

Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)

CCBI/ICC preliminary input for submission to national governments

31 March 2006

Global business' preliminary input on WSIS Tunis Agenda paragraphs 69-71 regarding "enhanced cooperation" and key priorities regarding Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

Introduction

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Tunis, November 2005, Tunis Agenda outlines the establishment of an Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and enhanced cooperation amongst existing organizations that address Internet related issues.

The Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI) and International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) urge that the formation of the IGF and any process towards enhanced cooperation between existing organizations be consistent with the Tunis Agenda and key principles described below. Governments already agreed in the Tunis Agenda that any enhanced cooperation "will involve all stakeholders in their respective roles". Such cooperation must, of course, also be fully consistent with the WSIS mandate that Internet governance be "multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations." ¹

¹ 'Enhanced cooperation'

WSIS Tunis Agenda text Paragraphs 69-71

69. *We further recognize the need for enhanced cooperation in the future, to enable governments, on an equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities, in international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet, but not in the day-to-day technical and operational matters, that do not impact on international public policy issues.*

70. *Using relevant international organizations, such cooperation should include the development of globally-applicable principles on public policy issues associated with the coordination and management of critical Internet resources. In this regard, **we call upon** the organizations responsible for essential tasks associated with the Internet to contribute to creating an environment that facilitates this development of public policy principles.*

71. *The process towards enhanced cooperation, to be started by the UN Secretary-General, involving all relevant organizations by the end of the first quarter of 2006, will involve all stakeholders in their respective roles, will proceed as quickly as possible consistent with legal process, and will be responsive to innovation. Relevant organizations should commence a process towards enhanced cooperation involving all stakeholders, proceeding as quickly as possible and responsive to innovation. The same relevant organizations shall be requested to provide annual performance reports.*

Key business priorities regarding enhanced cooperation

Paragraph 71 of the Tunis Agenda clearly states that “all stakeholders” and “all relevant organizations” should be involved in the “enhanced cooperation” process. This principle of inclusiveness is critically important to success in achieving “enhanced cooperation”.

- We believe that ‘enhanced cooperation’ refers to greater cooperation among existing organizations, not the creation of new entities.
- Enhanced cooperation amongst the relevant organizations that address Internet related issues should be guided by the objective of information sharing, creating more awareness and where appropriate, coherence in work programmes and collaboration.
- Enhanced cooperation should be facilitated across the spectrum of all relevant organizations including those that are private sector-led, those that are intergovernmental (IGOs) and those that are multistakeholder.
- The dynamic nature of the Information Society and the Internet are such that new or additional groups will emerge that should be allowed to be part of this enhanced cooperation process. In keeping with the Tunis Agenda principle of inclusiveness, “All relevant organizations” should not be interpreted as a snapshot in time.
- The fact that many of the organizations that are addressing Internet-related issues and their decision-making processes are already multistakeholder should be recognized since this can be an important foundation for enhanced cooperation.
- Business, given its expertise, should be involved on an equal footing, in any discussions or decisions regarding ‘enhanced cooperation’.

Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

On the multistakeholder advisory group

- We are pleased by the establishment of a multistakeholder advisory group for the IGF, as required by the Tunis Agenda.
- It is vital however, that this single, integrated multistakeholder group includes all stakeholder groups, on an equal footing. Indeed, participation on an equal footing is a fundamental principle that should guide all aspects of the IGF – including attendance, representation, leadership, access, operations – from now through any and all IGF meetings.
- All operational decisions regarding the IGF should be made by the single, integrated multistakeholder group.
- There should be an equal number of government, business, civil society and technical community members; perhaps 5 from each of the four groups -- governments, business, civil society and the technical community. This view echoes the Government of Canada’s call for “an equal number of representatives from each” of the stakeholder groups.

- Business cautions against the bureaucratization of this advisory group which will diminish its efficiency. Limiting the size of this advisory group is essential to ensure that this group will be effective.
- Setting aside half of the positions in the new group for governments, however, and allocating the rest for "others," to include representatives from business, civil society and the technical community, would not be consistent with the spirit of Tunis, particularly its call for the "full involvement" of all stakeholders. Instead, each stakeholder group should be able to recommend an equal number of persons for the group.
- Decisions on the formation of the group, and the selection process for it should be done in consultation with each stakeholder group: government, business, civil society, and the technical community. Otherwise, there could be a lack of transparency in the process which could raise concerns.
- Our proposed criteria for selection of individual members includes:
 - experience
 - expertise
 - ability to outreach to broader stakeholder group
- Flexibility for members of the group to be rotated as the Government of Australia has suggested should be taken into account in its formation. While reappointment should be possible for one year, it is very important that the group remain dynamic and reflect current IGF work.
- We remain cognizant of the need to have experts in the topics under consideration participate in the discussions of the IGF and would of course suggest that any discussion or terms or tenures take into account the need for subject matter expertise in the advisory group for future IGF events.
- Business envisions a process whereby CCBI/ICC, for instance, could put forward the names of business representatives/candidates, with biographical information to demonstrate their capacity to contribute to the work of this group effectively, consult with a broader business community, and to reflect geographical and sectoral diversity.
- The UN Secretary General could consider and draw upon the recommended business candidates in his selection process.
- Business suggests that IGO perspectives should be present in the IGF through the government representatives, i.e. as one of their representatives or as part of the broader group to which government representatives would outreach/consult. If IGOs are invited to the group's meetings, then other international bodies that may not be represented in the group should also be invited on the same basis.

