

World Summit on the Information Society
**The Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors
(CCBI)**

Intersessional Meeting 17 July 2003

INTERVENTION 4

**by Ayesha Hassan, Senior Policy Manager,
International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)**

Thank you Madame Chair, Mr President, Mr Secretary General and distinguished participants.

On behalf of CCBI, given the ongoing discussions among governments on the internet names and numbering system and software development models, business feels it is important to reiterate our views on these important issues.

One, the technical coordination of the internet names and numbering system. Business would like to first respectfully request that governments distinguish between the technical coordination of the internet and other policy matter. We recognize the important role government has in policy development in this area through consultation with all stakeholders.

ICANN, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, represents a multi-stakeholder process which is led by the private sector. ICANN's governmental advisory committee affords governments an opportunity to coordinate views and to provide meaningful input to the ICANN process.

Business strongly supports continued private sector leadership of the technical coordination of the internet and this cannot accept a reference to intergovernmental organizations assuming this role. Private sector leadership is very important given the fast changing and dynamic nature of technological progress.

Finally, we feel it is important to note that the technical coordination functions and providers of internet names and numbers must comply with the laws to which they are subject. Two software development models on Open Standards and Open Source Software.

At the outset we would like to note that the corporate members of CCBI include companies that employ and support both open source and proprietary software models. All of our members subscribe to the following views. Unfortunately, the draft documents fail to recognize the distinction between open standards and open source software.

An open standard is a technical specification whereas open source is a software development model, which like any other software development model, may or may not implement open standards.

Standards do not require either proprietary or open source software for their adoption or utility, and in some cases may combine technology or intellectual property developed under both software development models. Furthermore, when these standards are open and available to all through reasonable and non-discriminatory licensing, they help all developers create products that inter-operate with each other.

Therefore, governmental policy on software standards should not discriminate in favour of or against any particular software development model.

Specifically relating to *standards* any reference to them should recognize that they should be voluntary, international, consensus-based and industry-led.

Specifically relating to *Open Source Software* business recognizes that governments have legitimate concerns about reducing costs associated with software. However, governments should bear in mind that open and competitive procurement policies avoid market distorting effects and result in greater competition that benefits governments and citizens in the long term. Therefore, as a general matter, multilateral government declarations, including that of WSIS, should remain neutral with respect to different technologies and modes of technology development. However, if they do, they should remain neutral as to all software development models, promoting competition and choice.

Thank you for your attention.