Coordinating Committee of Buisness Interlocutors (CCBI)

INPUT ON 'POLITICAL CHAPEAU' AND OPERATIONAL PART OF THE
FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE SECOND PHASE OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON
THE INFORMATION SOCIETY-TUNIS (NOVEMBER 2005)

Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI)
World Summit on the Information Society, WSIS
Tunis, 16 – 18 November 2005

Input on 'political chapeau' and operational part of the final document of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society-Tunis (November 2005)
1 February 2005

The members of CCBI appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the 'political chapeau' and operational part of the document drafted by the 'Group of the friends of the Chair'.

Political Chapeau [11 January 2005 Version]

The draft resulting from the second meeting of the 'Group of the friends of the Chair' rightly emphasizes the importance of all stakeholders in fulfilling the objectives of the Geneva Declaration and Plan of Action, calling on all stakeholders to work together towards these ends. However, the equal role of the private sector should be particularly acknowledged in changing the 'digital divide' to digital opportunities.

We also offer the following specific comments on the 11 January, 2005 text:

- We note that the political chapeau will be approved in the WSIS Plenary in Tunis and thus we believe that it is best described as a commitment by "representatives of governments of the world".

- We suggest that the first sentence of the second paragraph be modified for clarity to read: "The Tunis Summit represents a unique opportunity to increase optimism regarding the future by focusing on concepts that challenge traditional assumptions and which promote an environment that can transform peoples' activities, interactions and lives for the better, globally."

- We recommend the addition of a reference in paragraph 7 to stimulating economic growth as a precondition to enable the other factors, and a reference to the important role of business in stimulating economic growth. Conditions that discourage economic growth and investment inhibit human, social and infrastructure development and growth.

- We urge that whatever formulation is chosen for paragraph 11, it include an appropriate reference to people from countries impacted by natural disasters as in alternatives 11A and 11B.

- We commend the 'Group of the friends of the Chair' for recognizing that any process to achieve the Millennium Declaration Goals should have characteristics that include: openness, inclusiveness and transparency; promotion of cooperation among stakeholders and flexibility. However, we suggest that paragraph 14 be modified for clarity to read:

  "We strongly believe that full and timely implementation of decisions we took in Geneva and in Tunis, the establishment of appropriate follow-up mechanisms thereto, and ensuring that this process is open, inclusive, transparent, flexible and promotes co-operation among stakeholders is the way to achieve the goals and overall strategy embodied in the Millennium Declaration. We therefore reaffirm our strong resolve to develop and implement an effective and sustainable response to challenges and opportunities of building a truly global Information Society that benefits all our peoples."

Operational part of document(s) [11 January 2005 text]

CCBI continues to believe that the operational part of the document should focus on showing progress on the commitments made at WSIS-Geneva to complement the Declaration and Plan of Action. In that regard, particular recognition should be given to areas/countries where progress has been made on the commitments in the Declaration and Plan of Action regarding the essentials:
- creation of the necessary environment for ICT infrastructure
- education
- capacity building
- policy, legal and regulatory frameworks that are pro-competitive, spur investment, and foster entrepreneurship, while highlighting the critical need for continued progress in creating enabling environments for investment and fostering entrepreneurship and innovation.

The rule of law, intellectual property protection, liberalized telecommunications infrastructure, and trade commitments should all be recognized as essential components of an enabling environment.

We also offer the following specific comments on the 11 January 2005 text:

- We believe that the term "moderator" is a more appropriate description in connection with each team of stakeholders, since the role would be more as a moderator, a facilitator, and/or a catalyst in stimulating interactions among the various stakeholder representatives who will be accountable to governments, international organizations, civil society groups, intergovernmental organizations, and business entities. This term should be used in paragraphs 10, 11 and the Annex.

- In the discussion of paragraph 25, we recommend that a prime consideration should be creating and maintaining an enabling environment that stimulates investment and economic growth and that does not impose inhibitors to development.

Comments on the follow up mechanism(s)

- In discussing the follow-up mechanism for the Tunis Phase, we suggest that the phrase in paragraph 29 "within the United Nations" be replaced by "related to the United Nations" to encompass the range of options being considered. As CCBI has recommended in past comments, while there should be some forum for dialogue and a mechanism to track progress, formal institutionalization within the UN structure could divert desperately needed resources from action, to continued dialogue.

- Many actors have highlighted the need for a forum for discussion regarding policy and partnership issues related to ICTs and the Information Society. CCBI supports the concept of a forum for discussion to address this need and provide the needed information and place for exchange. We believe that any forum or initiative should be a joint multistakeholder effort. CCBI does not view any forum that may be set up as part of the follow up to WSIS Tunis as having decision-making authority or to be the creation of a new intergovernmental body.

- CCBI members recognize that there will be need for continuous assessment and evaluation of the WSIS Geneva and Tunis protocols as they relate to meeting the MDGs. This is an important consideration in shaping the follow up mechanism or mechanisms.

CCBI looks forward to providing further comments on this document as it develops.

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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 will take place in 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 CCBI, is constituted of the following organizations and their members: Among the organizations actively involved in the work of the CCBI, in addition to ICC, are: Associacion Hispanoamericana de Centros de Investigacion y Empresas de Telecomunicaciones, Brazilian Chamber of Electronic Commerce, the Business Council of the United Nations, Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD; Global Business Dialogue on Electronic Commerce; Global Information Infrastructure Commission; Money Matters Institute; United States Council on International Business; World Economic Forum; World Information Technology and Services Alliance; French Publishers Association; International Publishers Association; and Gobierno Digital.

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/home/e_business/wsis.asp
or contact wsis@iccwbo.org

ABOUT ICC

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. 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.