TECHAMERICA REMARKS
UNDESA CONSULTATIONS ON ENHANCED COOPERATION
NEW YORK, 14 DECEMBER 2010

Thank you, Chair. Mr. Under-Secretary General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

I am honored to be speaking here today on behalf of the 1200 member companies of TechAmerica, the largest technology advocacy trade association in the U.S. The breadth of our membership spans the spectrum of the technology industry components and reflects the small, medium, and large enterprises that make up this dynamic and innovative industry. We are headquartered in Washington, DC with offices across the U.S.; in Brussels, Belgium; and in Beijing, China. We are a member of ICC-BASIS, and we are the U.S. association member of the World Information Technology and Services Association (WITSA). WITSA has members in 78 countries, an over 60% of them are from developing and emerging economies.

On behalf of our members, I would like to thank the Economic and Social Council for its undertaking of an open and inclusive consultative process, and I am delighted to be here today to participate and share our views on enhanced cooperation in the Information Society. In accordance with the Chair’s process instructions, I will submit our comments for the record subsequent to this meeting and before the December 31 comment close.

As others have eloquently stated before me, enhanced cooperation should be inclusive of all relevant organizations with the involvement of all stakeholders in the process. This principle is directed in the Tunis Agenda and has been reflected in the evolution of and
consultations in the Internet Governance Forum over the past 5 years. Business is supportive of enhanced cooperation among international bodies and inter-governmental entities that is inclusive of all stakeholders in business, government, non-governmental organizations, and the technical community.

With regard to Internet Governance, TechAmerica recently submitted written comments to the consultation on improvements to the IGF, which I commend to the chair in response to your question about IGF achievements and improvements, and which we will addend to our submission today. In that submission, we noted that the most important achievement of the first five IGF meetings is the creation of an international, multistakeholder, dialogue forum with increasing levels of participation from – and exchange between – industry, governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the technical community, and civil society.

As such, the IGF in its present modalities is a key example of enhanced cooperation, both in its principles and how those are implemented in the preparatory process, in regional and national IGFs, and in the annual forum. The inclusion of all stakeholders in the dialogue where all can participate and provide input on equal footing allows for some of the most timely, informative, and candid exchanges among interested parties from across the globe. Those exchanges lead to relationships that further general understanding and often lead to greater opportunities for collaboration and capacity building in one form or another. Given the complexity of discussions involving technology and public policy, inclusion of all stakeholders will contribute to informed dialogue.

I would like to make three discrete points about enhanced cooperation.

One. I want to emphasize the interest of the business community in this important issue and the value we place on the global process. Industry participates in the process; we will continue to engage by bringing our expertise, our opportunities, and our challenges to the global forum; and we look for ways to bring into the dialogue those that are not already here.
Two. I would like to underscore earlier comments about the importance of open and transparent decision making processes, both in government and in international organizations. Only then can policy reflect the full scope of precisely the issues it is seeking to address.

And, three. We see and welcome the collaborative component of enhanced cooperation in other bodies as well. For example, in its recent Plenipotentiary Meeting in Guadalajara, the ITU put forward resolutions in which it acknowledges and invites collaboration with other organizations. This integration of collaboration in the ITU’s work is crucially important to further effective solutions, industry innovation, economic and social development, and trust and confidence in the Internet.

In closing, I would like to re-emphasize the notion that enhanced cooperation is cooperation across the board, not in silos of discipline that do not benefit from the input from and engagement with other stakeholders. Enhanced cooperation is already underway, and we are committed to participating in it.

I would like to take this opportunity to response to a couple of the questions that you have posed for us today.

We listened with interest to the IBSA proposal for an inter-governmental working group, but at this point it is unclear to us the need to create new institutions or processes for enhanced cooperation. While we support enhancing and increasing cooperation between organizations and among stakeholders, we need to further evaluate this proposal.

