



International Chamber of Commerce

*The world business organization*

An ICC initiative

**BASIS**

Business Action to Support  
the Information Society

## **General ICC BASIS intervention on IGF Rio topics 23 May 2007 by Ayesha Hassan**

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*Geneva, 23 May 2007*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman; my name is Ayesha Hassan representing the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and its initiative, Business Action to Support the Information Society (BASIS). We very much appreciate this opportunity to provide our views at this informal Consultation for the November 2007 Internet Governance Forum on how we believe the Forum can be structured and conducted. These build upon our comments of January 12, 2007 on the format and practical recommendations, entitled "ICC/BASIS Feedback on IGF Athens" that are attached to our written contribution to this meeting that can be found at the back of the room, and on the IGF and ICC websites.

This first ICC/BASIS intervention will provide some general views regarding the 2007 IGF and our desire to have it contribute to creating an open, inclusive, people-centric, development oriented Information Society. Later we will discuss our thoughts on some of the specific topics that have been proposed for the meeting in Rio de Janeiro and how they might seek to achieve that objective.

Business once more re-iterates its strong belief that the IGF should focus on helping to spread the benefits of the Information Society to more people and involving more people in Internet related issues at the national, regional and international levels. In addition, given the IGF time constraints, it should allocate its time on matters that can benefit from the opportunity to share information about activities underway in many organizations.

We think that the first IGF was successful in this regard, and part of that was due to the form and format, one being having sessions addressing broad topics that related to the ability to provide an inclusive people centric information society, and two by having a format that stimulated free and open discussions recognizing that there would not be a need to prepare and negotiate a text, as has been noted in the written contribution of the Internet Society which states "Athens worked because it was multilateral, multi-stakeholder, democratic and transparent. And, it was an open environment free of the intergovernmental pressures of negotiated texts and political manoeuvring. Suggestions that might change the structure and nature of the IGF for Rio or future meetings need to be approached with great caution and carefully measured against both the IGF's mandate and paragraph 77 of the Tunis Agenda." ICC/BASIS joins this approach.

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The ICC/BASIS, therefore, suggests that the following questions should be answered positively, and to add value for participants, in considering candidate topics for the November 2007 IGF:

1. Will discussion of this topic at the IGF contribute positively to ensuring a people-centric, development oriented Information Society?
2. Will discussion of this topic at the IGF contribute to increasing the number of people who can contribute or access information using ICTs? And,
3. Will discussion of this topic at the IGF help coordinate efforts that are already underway in multiple other forums and not duplicate discussions in another venue that is already addressing the topic?

ICC/BASIS believes that the answer to all of these questions should be “yes” regarding a topic before it is placed among the topics on the agenda for the second IGF.

In addition, ICC/BASIS makes the following general observations and proposals to assist in planning the November 2007 IGF meeting since the format of the main sessions will have an impact on how the topics are approached, and on the value provided to participants:

- A. ICC/BASIS believes that the cross-cutting theme of human and institutional capacity building should feature in all of the main meeting sessions, and urges a true integration of concrete capacity building elements in the agenda for the IGF in Rio.
- B. A comprehensive approach to highlighting existing best practices and those under development in other forums on all of the main meeting themes is essential to respond to the input of many participants from all stakeholder groups, and in particular from developing countries. Best practices and lessons learned are not a separate subject and thus must be part of each main session, which will also ensure that the IGF discussions are not duplicative.
- C. Business supports one reporting session that gives organizations that are addressing Internet governance related issues the opportunity to update the IGF community and each other on developments as a way of building, understanding and helping to raise awareness of developments in key Internet related organizations.
- D. The IGF should provide a place for stakeholders to get up to date information regarding issues being addressed in existing organizations or which cut across several different organizations in one reporting session. This session can thus be complimentary to the discussions in the main meetings and avoid the duplication of discussions taking place in other forums.
- E. Business believes that the four main topics of security, access, openness and diversity cover a broad range of Internet governance issues, and that building on the discussions that took place at the IGF in Athens will be important to make the second IGF productive with further exchange on these important issues which have by no means been completed.



- F. Business recommends putting the main meeting discussions on openness and security on the same day, followed by discussions on access and diversity on the same day. This would provide a coherent approach to the interrelationship of each of these two sets of broad topics.
- G. Business supports the idea of having the IGF secretariat suggest subjects for the main workshops, to supplement the main themes, and to encourage different stakeholders to express an interest in working collaboratively to organize them. The number of all types of workshops should be limited so that people will have time to attend them and they should all be well advertised in advance.
- H. Business supports having the emerging issues session towards the end of the IGF in Rio to most effectively highlight new issues that may be discussed throughout the event.
- I. The IGF will benefit greatly--both in terms of the quality of the sessions and the interest the IGF generates---if the programme is solidified and “anchor” participants in sessions are confirmed and publicized by the end of June.
- J. One of the benefits of an annual IGF is that it presents opportunities for new technologies and applications as well as best practices and lessons learned to be presented as real, successful projects or programmes. These should be introduced into our discussions.

Mr Chairman, ICC/BASIS members believe that the general observations and proposals that we have just offered should allow the November IGF in Rio de Janeiro to build upon the success of the first IGF in Athens. Furthermore, we think that the questions that we have identified and proposed are important to answer positively in considering topics for the second IGF to ensure that it achieves the important objective of contributing to an open, inclusive, people-centric, development-oriented Information Society.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



## **What is Business Action to Support the Information Society (BASIS)?**

ICC created BASIS to serve as the voice of business in the global dialogue on the Information Society, following the two World Summits on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005). BASIS participates in UN-linked forums set up to continue the dialogue, such as the Global Alliance for ICT and development (GAID), the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and the WSIS follow-up and implementation processes.

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 the Summits in Geneva and Tunis.

To promote the environment in which global business will continue to thrive as an innovator of these technologies, BASIS mobilizes business to help shape the agenda and participate in these global discussions. The initiative aims to unite the business community, to raise awareness among the public, governments, civil society, intergovernmental organizations and technical authorities of what business requires to continue contributing to the development of the Information Society. BASIS relies on policies developed in ICC's Commission on E-business, IT and Telecoms (EBITT) as the foundation for its efforts.

For further information regarding BASIS, the founding partners, members and activities, please consult the BASIS website at: <http://www.iccwbo.org/basis>.

### **About ICC**

The International Chamber of Commerce is the largest, most representative business organization in the world. Its thousands of member companies in over 130 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](http://www.iccwbo.org)