regulation is the most appropriate public policy option in an environment of competition and rapidly changing technology. Public policies of an international nature are coordinated through numerous existing international bodies such as the WTO, WIPO, UNCITRAL, UNESCO, ITU, OECD, APEC and CITELE. These expert bodies should be the fora where future substantive discussions on policy issues are addressed in keeping with their current mandate.

We need to minimize redundancies and promote collaboration and coordination among the existing organizations and expert bodies to best utilize the limited resources of all.



The UN Secretary-General's Working Group on Internet Governance

The UN Secretary-General's Working Group on Internet Governance should recognize the above and ICC believes it should focus on the following key actions:

- Complete a matrix of issues and the organizations addressing them. We are pleased to provide a matrix that the ICC has developed as a starting point for this exercise.
- Identify policy issues that may not be adequately addressed by an existing expert body and propose a process for allocating responsibility for those aspects that are not being adequately addressed.
- Identify methods for sustainable and meaningful participation from all stakeholders, particularly representatives from the developing world – both governments and non-government stakeholders – in existing expert bodies, consistent with their mission and competency. This would include:
 - a) awareness-raising initiatives;
 - b) capacity-building efforts; and
 - c) innovative mechanisms for participation
- Identify mechanisms to promote greater coordination among the existing expert bodies to prevent duplication, and promote cooperation and collaboration.

Over and above these four elements, we believe that the UN, through the appropriate bodies, could play an important role in raising awareness among governments and other stakeholders on important issues by utilizing the existing materials developed and provided by expert bodies. These issues include authentication, trade liberalization, security of information systems and networks, and cross-border fraud.

ICC looks forward to continuing to work with the UN and others to promote continued progress toward a global information society for all.

The UN Secretary-General's ICT Task Force on Financing

The following elements are critical to address financing needs in a sustainable manner:

- The approach to financing must be holistic and should include public/private partnerships to build access in the short and medium term. However, long-term affordable access to ICTs and the needed infrastructure will only be realized through the development of an enabling environment that promotes competition and private sector investment.
- Business is supportive of an assessment or study to evaluate the effectiveness of existing funding mechanisms to ensure a fact-based approach to future discussions on this issue.
- Business contributes to capacity building through numerous initiatives that maximize private sector experience and expertise.
- One of the key objectives of infrastructure and e-commerce development initiatives should be “sustainability” in serving the needs of people and societies. It is the view of business for consideration by this Task Force that such development oriented ICT initiatives, in order to be sustainable, must be demand and market driven. This can enable initial outside-supported catalytic action to launch self-sustaining local programmes. The blueprints planning for such initiatives should include real or projected benefits or revenues as a measure of their genuine usefulness and sustainability.



- Business urges that the second phase of WSIS build upon the experience of phase one to ensure progress in the organization of phase two.

The WSIS outcomes documents support the participation of all stakeholders in the financing issues.

Business recommendations and actions regarding financing and funding matters:

- Business, through its numerous initiatives as noted above, is a critical partner in capacity building and its initiatives should be considered as part of the analysis of the Task Force. Therefore, we believe that business should be a full partner in the assessment and development of the report that is called for in the WSIS Plan of Action.
- Business is prepared to contribute time and resources to actively participate in the work of the UN Secretary General's task force on these issues and seeks formal nomination to this task force.
- Business urges the consideration of the elements outlined in this section by all stakeholders and the UN Secretary General's task force on financing.
- Given the critical role of the private sector in developing and deploying such infrastructure and the numerous private sector initiatives, this Task Force should include full participation of the private sector.

To contribute to the ongoing debate, ICC will do the following:

- ICC will continue to develop substantive input to help raise awareness about and clarify which issues are being addressed by existing intergovernmental, international and other expert bodies.
- ICC will strengthen its efforts to provide substantive guidance and recommendations on the necessary legal, policy and regulatory frameworks that promote the maximization of ICT and Internet use.
- ICC's advisory committee on Internet governance and the members of ICC's commission on E-business, IT and Telecoms will develop ideas and proposals to address the issue of participation in existing expert bodies.
- ICC will work with other stakeholders to identify mechanisms to facilitate sustainable and meaningful participation from all stakeholders, particularly representatives from the developing world – both governments and non-government stakeholders – in existing expert bodies, consistent with their mission and competency.
- ICC will work with other stakeholders to address the need for collective learning, raising awareness and building capacity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Cattau', with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

Maria Livanos Cattau
ICC Secretary General

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Talal Abu-Ghazaleh', with a large, stylized initial 'T'.

Talal Abu-Ghazaleh
Chair, ICC Commission on
E-Business, IT and Telecoms (EBITT)

The International Chamber of Commerce

ICC is the world business organization, the only representative body that speaks with authority on behalf of enterprises from all sectors in every part of the world.

ICC promotes an open international trade and investment system and the market economy. Its conviction that trade is a powerful force for peace and prosperity dates from the organization's origins early in the last century. The small group of far-sighted business leaders who founded ICC called themselves "the merchants of peace".

Because its member companies and associations are themselves engaged in international business, ICC has unrivalled authority in making rules that govern the conduct of business across borders. Although these rules are voluntary, they are observed in countless thousands of transactions every day and have become part of the fabric of international trade.

ICC also provides essential services, foremost among them the ICC International Court of Arbitration, the world's leading arbitral institution.

Within a year of the creation of the United Nations, ICC was granted consultative status at the highest level with the UN and its specialized agencies.

Business leaders and experts drawn from the ICC membership establish the business stance on broad issues of trade and investment policy as well as on vital technical and sectoral subjects. These include financial services, information technologies, telecommunications, marketing ethics, the environment, transportation, competition law and intellectual property, among others.

ICC was founded in 1919. Today it groups thousands of member companies and associations from over 130 countries. National committees work with their members to address the concerns of business in their countries and convey to their governments the business views formulated by ICC.



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