



WITSA STATEMENT
In preparation for the
WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY
PHASE II – TUNIS, NOVEMBER 2005
October 2005

Introduction

The World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) has supported and participated in preparatory meetings for the World Summit on the Information Society since its inception. WITSA was a founding member of the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI), an umbrella group established by the International Chamber of Commerce to provide unified business input into the WSIS process.

WITSA has issued several Statements in the past representing its views with regard to the Summit. In November 2002, WITSA released its Statement, *Building an Information Society: A Roadmap for the World Summit on the Information Society* that advocated a three-focus approach for WSIS. WITSA proposed that WSIS concentrate on basic education, the underlying telecommunications infrastructure, and applications that benefit society such as e-health and e-education.

In May of 2003, WITSA expanded on this approach in the WITSA Statement on the *World Summit on the Information Society Draft Declaration of Principles and Action Plan*. In this document, WITSA reiterated its belief that governments, in preparation for WSIS, should identify and focus on a set of priority issues that highlight the fundamental building blocks of an information society. Focusing on these priority issues would create a meaningful framework for demonstrable progress toward the long-term sustainability of a truly global information society.

In November of 2003 just prior to the opening of the Geneva Phase of the Summit, WITSA adopted the CCBI Statement declaring that the global business community is committed to speeding the development of a truly worldwide information society that can foster economic growth and social well-being for all. It recognizes that capabilities based on information and communications technologies (ICTs) can serve as vital tools for sustainable economic development, knowledge sharing, societal interaction and freedom of expression, particularly in the world's least developed countries. That Statement contained a ten-point plan for achieving those goals. It is worth re-stating these points:

1. Assemble and provide the fundamental building blocks of the Information Society:
 - reliable access to secure information and communications networks and services;
 - sound and broadly available education and training systems to build human capacities; and
 - appropriate integration of ICTs in the provision by governments of essential citizen services, such as healthcare and other systems, to expand capabilities, reduce costs, and improve productivity and the quality of life for people.
2. Establish national legal systems that are predictable, transparent, clear to everyone and that respect the principle of non-discrimination.
3. Ensure that public policies and regulations governing national systems promote competition as a preferred means of governing markets for ICT services and products.
4. Create a legal, policy and regulatory environment that stimulates the needed private investment in ICTs including:
 - strong intellectual property protection consistent with existing international agreements;
 - trade liberalization;
 - technology neutrality with respect to user choice; and
 - respect for negotiation and implementation of commercial, value-based agreements between businesses.
5. Make sure that policy making is based on effective communication between governments and business at national, regional and international levels.

6. Remove barriers that hinder innovation, entrepreneurship and the creation of new businesses, including small and medium size enterprises.
7. Use public-private partnerships to create educational and training facilities, and access points, capable of developing the skills people need to participate in the Information Society. Information and communications technologies should be included in the curriculum at all levels of educational systems and as part of worker continuing education and national education strategies.
8. Expand programs to encourage businesses of all sizes to integrate ICTs in their operations and thereby improve the performance and the productivity of their employees.
9. Combat Cybercrime with a global culture of information and communications network security and an appropriate legal framework.
10. Work to incorporate ICTs into national and international social and economic development strategies that promote an Information Society for all.

This Statement, made just prior to the beginning of the Tunis Phase of the Summit, reinforces our previous positions and reflects upon developments since Geneva.

World Information Technology and Services Alliance

The World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) is a consortium of 67 information technology (IT) industry associations from economies around the world. As the global voice of the IT industry, WITSA is dedicated to advocating policies that advance the industry's growth and development; facilitating international trade and investment in IT products and services; strengthening WITSA's national industry associations through the sharing of knowledge, experience, and critical information; providing members with a vast network of contacts in nearly every geographic region of the world; and hosting the biennial World Congress on Information Technology, the premier industry sponsored global IT policy event, and the biennial Global Public Policy Summit. Founded in 1978 and originally known as the World Computing Services Industry Association, WITSA has increasingly assumed an active advocacy role in international public policy issues affecting the creation of a robust global information infrastructure. For additional information about WITSA and its activities, go to <http://www.witsa.org>.

General

The information and communication technology (ICT) industry is an important and robust industry. In fact, it is one of the most dynamic creators of jobs and income in the world. Worldwide in 2003, ICT accounted for approximately \$2.4 Trillion or 6.8% of GDP according to *Digital Planet 2004*¹. As markets in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America continue to develop, the compound annual growth rate is expected to be 8% between 2003 and 2007 by which time the worldwide market is expected to be over \$3.2 Trillion.²

The conclusion that can be drawn from these statistics is that all countries want to participate, and participation in the market will help individual economies grow and prosper. Participation today in the global economy requires the availability of, and effective access to, an Internet that is stable, ubiquitous, and secure.

