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GLOCOM on Behalf of WSIS Civil Society Internet Governance

Contribution on behalf of the WSIS Civil Society Internet Governance
Caucus, submitted by GLOCOM

**Requesting changes to two paragraphs in Chapter Three (DT/10
(Rev. 4)-E)**

We realize that agreed paragraphs are considered closed, however, we note that the whole chapter remains in square brackets and that "agreed" paragraphs were reopened for discussion during the recent intersessional meeting.

The paragraphs we request to change are:

45 c) Civil society has also played an important role on Internet matters, especially at community level, and should continue to play such a role;

and

65. We also underline the importance of countering terrorism in all its forms and manifestations on the Internet, while respecting human rights and in compliance with other obligations under international law, as outlined in UNGA A/60/L.1* with reference to Art. 85 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome. (Agreed)

About paragraph 45 c

The Internet Governance Caucus made a comment during prepcom 3 to Sub-Committee A stating that this description of civil society's role and responsibility with regard to Internet governance was severely lacking, we suggested new text:

43 c. Civil society has played an important role on Internet matters. This role has ranged from capacity building at the community level to the contribution of much of the technological innovation and to the creation of much of the content that makes the Internet what it is today. Civil Society should continue to play such a role.

<<http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs2/pc3/contributions/sca/GLOCOM-22.doc>>

We recognize that the language of para 45 c is from the Geneva Declaration of Principles, but also note that the text was drafted in the closed session held shortly before the Geneva Summit, consequently civil society has not had the opportunity to influence the description of itself as a stakeholder in this process. It is clear that the current text of 45 c does not reflect civil society's past and current role in anything like an adequate and appropriate manner.

The text we read and submitted to Sub-Committee A on September 22 was unfortunately not considered during the meeting of the drafting group established to coordinate work on (then) paragraphs 43-44, and it was also missed from the initial compilation of comments received.

Should the text we suggest not be acceptable, then we note that the EU suggested a more simple change, simply to delete "especially at community level" leaving "Civil society has also played an important role on Internet matters, and should continue to play such a role;"

Our concern is not only that the description of civil society in 45 c is inadequate and misleading, stakeholders roles and responsibilities are referred to throughout the chapter (in the working definition of Internet governance itself, 44, and paras 41, 58, 74, and significantly in the contributions being considered for Section 5, for example para 70 in the Chair's Food For Thought paper "each of them in their field of competence") and we see this as a potentially limiting factor on civil society's future involvement in multi stakeholder processes.

About paragraph 65

"We also underline the importance of countering terrorism in all its forms and manifestations on the Internet, while respecting human rights and in compliance with other obligations under international law, as outlined in UNGA A/60/L.1* with reference to Art. 85 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome."

It is unclear what "manifestations" of terrorism on the Internet would be. The Geneva Declaration and Chapter 3 describe the Internet as a "global facility available to the public"; the manifestations of this global facility are too enormous to imagine. The language is dangerously ambiguous and could open doors for censorship and infringements on freedom of expression. We strongly suggest that this paragraph be deleted.

These comments echo a statement to Sub-Committee A made by the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) on behalf of Civil Society Privacy and Security Working Group and the Civil Society Human Rights Caucus, 29 September 2005
<<http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs2/pc3/contributions/sca/CS-29.doc>>