

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

Intervention by Ayesha Hassan (ICC) on behalf of CCBI

25 February 2005

WSIS Tunis, PrepCom 2

Thank you, Madame Chairman

CCBI remains concerned that governments at PrepCom 2 are welcoming the Digital Solidarity Fund before the originators of the Fund have made clear the principles and processes by which any resources provided by it would be collected and distributed.

In the last several days, some delegates reported that the Fund management leaders had provided assurances that the Fund procedures were consistent with the PrepCom 2 discussion regarding the allocation of the Fund.

With respect to the Fund collection process, Paragraph 27 indicates that the Digital Solidarity Fund is “voluntary in nature” and that contributions will come from “voluntary sources”.

Business looks for assurances from the Fund that all the sources of the funds will contribute solely on a voluntary basis. Business does not consider a mandated percentage of procurement going to the Fund as voluntary.

Business will be monitoring the Fund launch in March 2005 to confirm that the Fund inaugurated there will have the voluntary nature that has been the basis for the consensus developed here.

Alignment at the March Fund launch on topics such as the voluntary nature of the Fund, its accountability, and its allocation will be a strong signal to business and others on whether progress has been made on this issue.

However, for development to be sustainable, we once again stress the importance of an enabling environment since it:

- empowers people,
- facilitates the exercise of freedom of expression and other rights,
- promotes the free flow of information,
- encourages innovation and investment,
- unleashes the entrepreneurial spirit, and
- stimulates productivity for people, society, enterprises and governments.

A voluntary Fund has to be complementary to existing financial mechanisms, especially in providing seed funding to encourage the aggregation of other forms of contributions including in kind.

CCBI would also like to take this opportunity to inform you that the first joint statement of the Civil Society Plenary and the CCBI has been approved. The statement urges a multistakeholder approach to any follow up and implementation for WSIS. It has been approved for tabling and copies will be made available shortly.

Thank you, Madame Chairman.

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: Asociacion 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.