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du Conseil de l'Union européenne*

Statement made by the Presidency of the Council of the European Union

WGIG Open Consultations, 18 April 2005

The EU would like to thank the WGIG for its ongoing work on key issues related to the stable and secure functioning of the Internet.

Among these, the question of internationalization of the management of the Internet's core resources, namely the domain name system, IP addresses and the root server system appears as one of the main issues in this debate.

The EU believes that a new cooperation model is needed in order to concretize the provisions in the WSIS Declaration of Principles regarding the crucial role of all actors within Internet governance, including governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations. We think that the existing Internet Governance mechanisms should be founded on a more solid democratic, transparent and multilateral basis, with a stronger emphasis on the public policy interest of all governments.

This new model should be based on the following principles:

1. it should not replace existing mechanisms or institutions, but should build on the existing structures of Internet Governance, with a special emphasis on the complementarity between all the actors involved in this process: governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations;
2. the new public-private co-operation model should contribute to the sustainable stability and robustness of the Internet by addressing appropriately public policy issues related to key elements of Internet Governance.

The EU believes that governments do have a specific mission and responsibility vis-à-vis their citizens and their role within this new cooperation model should be mainly focused on principle issues of public policy, excluding any involvement in the day-to-day operations.

Furthermore, the EU strongly reaffirms its attachment to the architectural principles of the Internet, including interoperability, openness and the end-to-end principle.

We therefore support the WGIG in its paper on the root zone file and the root server management when it states that:

"proposals for improvement need to consider that in general the existing system has functioned properly from the technical point of view for more than two decades and that adjustments, where needed, both for technical and political reasons, have to be made in a proper and adequate way related to the functioning, stability, security and further development of the Internet"

This is why we encourage the WGIG to present balanced options for a true internationalization of the management of the Internet's core resources in its Final Report.

While this statement is limited to the issue of internationalisation, the EU reiterates the importance it attaches to the stability, dependability and robustness of the Internet, including spam and network security.
