Government of Barbados

Comments on the Report of the Working Group on Internet Governance

(i)   The Working Group on Internet Governance has discharged its mandate in an extremely efficient manner. From all appearances it has examined the key issues involved in Internet Governance and has produced an excellent report. The Group is therefore to be complimented for the work undertaken;

(ii)   It is clear that the Internet is impacting on the development of both developed and developing countries. At the present time, developing countries have little or no say in the Internet Governance process. The proposal for the establishment of a forum which would involve all stakeholders and which would address Internet Governance issues should be vigorously pursued. Further, the forum should be linked to the United Nations, given the mandate of that body;

(iii)   The Internet has implications for the development of all countries. Hence, no one country should be allowed to exercise unilateral control over its governance. In order to address this deficiency, an international body should be established which would have responsibility for public policy development and decision making, oversight over the entity which would be responsible for the technical aspects of the Internet and for facilitating co-ordination and co-operation between all stakeholders in respect of the operations and development of the Internet. Given the unique role and status which the United Nationals enjoys, it would be important for the international oversight body to have some form of relationship with the United Nations. The precise form which that relationship should take should be the subject of further international dialogue. Also, care should be taken to ensure that governments are given appropriate authority in relation to the functioning of the international oversight body;

(iv)   The manner in which the Internet Root Servers are currently deployed has serious implications for Internet costs for many developing countries. Indeed, the issue of international interconnectivity to the international backbone and the associated costs should be addressed to provide greater equity in respect of access costs. Additionally, special consideration should be given to

small island developing states, in recognition of the fact that such countries face a serious disadvantage in view of their lack of critical mass;

(v)   Cybercrime presents a serious challenge for all countries, but especially for small island developing states. It is clear that this problem cannot be adequately addressed by any one country acting alone.   The international community must therefore pool its resources in order to tackle this problem in an effective manner. There has to be co-operation between the governments of different countries and between the law enforcement agencies of different countries in the fight against cybercrime.   It is strongly recommended that there be intense international dialogue to facilitate the formulation of an international agreement to enable countries, both developed and developing, to combat cybercrime.

(vi)   Spam presents serious challenges for developing countries with their limited resources. The time taken by individuals to deal with spam on a daily basis represents a waste of human resources and adds to the cost of doing business. All stakeholders need to work together to fight the challenge posed by spam. In this connection, arrangements should be put in place, perhaps through the setting up of a working group or a task force, to facilitate dialogue between the various interest groups so that specific actions to combat the problem can be formulated for consideration and appropriate implementation.