Second, you asked if the IGF and enhanced cooperation are the same thing. IGF and enhanced cooperation are not the same thing; they are interconnected and interrelated, but they are not mutually exclusive. As I noted in my remarks, the IGF is one example of enhanced cooperation. And, we support cooperation in the IGF and other entities and organization as well, in an open and inclusive manner.

Thank you.
1. **What do you consider the most important achievements of the first five IGF meetings?**

The most important achievement of the first five achievements is the evolutionary nature of the international, multistakeholder, dialogue forum that is able to reflect all views and reflect timely technology trends in discussion and information exchange. Each year of the IGF has seen increased levels of participation from around the world and in each stakeholder community, not only in the forum meeting itself, but also in the preparation process.

A related achievement is the emergence of the national and regional IGFs that enable the dialogue and information exchange about Internet issues to take place throughout the year and reflect the discrete nature of that country or region. Each of these new forums has consistently applied the principles of the global IGF, while also focusing on national and regional perspectives and priorities. Most of these forums are dual purpose, addressing national and regional priorities regarding Internet governance and preparing and strengthening the ability of participants to fully participate in the global IGF, whether in person or virtually. The IGF has acted as the catalyst to the creation of these new multistakeholder national and regional IGFs. New communications and interactions have been forged on many levels, including bringing the national and regional perspectives into the global IGF.

We note that no such multistakeholder interactions, exchanges, or shared engagements existed merely five years ago, when the IGF was initially held in Athens, Greece. Today, there is a growing globalized multistakeholder exchange among and between industry, government, International organizations, NGOs, the technical community, and civil society that have raised the collective level of understanding of and benefit derived from the Internet that inform policy decisions around the world.

2. **How satisfied are you with the delivery of the results of discussions at the IGF and the impact they have had on developments in national, regional or international Internet governance?**

We are quite satisfied with the delivery of the results of the discussions at the IGF through timely transcripts and summary reports on a public website. Those discussions inevitably impact the national, regional, and international Internet governance developments as they are part of the global dialogue that people bring in to their discrete policy-making and partnership environments. The IGF and its participants can find more ways to deliver the IGF’s results to a broader community that are not yet involved in the dialogue that can then positively impact efforts elsewhere.

TechAmerica is a member of the World Information Services and Technology Alliance (WITSA), an organization that brings together 70+ national associations focused on
ICTs; over 60% of WITSA’s members are from developing and emerging economies. Both TechAmerica and WITSA attend the preparatory sessions for the IGF, participate in national and regional IGFs, and organize workshops for the IGF. The materials provided to date have been helpful to our efforts to inform and enhance awareness for the hundreds to thousands of small businesses located in the WITSA countries.

We would strongly support further enhancements to the reporting out of the IGF in publications that document best practices, success stories, and other informational materials that could be compiled from the workshops that take place at the IGF.

3. Which, if any, new mechanisms would you propose to improve the impact of the IGF discussions, in particular as regards the interaction between the IGF and other stakeholders?

Creating a new mechanism to regularly report to other processes and intergovernmental forums would be an excellent next step. This would help to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize the progress made on issues in the IGF through transmission to other forums as appropriate and useful. Examples of current products that can be furthered for such transmission purposes are

- IGF Best Practices document (issued after IGF Vilnius)
- IGF substantive books
- IGF website

Each of these products can be improved for greater impact, and we would strongly support the compilation of success stories, case studies on a national basis that could be leveraged further.

We do not believe the IGF overall should try to produce recommendations that are negotiated or approved; instead, the IGF should focus on documenting engagements and other case studies that emerge from the IGF discussions and, through their distribution, allows each stakeholder to use the in way most effective for them.

We support the participation of the IGF Executive Secretariat in the national and regional IGFs in order to inform and to enhance the relation between those communities and the global IGF.

We are certainly open to discussions about other improvements, and will actively participate in all such discussions, on behalf of the ICT global industry.

