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

Intervention by Ayesha Hassan on behalf of CCBI

21 February 2005
WSIS Tunis, PrepCom 2

Thank you Madame Chairman,

On behalf of the members of the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors for WSIS, I am pleased to provide you with our input the implementation mechanism in the operational part of the text.

On the operational part:

CCBI continues to believe that the operational part 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 propose a change in paragraphs 10,11, as follows: The term "moderator" should be used rather than "coordinator" in paragraphs 10, 11 and the Annex. If this is done, we propose to delete the brackets.

The explanation for this request is that we believe that the term moderator" is a more appropriate description rather than "coordinator" in connection with each team of stakeholders, since CCBI believes the role should 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.

Para 23: We would like to reiterate the importance of technological neutrality with respect to user choice in policy, legal and regulatory frameworks that relate to "free, open source" or proprietary software to ensure that all choices are available to all users.

In discussing the follow-up mechanism for the Tunis Phase, we recommend 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. Given that each representative of a stakeholder is accountable to its membership/constituencies, therefore the convenor cannot be expected to coordinate these work programs. And significant resources could be lost in the process, when the focus should be on enhancing and improving the contribution of work of all of the groups.

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 and multi-stakeholder effort. CCBI does not support that any forum that may be set up as part of the follow up to WSIS Tunis should have operational decision-making authority or to be exclusively intergovernmental body, whether new or existing.

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.

Small groups

We understand that "small groups" may be set up to address particular paragraphs. We strongly believe that any such group, whenever they are established, should include all stakeholders. At a minimum, observers should be allowed to attend the meetings and adequate opportunities should be provided for them to provide input to the discussions.

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

Thank for your attention.

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.

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