The technology is fast-changing and dynamic. The challenge is to keep the innovation and growth that has characterized the Internet from the beginning while exploring specific issues that arise with respect to its administration or operation, so as to continue to ensure its smooth functioning well into the future. Implementation of change must ensure continued stability, reliability and availability.

Past and Future

Since Geneva, two reports have been issued by separately constituted working groups: one on Financing Mechanisms and one on Internet Governance. WITSA recognizes the extensive work done by the working groups and commends them on their efforts. WITSA feels that the reports were generally useful and contributed to the overall understanding of the issues under consideration.

However, WITSA feels that far too much attention has been devoted to issues that are not central to the underlying goals and objectives of the Summit of bringing the Internet and the information society to the developing world. WITSA has been disappointed and a bit surprised that little acknowledgement has been made of the positive role that private innovation, market forces and competition have played to date in expanding the Internet and access to it. Experience and extensive analysis performed by entities such as the OECD have clearly shown the benefits of these forces in expanding access, introducing choice, reducing prices, and benefiting economies. The growth and impact

¹ *Digital Planet 2004*, published by the World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA), based on research conducted by Global Insights, Inc., October 2004.

² *Ibid*, page 12

of the Internet have been driven by its openness, transparency, and bottom-up processes.

WITSA continues to believe that governments should identify and focus on a set of priority issues that highlight the fundamental building blocks of an information society. Focusing on these priority issues will create a meaningful framework for demonstrable progress toward the long-term sustainability of a truly global information society.

WITSA believes that the WSIS should focus on:

- The role of government in introducing competition and providing a favorable regulatory environment to enable the development and deployment of an underlying Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure
- Education, both basic and in the use of information technology products and applications
- Benefits of applications to improve the lives of citizens, specifically e-government, e-health and e-learning

Development/Deployment of the Infrastructure: An underlying ICT infrastructure is essential to benefiting from the information society. Without such an infrastructure, including access devices, it will be impossible to connect to the Internet from which many of the benefits of the information society come. Thus, the WSIS should focus first on the role of governments in introducing competition and providing a favorable regulatory environment to create the framework necessary to ensure such deployment/development by the private sector.

Education: Education is necessary in order to obtain sustainable benefit from the information society. Without the requisite education, including basic tools such as literacy and more targeted tools such as computer literacy, the citizenry will not be able to utilize the deployed infrastructure and equipment necessary to access the Internet. Thus, the WSIS should focus on a framework that will develop the requisite skills through appropriate public-private partnerships to engage in an information society.

Benefits of Applications: Applications are the tools that allow citizens to derive the benefit from the information infrastructure. ICT applications can play an important role in advancing general economic development and living standards. For example, the UNICT Task Force is currently supporting an approach that emphasizes the importance of ICT in development. In fact, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General, has stated his intentions to exploit ICTs to meet the Millennium Development Goals. In this regard, we recognize three primary uses of ICT:

- e-Learning: closely linked to the education section above, this recognizes the potential for ICT to advance/enhance education.
- e-Health: ICT can greatly enhance health care delivery systems by connecting health care professionals around the world, including online networks of expertise, and access to information about health issues confronting countries.
- e-Government: WSIS could also serve as an important forum to address e-Government. Such a focus could ensure that governments better serve their constituencies. Moreover, e-Government initiatives will enhance participation in the information society and enable private sector development in ICT.

The private sector is the primary investor in and innovator of infrastructure, products and services. Effective markets are therefore essential to ensuring a sustainable information society. The priorities set forth above support the creation of markets by fostering a connected, educated and healthy population that can increasingly become engaged in the information society. Such engagement begins through the use of ICT for development and then builds upon itself as development proceeds. WITSA believes that public/private partnerships can often play an important role in facilitating these applications.

Recommendation

WITSA recommends that the Summit participants focus their efforts on the building blocks above to bring the benefits of ICTs to the world's developing economies and their citizens.

The global business community is committed to speeding the development of a truly worldwide information society that can foster economic growth and social well-being for all. It recognizes that capabilities based on information and communications technologies (ICTs) can serve as vital tools for sustainable economic development, knowledge sharing, societal interaction and freedom of expression, particularly in the world's least developed countries. Only if business and governments work together with other partners can people everywhere be assured of access to ICT tools and the knowledge and empowerment they deliver.

WITSA members are committed to building upon existing public-private ICT partnerships and to the creation of enabling environments. This will stimulate private investment in the infrastructure necessary to support the sustainable development of the Information Society. Business can thus fulfill its role through a comprehensive approach that incorporates both short-term and long-term strategies.

