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Date: Wed, 11 Oct 2006 11:00:59 +0200

Dear Ms Nana Mekounte,

I would like to thank you for your letter of support and for drawing my attention to the difficulties encountered by Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) from developing countries, and in particular the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), to participate actively in the preparatory process for the IGF and their inaugural meeting of the IGF itself. By and large I share your concerns and it is one of the stated aims of the IGF Secretariat to facilitate attendance of stakeholders from developing countries.

As you may be aware of, the IGF is not part of the regular United Nations activities. It therefore depends on voluntary funding. As time was short for preparing the first IGF meeting we have not been able to generate sufficient resources to fund developing country participation.

It is our hope that a successful first meeting of the IGF will also generate interest among potential donors. As you rightly point out, the overall theme of the Athens meeting is 'Internet Governance for Development'. Funding to assist participants from developing countries is part of this theme.

I agree with you in so far that virtual participation can never replace the physical presence at a meeting. Nevertheless, we will try to maximize our resources and make best possible use of virtual participation technologies to be as inclusive as possible. While virtual participation is not a solution, it is a viable 'next best'.

With your agreement, we would like to post your letter on our Web site. The concerns you express in your letter are important and deserve being brought to the attention of the visitors of our Web site.

Best regards

**Markus Kummer
Executive Coordinator
Secretariat of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)**