

WGIG Open Consultations: 18 April 2005

Syria notes that the ICC comments posted state on page 7 that the private sector created the Internet.

We cannot agree with this statement, since it is well known that the basic research leading to the Internet was funded by the US Department of Defense, as is the case in many other fields of telecommunication, and the initial structure was rolled out under funding from DARPA and the National Science Foundation in the USA and academic research funds in Europe and elsewhere.

The web was invented at CERN, an intergovernmental organization.

Of course the facilities that implement the applications and services of the Internet were, and are, deployed by the private sector. But this is true of telecommunications facilities in general during the past two decades because of the liberalization and privatization, and was true even earlier, starting with telegraphy. So the Internet is no different in that respect from any other telecommunication technology, which, historically, were initiated by government funding and/or subsidies including incentives, and then exploited by the private sector, which is normal also for other industries.

It is also important to note that the last mile infrastructure which is used for Internet access was built, in most countries, by government initiatives, even if it is now privately owned. And, in developing countries, government initiatives are still urgently and badly needed to improve ICT penetration and Internet growth. Syria expects the Summit to recognize this.

Syria also notes the comment on page 9 concerning supposed imbalance of the papers. On the contrary, Syria finds that the papers avoid presenting only one view of the issues, and that they properly reflect differences of views, not forgetting the important role of the ITU through its work in all the relevant sectors, including the highest organ of the ITU, Plenipotentiary Conference, which has adopted Resolutions that mandate further work by ITU in many areas, including those within the mandate of the Working Group (for example, definitions). However, Syria notes that the current papers do not fully reflect either the balance of views, or the work currently done in the ITU and would expect this to be rectified in the future.

Please note also that Syria will submit further comments after the open consultations of today.