The World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA)

Argentina	Cámara de Empresas de Software y Servicios Informáticos (CESSI) URL: http://www.cessi.org.ar/ E-mail: camara@cessi.org.ar
Armenia	Armenian Union of Information Technology Enterprises (UITE) URL: http://www.uite.org/ E-mail: uite@arminco.com
Australia	Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) URL: http://www.aiia.com.au/ E-mail: aiia@aiia.com.au
Bangladesh	Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS) URL: http://www.bcs-bd.org/ E-mail: samity@dhaka.agni.com
Benin	AP.TIC Benin – The Professionals of Information and Communication Technology Association URL: http://www.apticbenin.org E-mail: contact@apticbenin.org
Brazil	Sociedade de Usuários de Informática e Telecomunicações - Sao Paulo (Sucesu-SP) URL: http://www.sucesusp.org.br E-mail: sucesusp@sucesusp.org.br
Bulgaria	Bulgarian Association of Information Technologies (BAIT) URL: http://www.bait.bg/ E-mail: bait@spnet.net
Canada	Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC) URL: http://www.itac.ca/ E-mail: info@itac.ca
Chinese Taipei	Information Service Industry Association of Chinese Taipei (CISA) URL: http://www.cisanet.org.tw/ E-mail: cisa@mail.cisanet.org.tw
Colombia	Colombian Software Industry Federation (FEDESOFIT) URL: www.fedesoft.org E-mail: proyectos@cati.org.co
Costa Rica	Costa Rican Chamber of Information and Communication Technologies (Camtic) URL: http://www.camtic.org/ E-mail: fcartin@camtic.org
Czech Republic	Association for Consulting to Business (Asociace Pro Poradenství v Podnikání - APP) URL: http://www.asocpor.cz/ E-mail asocpor@asocpor.cz
Ecuador	Association Ecuatoriana de Tecnología de Información y Servicios (AETIS) URL: http://www.aetis.org.ec E-mail: aetis@usa.net
Egypt	Egyptian Information Technology, Electronics and Software Alliance (EITESAL) URL: http://www.eitesal.org E-mail: moh.fouad@eitesal.com
Finland	Federation of the Finnish Information Industries (TIETOALAT) URL: http://www.finnishinformationindustries.net E-mail: info@tietoalojenliitto.fi
France	Syntec Informatique URL: http://www.syntec-informatique.fr/ E-mail: jpeybert@syntec-informatique.fr
Greece	Federation of Hellenic Information Technology and Communications Enterprises (SEPE) URL: http://www.sepe.gr/ E-mail: sepe@compulink.gr
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Information Technology Federation (HKITF) URL: http://www.hkitf.org.hk/ E-mail: mok@hknet.com
Hungary	Hungarian Association of IT Companies (IVSZ) URL: http://www.ivsz.net/ E-mail: szekfu@ivsz.hu

India	National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) URL: http://www.nasscom.org/ E-mail: nasscom@nasscom.org
Indonesia	ASPILUKI - Indonesian Telematic Software Association URL: http://www.aspiluki.or.id/ E-mail: g_rianto@link.net.id
Israel	Israeli Association of Software Houses (IASH) URL: http://www.iash.org.il/ E-mail: software@industry.org.il
Italy	Associazione Nazionale Aziende Servizi Informatica e Telematica URL: http://www.anasin.it/ E-mail: Anasin@anasin.it
Japan	Japan Information Technology Services Industry Association (JISA) URL: http://www.jisa.or.jp/ E-mail: info@jisa.or.jp
Jordan	Information Technology Association - Jordan (int@j) URL: http://www.intaj.net/ E-mail: info@intaj.net
Kenya	Computer Society of Kenya (CSK) URL: http://www.csk-online.org/ ; E-mail: csk@nbi.ispkenya.com
Lebanon	Professional Computer Association of Lebanon (PCA) URL: http://www.pca.org.lb/ E-mail: Info@pca.org.lb
Lithuania	Association of the information technology, telecommunications and office equipment companies of Lithuania (INFOBALT) http://www.infobalt.lt/ E-mail: office@infobalt.lt
Malaysia	Association of the Computer And Multimedia Industry Malaysia (PIKOM) URL: http://www.pikom.org.my E-mail: info@pikom.org.my
Mexico	Asociación Mexicana de la Industria de Tecnologías de Información (AMITI) URL: http://www.amiti.org.mx/ E-mail: amiti@amiti.org.mx
Mongolia	Mongolian National Information Technology Association; badarch@magicnet.mn
Morocco	l'Association des Professionnels des Technologies de l'Information (APEBI); http://www.apebi.org.ma/ E-mail: apebi@apebi.org.ma
Nepal	Computer Association of Nepal (CAN) / http://www.can.org.np/ / info@can.mos.com.np
Netherlands	ICT~Office URL: http://www.ictoffice.nl/ E-mail: info@ictoffice.nl
Netherlands Antilles	Curacao Information & Communication Association (CICA) URL: http://www.cica.an/ E-mail: info@cica.an
New Zealand	Information Technology Association of New Zealand (ITANZ) URL: http://www.itanz.org.nz/ E-mail: info@itanz.org.nz
Northern Ireland	Momentum - The Northern Ireland ICT Federation URL: http://www.momentumni.org
Norway	ICT Norway (IKT Norge) / http://www.ikt-norge.no/ E-mail: bt@ikt-norge.no
Palestine	Palestinian IT Association (PITA) URL: http://www.pita-palestine.org/ E-mail: info@pita-palestine.org
Panama	Asociación Panameña de Software (APS) http://www.aps.org.pa/ / aps@arango.com
Philippines	Information Technology Association of the Philippines (ITAP) URL: http://www.itaphil.org/ E-mail: cvparlade@pablaw.com.ph

