

Statement of the Civil Society Internet Governance Caucus WSIS InterSessional Meeting, Paris, July, 16, 2003, as spoken by Wolfgang Kleinwaechter

Madam chair, dear delegates,

The Civil Society Internet governance caucus would like to bring to your attention Item 44 of the Declaration of principles and Item 33 of the Action Plan. Civil Society would like to propose more precise language to describe this issue.

Governance issues related to the Internet, primarily the technical coordination of internet identifiers, protocols and root servers, is a complex challenge which needs a complex reaction and has to include all stakeholders - civil society, private industry and governments. No single body and no single stakeholder group is able to manage these challenges alone.

This multistakeholder approach should be the guiding principle both for the technical coordination of the Internet as well as for broader public policy issues, related to cyberspace in general.

We recognize that the "Internet Tradition" of community decision-making, characterized by the IETF motto "rough consensus and running code", has involved bottom up processes since the inception of the Internet.

The development of policies and frameworks in this context must continue to be a bottom-up process. This bottom up policy development process (PDP) should be as inclusive as possible, transparent and open for participation by all interested parties, in particular for civil society and individual Internet users. In every country, management of Internet resources and related public policy should be built in the interest of and in consensus with the national Internet communities.

We see NO need to for any INTER-GOVERNMENTAL organization to take responsibility for management of the domain names and the IP addresses, but we see a need for ongoing improvement of the existing structures and mechanisms. Regardless of achievements which has been reached so far, there is, to use the words of Jon Postel, the "Father of the Domain Name System", "a lot to do in this interesting world, we live in". There is a need for more openness and transparency, for more participation in and democratization of decision making. There is a need for better coordination, consultation and communication. And there is a need to hand over the control of the Internet Root Server System to the Global Internet community.

Additionally, civil society would welcome having organizations dealing with public policy issues of the Internet improve their cooperation and coordination and include all stakeholders, in particular civil society, in their policy development processes.

In a broader context of ICT policy making and global governance, we invite the WSIS to consider launching a "Global Information Society Observation Council" which could serve as a meeting point for improved coordination, consultation and communication on ICT issues. Such a "Council" should be composed of representatives of governments, private industry and civil society. It could promote the exchange of information, experiences and best practices on issues from privacy to free speech on the Internet, from IPR to eCommerce, from Ipv6 to ENUM. Listening to the good experiences of others is a cheap investment and could become a source of inspiration for innovative policy development in the 21st Century.

We will provide the WSIS secretariat with a new proposed language for the Items 33 and 44. I thank you for your attention.