



ACSIS

African Civil Society for the Information Society

NETWORK ON ICT4D

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Yaoundé, le 03 Octobre 2007

Att: H.E Hadil DA ROCHA VIANA, Minister,
Director for Scientific and Technological Affairs,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Att: Mr. Nitin DESAI The United Nations Secretary-General's Special Adviser for
Internet Governance

c/c Mr. Markus KUMMER, IGF secretary

Excellency, dear sirs

We wish to reiterate and confirm with this new open letter, our deep concern that we expressed in our previous open letter, last year, that the Internet Governance Forum should be more inclusive.

Civil Society has proven through all the WSIS process its commitment to contribute to the emergence of an inclusive sustainable information society. Civil Society from Developing countries and particularly from Africa, despite the serious difficulties they usually face, has managed to contribute significantly to the outcomes of the Summit. We, hereby, reaffirm our commitment to contribute to the subsequent Internet Governance Forum process.

As we have already expressed last year, but unfortunately with no practical results, we would like to call your kind attention to the serious practical difficulties and financial challenges that are facing Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from the Least Developed and Developing countries and from Africa in particular, in order to participate in persons to IGF meetings, (consultation meetings in Geneva, the main Forum meeting in Rio, as well as other related meetings).

It should be recalled that remote participation when internet connection are not efficient and reliable is of a limited effectiveness and it does not replace physical presence, as Mr. Markus KUMMER concurred last year, in his answer to our public letter.

The need for a viable support mechanism is especially crucial for CSOs and developing countries at this crucial stage of the Forum process, when the IGF is about to enter the full implementation of its mandate. The failure to find adequate solutions to this problem might seriously prevent, to an important extent, the meaningful participation from those stakeholders and would go against WSIS and IGF stated principles.

We have been very glad to learn that some stakeholders have listen to our public call in 2006 that Mr Markus KUMMER kindly posted on the IGF web site. In particular Canada has made a very generous announcement on 23 may 2007: Canada is taking concrete action to try to make that happen I am pleased to say that we have been able to place \$100,000 with the ITU to provide fellowships to experts from developing countries to participate in the Rio meeting. We firmly believe that our dialogue will be enhanced by the participation of developing country experts in the discussions in Rio. We also see this as a positive way of encouraging the ITU and the IGF to cooperate in a very real way. Japan at the last consultation meeting on September 03 very kindly announced that it will enhance its support to the IGF and the Secretariat by contributing 10 million yen or about \$87,000 U.S. dollars at a recent exchange rate for the future facilitation of preparation process of IGF, as well as capacity building, such as fellowship programs for developing countries.

We would like to thank Canada and Japan for their very kind attention and generosity. There are many other generous donors that are listed on the IGF web site that we should be glad to thank too if we could. Since donated amounts and intents are not disclosed, we are just guessing and hoping that there is also a significant financial amount that could be used to ensure an inclusive participation, according to each donors®intent.

Last year, we stressed our wish that practical procedures should be put into place to insure the inclusive participation of all stakeholders. Unfortunately, we are witnessing that necessary mechanisms have not been established yet, when the meeting is only six weeks away. Therefore the only mechanism that is left available at this time is to follow the established WSIS best practices and to transfer as soon as possible available funds from the trustees (ITU, etc..) to the Civil Society Bureau executive secretariat to be immediately distributed transparently and with full accountability among the candidate main session speakers from developing countries that have been nominated by the two specific civil society groupings that are following the IGF process.

We are confident that the chairmen of the IGF advisory group are going to implement, as expeditiously as possible, well practised suggested mechanisms, as funds are currently available thanks to Canada, Japan, and possibly other donors.

We thank you in advance for the kind consideration that you are going to give to our concerns, in order to insure an effective and inclusive participation of Civil Society from developing and transition countries, contributing to the overall success of the Rio meeting

The ACSIS President

Ms Delphine NANA MEKOUNTE