

I speak on the behalf of IT for Change, an NGO based in Bangalore, India (www.ITforChange.net).

We thank the representative of UN DESA for presenting the Secretary General's report on Enhanced Cooperation. We also thank the representatives of various organisations that presented their annual performance reports with regard to creating an environment for Enhanced Cooperation towards developing appropriate global public policies in the area of Internet Governance, as called for by the Tunis Agenda. These are very informative and also encouraging.

However, a great deal of confusion continues about what precisely constitutes 'Enhanced Cooperation', whereby it is obviously difficult to assess what has been achieved about it. We can see that there are many in this room who think that the process of enhanced cooperation is already commenced and well on its way. At the same time, there are many others who hold that the process of enhanced cooperation as mandated by the Tunis agenda was never initiated.

It is our understanding that this confusion arises from the the fact that there are two, shall we say, distinct tracks, or set of processes, mentioned in Tunis Agenda with regard to enhanced cooperation.

One of these refers to the primary activity which is aimed at 'developing globally applicable public policy principles' and is clearly centred on the role of governments, who of course will work in consultation with other stakeholders, in fact with as much active participation from them as possible. This is clear from paragraphs 68, 69 and 70 of Tunis Agenda which define the concept of enhanced cooperation. This is also clear from the context developed in the preceding paragraphs of the Tunis Agenda.

However, there is also a secondary and subsidiary enabling set of processes mentioned in the Tunis Agenda with regard to enhanced cooperation which are centred on 'organisations responsible for essential tasks associated with the Internet'. These organisations are supposed to, quoting the Tunis Agenda, 'create an environment that facilitates this development of public policy principles'. These organisation are called upon to provide annual performance reports on the enabling action expected of them to facilitate enhanced cooperation. It should, however, be obvious that these report by themselves, or the action listed therein, do not constitute enhanced cooperation as, and in the meaning, called for by the Tunis Agenda. It is therefore our humble view that the mandate given to the Secretary General by Tunis Agenda to commence a process of enhanced cooperation is not exhausted by calling for these performance reports and summarising them.

A very good indicator that two very distinct set of processes were meant by the Tunis agenda, as argued above, is the fact that paragraph 69 which speaks of the primary, public policy development, aspect of enhanced cooperation clearly excludes 'day-to-day technical and operational matters' pertaining to the management of the Internet. However, the second part of paragraph 70, which speaks of the secondary set of enabling processes, specifically centres on 'organisations responsible for essential tasks associated with the Internet', which apparently are the same tasks that paragraph 69 excluded from the ambit of the primary focus of enhanced cooperation.

The report of the Special Advisor to the Secretary General for Internet Governance on ways to move forward on enhanced cooperation was unable to find enough common ground among the principal actors. The present report of the Secretary General also refers to lack of practical guidance on this issue.

In the circumstances, we understand that the best, and perhaps the only, way to move forward now is to put all the major actors and all stakeholders together in one room and mandate them to come up with some concrete steps that should be taken to commence the process of enhanced cooperation, which was mandated to be commenced in the first quarter of 2006, immediately after

the World Summit on the Information Society. We therefore appeal to the Secretary General to call for such a meeting as an open consultation with all stakeholders on steps to be taken to commence the process of enhanced cooperation.

One last point. It is important to recognise that the two Internet Governance related outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society – Enhanced Cooperation and the Internet Governance Forum – are distinct processes, respectively mandated with development of public policies with regard to the Internet, and a multi-stakeholder policy dialogue. However they are complimentary in the sense that the multistakeholder policy dialogue is supposed to contribute to development of public policies.

Thank you, Chairman.

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