



*Report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development  
Report of the Secretary General on the activities of GAID*

*Items 7 (f) and 13 (b)*

*25 July 2007*

Mr. President  
Distinguished Delegates,

The UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development held in May 2007 its first session since its successful review by the Economic and Social Council one year ago. For the first time in a subsidiary body of ECOSOC, it was decided that an intergovernmental body would take into account the multi-stakeholder approach, as confirmed by ECOSOC decisions 2007/215 and 2007/216. It implied evolutions in the working methods of the Commission, in particular regarding NGO participation in the Commission's proceedings.

Among the good examples observed during the 10<sup>th</sup> session of the CSTD, I would like to refer to the one day joint event organised by CSTD and the Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID), which brought views from multiple categories of stakeholders involved in harnessing the use of ICT to accelerate the UN development agenda. It also included the oral participation of all stakeholders in plenary meetings of the CSTD as well as in informal meetings. It finally consisted of various interactions and consultations between the CSTD Bureau and representatives of non governmental observers. These good practices should be maintained and strengthened.

- In particular, NGOs and other observers should be reserved a specific amount of time to address the CSTD Plenary at each of its segments or interactive discussion and under each substantive theme and agenda item as they are taken up by the CSTD. It could in that sense become inspired by the experience gained during the WSIS process in terms of arrangements for NGO participation.
- As proposed by several non State actors during the CSTD session, a format such as a multi-stakeholder advisory group could be considered as a

permanent structure working through electronic devices to assist and advise the CSTD Bureau and the CSTD Secretariat, even in the intersession period.

- As a prerequisite, it is also fundamental that predictability in the organisation of its segments be increased to better attract issue-related specialists and gain higher expertise from civil society and private sector observers.
- We welcome paragraph 12 of ECOSOC resolution 2006/46, requesting that “*future sessions of the Commission will increasingly be conducted in the form of interactive dialogue*”, and in line with the last recommendation of the draft resolution proposed by the CSTD for adoption by the Council, we also support that the working methods of the Commission be articulated around focused and itemised interactive segments, following multi-stakeholder principle at the discretion of the CSTD Chairperson in offering the floor.

## Reporting to CSTD

The 2007 CSTD Resolution proposed for adoption by the Council addresses the crucial issue of reporting patterns between the WSIS multi-stakeholder implementation process and the system wide follow up to the CSTD. The establishment of such an articulation between the implementation process and the system wide follow up is a significant positive and welcomed step. This will support the reporting process to be performed by the UN Secretary General to the CSTD. Action Line facilitation meetings proved to be an important space for progress tracking and sharing knowledge and good practice. Efforts should be continued by international organisations facilitating this process in terms of outreach to all relevant actors from all categories of stakeholders.

In this context allow me, Mr. President, to mention the concerns of the *WSIS CS Working Group on Financing for Development* and I quote their concerns and suggestions:

“The Geneva Plan of action implementation has been structured along specific Action Lines. However, they lack clear priorities.

- Regarding the e-science action line, there should be more synergy between the old and new mandate of CSTD.
- The governance part of the Tunis Agenda is implemented through the specific mechanism of the Internet Governance Forum, while the financial part of the Tunis agenda has been left as an orphan without care, without direction, without specific implementation or integration in any of the follow-up mechanisms. Therefore, it is suggested, in order to recover some symmetry with the Geneva process that the ECOSOC should constitute Assessment Lines facilitated by specific UN agencies and other organizations, within similar rules of procedures and practices.

The proposed four post-WSIS Assessment Lines could be:

- A1: Official Development Assistance ODA ( UNDP, World Bank, EU-EFD)
  - A2: Multi-stakeholder Partnerships ( UNCTAD, ITU )
  - A3: Innovative Financial Mechanisms ( UNCTAD, DSF )
  - A4: Infrastructure and International Interconnection costs ( ITU, UNCTAD, a representative body of the African Union, e.g. ATU )
- Facilitators and co-facilitators have been suggested on an exploratory basis, and CSTD could select other facilitators as appropriate.” End of quote. More info can be obtained from the WG.

WSIS implementation activities should be encouraged to use a common template for reporting to the CSTD Secretariat. In any event, the CSTD should not devote its meeting time to repeat the stock-taking exercise, but only concentrate on the review and assessment task as defined in its mandate.

#### Enhanced Cooperation

Mr. President,

Let me also briefly mention some concerns of the *CS Internet Governance Caucus* with reference to the relevant part in the Secretary General's report to the ECOSOC which mentions that "consultations are under way to start a process towards enhanced cooperation among all relevant stakeholders with regard to Internet governance, as requested by the Summit". In this respect it is pertinent to note that Para 71 of the Tunis Agenda also clearly states that: "the process towards enhanced cooperation ...will involve all stakeholders".

In the following I quote the CS Internet Governance Caucus:

“The Civil Society Internet Governance Caucus notes with concern that the letter and spirit of the WSIS multi-stakeholder principles do not appear to have been applied in relation to the processes around 'enhanced cooperation' for Internet Governance. In spite of directly requesting information of the SG's office regarding the process, through our letter dated 29th January, 2007, addressed to SG's Special Advisor on WSIS, civil society groups have neither received information about, nor been invited to or involved in consultations, in any way to date.

The caucus, along with other civil society groups, has consistently demonstrated its commitment to contribute constructively to the WSIS follow-up process, a commitment which extends to all elements of the process, including that of enhanced cooperation.

We request that the United Nations, ECOSOC, and all other parties ensure that the enhanced cooperation process is conducted in a manner that is fully consistent with the principles of transparency and multi-stakeholder

participation set forth in the Tunis Agenda. All information about consultation processes for enhanced cooperation should be provided in a timely and transparent manner to all stakeholders, as well as modalities ensured for their participation in all processes, including of initial consultations and developing the initial agenda and format for enhanced cooperation.

In order to ensure participation of an appropriately wide range of civil society in this process, it would be useful to include formal consultations on enhanced cooperation during, or around, the Information Society week events in May as well as encourage informal meetings during events such as the Internet Governance Forum.” End of quote

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CONGO supports the engagement of all categories of stakeholders in the work realized by the Global Alliance for ICT and Development. As a catalyser for multi-stakeholder and action oriented partnerships and as a multi-stakeholder platform for cross-sectoral policy dialogue, with the view to harness the use of ICTs towards achieving the UN development agenda, including the MDGs, GAID is also a very innovative and significant tool to support the achievement of the WSIS outcomes.

In this context, civil society, due to its diversity of perspective and expertise, has a major role to play and can bring to GAID a very significant added value. One of the priorities of GAID would be to continue to find means to have a greater involvement from those who work from the grassroots communities and those in contact with the use of ICT on the ground, with the view to better and more directly access their needs, knowledge and experience. To that end, the bottom-up and inclusive approaches should be strengthened in the GAID decision taking process. The involvement of additional groups of partners, such as more traditional development practitioners and major foundations, could also be considered in the up coming year.

One year after its launch, GAID has achieved many very positive steps, including in becoming one of the multi-stakeholder processes feeding into the CSTD. CONGO and a number of civil society entities are ready to continue to work with the GAID Secretariat to consolidate this initiative and to strengthen the sense of community among its members and partners.

I thank you for your attention and for giving me this opportunity to speak.