



**International Chamber of Commerce**

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An ICC initiative

**BASIS**

Business Action to Support  
the Information Society

## **ICC/BASIS Intervention 1 Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Open Consultation Meeting 13 February 2007**

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*Geneva, Switzerland*

### **Intervention 1 – Ayesha Hassan, ICC**

Thank you, Mr. Chair. On behalf of the International Chamber of Commerce and the members of the Business Action to Support the Information Society (BASIS) initiative, I would like to thank you, joining others who have thanked you, as well as Mr. Kummer and the entire IGF Secretariat team and the Advisory Group members for all that you have done in this past year.

We would also like to reiterate our thanks to the Greek host country and the Greek people for the warm welcome and the exemplary example that they set as a host country in providing all of the practical and logistical support, and the ceremonial setting for all of us to enjoy this inaugural Internet Governance Forum .

As many of you know, the ICC BASIS group has submitted two contributions. They are up on the IGF web site. They have also been made available on the tables in the back of this room. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the key priorities that business has identified in reflecting on the Athens event.

First of all, this was a very successful format. Business would reiterate what many others have said. The multistakeholder interaction and participation and the principle upon which the Internet Governance Forum is based was a great success. Athens proved this.

We would continue to support the maintenance of this principle in all aspects of the preparations and the IGF itself as we plan ahead for Rio. Building on this successful format and thinking about the topics to be addressed in Rio, one of the things that we would put forward for consideration is that the basic topics that were addressed in Athens were broad. In order to continue the dialogue, as many have called for, it could be useful in outlining the program for Rio to identify creative formats to increase the interactive nature of the discussion and to attract more stakeholders from around the world to participate in those discussions.

Some of those format suggestions are outlined in more detail in the contributions, but they would include what others have said about shortening the panel lengths and decreasing the number of panellists, et cetera.

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Some of the improvements that have been suggested by the business community, as well as others, can also be addressed by planning ahead. And one of the key elements here would be to work together to be able to have a confirmed program to be able to invite key experts and increase participation and diversity of participation in a timely manner. This will add to the richness of the discussion and bring the benefits of this forum to more people. We would also support the ideas of having more information posted on the Web site and be able to integrate that information into the preparation of the sessions. This also help the moderators and the panellists, to be able to prepare together ahead of the IGF.

These improvements would help the discussions to become more focused and enable them to take into consideration the various viewpoints and make sure the moderators have the information they need to guide the discussion and involve the members of the audience in a deep way if they have more time to prepare. The Athens meeting had its challenges in that regard and luckily we know that all sorts of preparations are already starting for the event in Brazil.

Underscoring from the business perspective, we do know that getting more of a diverse business participation will require addressing some of the practical issues and the financing issues. Again starting early will solve a lot of challenges of improvements that have been put forward.

We would also like to highlight that the summing-up sessions that the Secretariat and the Chairman of this meeting provided were very useful, and continuing to capture the range of viewpoints that were expressed in sessions will be useful to do again in Rio.

In terms of the workshops, many of them were informative and we would request careful consideration of how the workshops are planned going forward for Rio to create synergy between the main meetings, and giving multistakeholder groups an opportunity to have workshops.

The number of workshops in parallel to main sessions should be part of the consideration and the careful planning for the program in Rio, to ensure that all sessions have good attendance and people can benefit from the information that is being made available.

Another very important part of what happened in Athens was the informal discussions that were facilitated by the networking opportunities, some of them provided by the host country, others provided by other sponsors, and the plaza concept. Creating that kind of continued informal discussion, and opportunities for stakeholders to exchange experiences, information, resources, practices, and get to know each other as part of the continuing benefit of this multistakeholder forum is important for Rio.

With that, Chair, I would conclude, and I look forward to contributing later in the day.

Thank you.