

**Government of Québec's comments concerning the report  
prepared by the Working Group on Internet Governance  
(World Summit on the Information Society)**

Québec City, September 12, 2005

Québec 

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As indicated in its Information Highway Policy, the Government of Québec is firmly convinced of the importance of information and communication technologies, with a view to creating an information society — a major driving force for socioeconomic development. It therefore supports the efforts surrounding the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIF). The Internet is a fundamental aspect of the information society and a decisive factor for its development. All of the guidelines for Internet development are therefore of considerable importance for Québec.

The Government of Québec congratulates the chair and members of the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG) for their excellent work, which was carried out in an atmosphere of transparency and openness. They have dealt with the highly complex issue of Internet governance fairly and comprehensively. The Government of Québec welcomes the findings contained in the WGIG's report. They will serve as a basis for discussions within the WSIF process, for the drafting of the third chapter of the operational section of the document for the second phase of the Summit, in Tunis.

The practical definition of Internet governance proposed by the WGIG is satisfactory and covers the essential. The Government of Québec welcomes the definition's institutional perspective, which allows for important socioeconomic issues that go beyond the purely technical and technological aspects of the Internet.

The Government of Québec acknowledges the importance of the public issues that the WGIG has highlighted as inclusive and of high priority for Internet governance. The WGIG's suggestions for solving problems related to these issues are justifiable and highly valuable for governance authorities.

The following issues identified by the WGIG are of great interest to the Government of Québec:

- Internet stability and security and cybercrime
- Spam
- Freedom of speech
- Data protection and respect for privacy
- Consumer rights
- Multilingualism

Intellectual property is also an important Internet governance issue. For Québec, the lack of a sufficient guarantee of respect for intellectual property is still the main obstacle to the circulation of high value-added Québec content over the Internet. Rules for interconnection fees are also critical for broadband deployment. Global public policies are required to enable affordable connections in remote regions.

In addition to the issues singled out by the WGIG, education should be formally taken into consideration as a governance issue. For Québec, like all other jurisdictions, the Internet is an

essential, efficient tool for scientific research and education. Inversely, education and training are prerequisites for using the Internet. Scientific research is also a catalyst for innovation leading to technological progress with respect to the Internet. Among other things, governance guidelines should therefore not hinder Internet development favourable to scientific research.

The Government of Québec feels that it is essential to create a forum in order to favour and institutionalize dialogue and cooperation between all of the parties involved, correct current shortcomings with respect to coordination and collaboration, and facilitate participation.

As for the development of public policies and the carrying-out of the global control function, the Government of Québec favours the creation of a global governance mechanism allowing direct participation in decision-making processes at the various levels of government responsible for the aspects in question. Clearly, management of public policy issues, most of which are multidimensional and multidisciplinary, requires a new type of innovative, inclusive governance that goes beyond the current management framework. The involvement and participation of government authorities with jurisdiction over the corresponding public policies are necessary in order to attain the objectives set forth in the statement of principles.