On possible themes for the first IGF meeting in Athens

- In Athens, discussions should be concentrated on a single topic, or a limited set of topics that are closely related, that is important to development of the Internet and can help to bring the benefits of the Internet to all people. We agree fully with the views expressed by the Government of Canada that "one or two issues" should be discussed.

- Focus should be on discussion of those topics that could truly benefit from further outreach, information exchange and human capacity building at the global level amongst all stakeholders. To be effective and attract leaders and experts, the first event in Athens and any IGF events in the future should treat a specific topic in-depth and not attempt to open discussion of a plethora of issues.
- The IGF consultations in February 2006 generated inputs concerning a broad range of possible topics for consideration as the focus of the first IGF event. While no specific topics have been decided on, it is clear that the topics will require differing experts and that those on the IGF programme/agenda, for example, the speakers, panellists etc, must reflect the expertise required for the topic under consideration.
- We strongly endorse the focus on human capacity building in the Tunis Agenda and at the consultations 16-17 February 2006 in Geneva, and suggest that it is the fundamental basis for progress on all other issues in the IGF and for the Information Society. Thus, it could be the ideal first topic upon which to focus IGF attention.
- Human capacity building is cross-cutting, multi-dimensional and could benefit greatly from a global level exchange of information, best practices and experiences. It could also benefit from more partnership initiatives that could be forged at the IGF.

IGF Format

- Attracting global experts and leaders from around the world requires that the IGF be attractive in many respects:
 - Duration – 2-3 day substantive IGF programme could be more easily fit into their already busy schedules. Having a 2-3 day event would also focus the programme to the benefit of all attendees. It is possible that the host might organize other ICT-related activities in conjunction with the event for those who could participate.
 - Programme – opening and closing plenaries with an intervening series of panel sessions of experts addressing the various aspects of the selected IGF topic would allow all participants, including those from small delegations, to attend and gain from all portions of the event.

Additional priorities

- The limited human and financial resources of all stakeholders must be considered in the planning of any future consultations and meetings related to the IGF.
- We view as essential, the use of online tools to facilitate communication on all aspects of IGF planning and operations, and the use of webcasting, real-time transcripts, and other online tools to facilitate participation in the IGF event itself.

WHAT IS THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF BUSINESS INTERLOCUTORS (CCBI)?

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) was held during the week of 8 December 2003 in Geneva, culminating in the Summit segment on 10-12 December 2003. The second part of this Summit took place from 16 to 18 November 2005 in Tunisia.

Principals of the Summit host countries and executive secretariat invited the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) to create the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI) as a vehicle through which to mobilize and coordinate the involvement of the worldwide business community in the processes leading to and culminating in the Summit. ICC and the CCBI group led the private-sector effort to provide substantive input into the first phase of the Summit, and mobilized the private sector to participate in the preparatory phases and at the Summit itself.

The business community has decided to maintain a role for CCBI with regard to follow-up from the WSIS and its outcomes.

Among the organizations actively involved in the work of the CCBI, in addition to ICC, are: Asociacion Hispanoamericana de Centros de Investigacion y Empresas de Telecomunicaciones; Brazilian Chamber of Electronic Commerce; Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD; CABASE; CompTIA; E-COM LAC; French Publishers Association; Global Business Dialogue on Electronic Commerce; Global Information Infrastructure Commission; International Publishers Association; Latin-American Information Technology Association; The Computer Society of Kenya; United States Council on International Business; World Information Technology and Services Alliance.

For further information regarding CCBI, please consult the WSIS website at: <http://www.itu.int/wsis/index.html>
the CCBI website at www.businessatwsis.net
or ICC's website at: <http://www.iccwbo.org/policy/ebitt/id2343/index.html>
or contact wsis@iccwbo.org

ABOUT ICC

ICC is the world business organization, a representative body that speaks with authority on behalf of enterprises from all sectors in every part of the world. The fundamental mission of ICC is to promote trade and investment across frontiers and help business corporations meet the challenges and opportunities of globalization. Business leaders and experts drawn from the ICC membership establish the business stance on broad issues of trade and investment, e-business, IT and telecoms policy as well as on vital technical and sectoral subjects. ICC was founded in 1919 and today it groups thousands of member companies and associations from over 130 countries.

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