Poland	Polish Chamber of Information Technology and Telecommunications (Polska Izba Informatyki i Telekomunikacji - PIIT) / http://www.piit.org.pl/ Email: biuro@piit.org.pl
Portugal	Associação Portuguesa das Empresas de Tecnologias de Informação e Comunicações (APESI) E-mail: apesi@treal.pt
Republic of Korea	Federation of Korean Information Industries (FKII) URL: http://www.fkii.or.kr/ E-mail: grant@Fkii.org
Republic of Macedonia	Macedonian Association of Information Technology (MASIT) URL: http://www.masit.org.mk E-mail: contact@masit.org.mk
Romania	Association for Information Technology and Communications of Romania (ATIC) URL: http://www.atic.org.ro E-mail: atic@softnet.ro
Russia	Russian Information & Computer Technologies Industry Association (APKIT) URL: http://www.apkit.ru/ E-mail: info@apkit.ru
Senegal	Senegalese Information Technology Association (SIT'SA) www.sitsa.sn/ / sitsa@sitsa.sn
Singapore	Singapore infocomm Technology Federation (SiTF) http://www.sitf.org.sg/ / sitf@sitf.org.sg
South Africa	Information Industry South Africa (IISA) URL: http://www.informationindustry.org.za/ E-mail: info@informationindustry.org.za
Spain	Spanish Association of Electronics, Information Technology and Telecommunications Companies (AETIC) URL: http://www.aetic.es/ E-mail: aetic@aetic.es
Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka Information and Communications Technology Association (SLICTA) E-mail: sg@searcc.org ; http://www.slicta.lk/
Sweden	The Association of the Swedish IT and Telecom Industry (IT-Företagen) URL: http://www.itforetagen.se/ E-mail: info@itforetagen.se
Syria	Syrian Computer Society (SCS); URL: www.scs.org.sy , E-mail: sec@scs-net.org
Tanzania	Tanzania Information and Communication Technologies Association (TICTA)
Thailand	The Association of Thai Computer Industry (ATCI) URL: http://www.atci.or.th/ E-mail: Info@ATCI.or.th
Trinidad & Tobago	The Information Technology Professional Society of Trinidad and Tobago (ITPS); URL: http://www.itps.org/ ; E-mail: itps@itps.org
Tunisia	Tunisian IT Chamber (National Chamber of Information Technology Engineering and Services Companies – CNS-SSII); URL: http://www.ssi.org.tn/ ; E-mail: info@ssii.org.tn
Turkey	Turkish IT Services Association (TUBISAD) URL: http://www.tubisad.org.tr E-mail: tubisad@tubisad.org.tr
Uganda	The Private-Sector ICT Association of Uganda (PICTA) URL: http://www.picta.or.ug/ E-mail: info@picta.or.ug
Ukraine	Association "Information Technologies of Ukraine" (IT Ukraine); URL: http://www.itukraine.org.ua/ ; E-mail: nroyenko@miratech-software.com
United Kingdom	The Information Technology, Telecommunications and Electronics Association (Intellect) URL: http://www.intellectuk.org E-mail: info@intellectuk.org

United States Information Technology Association of America (ITAA)
URL: <http://www.ita.org/> E-mail: jmcwilliams@ita.org

Uruguay Uruguayan Chamber of Information Technology (CUTI)
URL: <http://www.cuti.org.uy/> E-mail: info@cuti.org.uy

Venezuela CAVEDATOS - Venezuelan Chamber of IT Companies
URL: <http://www.cavedatos.org.ve/> E-mail: cavedato@telcel.net.ve

Vietnam VINASA - Vietnam Software Association
URL: <http://www.vinasa.org> E-mail: office@vinasa.org

Zimbabwe Computer Suppliers' Association of Zimbabwe (COMSA)
<http://www.comsa.org.zw/> / comsa@csz.icon.co.zw