

## The comments of The Islamic Republic of Iran on the preliminary report of WGIG

24 February 2005 - Geneva

I would like to thank WGIG and its chair for preparing and presenting this report to PrepCom II. We believe that the mandate of WGIG is very clearly defined in the Geneva DoP. This Group must prepare the ground for the negotiations to be held in the framework of WSIS on one of the most important and sensitive remaining issues of WSIS process carried over to the second phase. This group has been given a special mandate to make internet governance more transparent, democratic and multilateral. Contrary to para 36 of the Report we think the definition of these terms in our circles are clear and thus there is not much need for WGIG to spend much of its time to redefine the terms.

For us, internet should be considered as a unique public good and a matter of public policy issue that its governance certainly transcends the technical issues. Internet affects socio-economic and cultural lives of the many people in many countries in a direct or indirect manner while a total absence of any internationally agreed regulatory regime or jurisdiction is being felt. In other words, this phenomenon has been developed in a jurisdictional vacuum and now it is time to go find a remedy to this end through the guidance of WGIG. We believe that the major objectives are not and should not become complicated and non-understandable by the citizens of our countries. Our nations and peoples in general and our young population in particular are increasingly becoming aware of the amazing potentials of ICTs and the ways they can change the prospects of their lives. They realize that denying a nation's access to ICTs for education under any reasons can hinder academic and scientific development and will lead to future shortfalls in both social and economic issues. Without access to available information, knowledge and ICTs, the digital and development divide that already exists between North and South will be further amplified. Thus when people ask for lower internet costs, affordable hardware and software and national administration of country code top level domains, they are legitimate rights to development and to communication. So it is not democratic to deny these rights without any reasonable justification. When the Internet connectivity, intended for education or science and information sharing is

being denied it is not transparent. When the decisions are not taken in an intergovernmental or international manner, it is not multilateral. Our peoples are expecting that their governments provide and facilitate these services and we expect WGIG to come up with efficient solutions to this end.

We agree with the four major categories as identified in para 26 of the Report , inspired by Geneva Dop, with some amendments namely distribution of equitable internet resources , access for all, stable and secure functioning of the internet and multilingualism and cultural diversity in internet.

WGIG should concentrate over some higher-level cross-cutting issues such as management of internet resources, domain name system and IP addresses, administration of root server systems, issues relating to the use of internet such as spam, network security and cyber crime that needs international cooperation and also horizontal issues such as infrastructural, developmental, legal and jurisdictional aspects of internet governance and capacity building in developing countries. The Group should also try to ensure active participation of all stakeholders in development of technical aspects of internet.

The Group should be guided by key WSIS principles; the outcome of WGIG must be fully in line with the overarching objectives of this global process namely establishing a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society. This could only be achieved through partnership, democratic, transparent and multilateral means since a unilateral system has no future in true information society.

Iran is eager to play its part in this process. I thank you, Mr Chairman