4. In your view, what important new issues or themes concerning Internet governance have emerged or become important since the Tunis phase of the Summit, which deserve more attention in the next five years?

One of the strengths of the current IGF format is that it encourages and enables discussion of timely issues of the day. For example, IGF Vilnius explored the opportunities and implications of cloud computing. We strongly support the ability to continue to address emerging issues; we would suggest that the IGF could explore how to reduce barriers to Internet access and creating greater trust and confidence in the use of the Internet.
Cybersecurity should continue as a core theme. Cloud computing remains a theme that should move forward, and we are supportive of continuing to examine the role and implications of social networking applications, especially in the mobile environment. We must all keep in mind that the next billion – and the next 4 billion users of the Internet will rely upon emerging forms of access to the Internet, including the role of Internet cafes, mobile access, and newer forms of access devices, utilizing mobile/wireless networks. We support a theme that continues to explore the relationship between Internet Governance and development.

5. What do you think should be the priority themes and areas of work of the IGF during the next five years?

- Continued emphasis on issues of importance to developing and least developed countries
- Attention to policy implications of new technologies
- Space for discussion of controversial issues
- IG for Development
- Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, Privacy
- Focus on best practices and information about policy choices and consequences

6. How can the capacity of those groups that are not yet well represented at the IGF be improved? In particular, what could be done to improve the capacity of representatives from developing countries?

- National and regional awareness raising efforts and efforts to integrate stakeholders in national level IG discussions
- Continued improvement of the remote participation facilities
- Concise information about how they can participate and effective distribution of this information
- Gather information about what the barriers are to ensure the right challenges are being discussed and addressed
- Attention to new ways to provide travel support if that is a major barrier
- Consider the criteria for host countries to ensure costs, facilities, travel access, visas etc are not barriers
- Development of support for remote sites who are integrated into the global IGF as part of the participatory program

7. How do you think more awareness of Internet governance issues and the IGF process can be raised amongst groups whose lives are affected by Internet governance but who are not yet part of the IGF process?

- Website improvements
- Create a network of organizations who are in touch with these groups and who can work locally to support awareness raising
- Interactions with key media to enhance the awareness of the importance and significance of Internet governance upon social and economic policy.
8. How, if at all, do you think that the IGF process (including the format of the meeting, the preparatory process, the development of the agenda, etc.) needs to change to meet changing circumstances and priorities?

- In-depth discussions tend to take place in the workshops, thus creating more workshop oriented main sessions, reducing the number of panelists and emphasizing interaction
- Consider the balance of workshops and open forums versus main sessions
- Improve the timeliness of schedules being posted
- Consider the balance of time allotted to open consultations versus MAG meetings to develop the program; possibly allowing more program work to be done in the open consultations and a parallel effort.

9. Do you have any other comments?

We support improvements to the IGF that enhance its multi-stakeholder, open dialogue, and information exchange elements; maintaining the IGF Secretariat in Geneva; holding ongoing open consultations in Geneva; and developing supportive interactions between the national and regional IGFs and the global IGF. We also support and encourage discussion of controversial and emerging topics in the multistakeholder environment of the IGF because it is an environment that enables frank and candid views to be expressed, further fostering information exchange on timely issues. Other organizations, such as intergovernmental organizations should participate in the IGF, and through participation on an equal footing with all other participants, contribute positively to this unique multistakeholder environment.

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1 TechAmerica is the leading voice for the U.S. technology industry, the driving force behind productivity growth and jobs creation in the United States and the foundation of the global innovation economy. Representing approximately 1,200 member companies of all sizes serving clients in the public and commercial sectors of the economy, it is the industry's largest advocacy organization and is dedicated to helping members' top and bottom lines. It is also the technology industry's only grassroots-to-global advocacy network, with offices in state capitals around the United States, Washington, D.C., Europe (Brussels) and Asia (Beijing). Learn more at [www.TechAmerica.org](http://www.TechAmerica.org)