

**THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT**

**MEETING ON ENHANCED COOPERATION ON PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES
PERTAINING TO THE INTERNET**

**18 May 2012
Geneva**

Contribution by

Switzerland

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CSTD interactive multistakeholder consultations on enhanced cooperation, Geneva, 18 May 2012

Statement of the Swiss government

Mr Chair, dear colleagues.

The Swiss government has been actively participating in the debate on internet governance including the process of enhanced cooperation since beginning of WSIS. In Tunis 2005, we were all happy that we found a compromise text about internet governance, including enhanced cooperation. Text was very good at that time because it allowed for different interpretations which meant that everyone found himself in the text.

The price we pay for this success of Tunis is that, as a consequence, since then we have a disagreement about what these paragraphs of the Tunis Agenda actually mean and we therefore have disagreement about where we are in the process of enhanced cooperation: There are the ones that claim that enhanced cooperation has still not started yet, as they understand this to be an intergovernmental process/body, maybe with some participation of non governmental stakeholders. Others claim that enhanced cooperation has already started years ago and is running at full speed as they see it as literally an "enhanced cooperation" of governments and other stakeholders in existing for a like ICANN, ITU, UNESCO, IETF, ISOC, etc.

What we have been experiencing so far is that we spend hours and hours of repeating these diverging views to each other without doing anything to get closer to each other. Unfortunately, the consultations organized by UNDESA in New York in December 2010 were a missed opportunity and turned out to be another repetition of the same.

I know that we are in the UN and that diplomatic processes are based on defending interests and positions by repeating them over and over again. However, we think that it does not make sense to continue with this for much longer. The Swiss government thinks that we need to have an interactive discussion where we all listen to each other and try to better understand our interpretations of about what the Tunis paragraphs mean and – if that is too difficult – try to agree what the next step towards enhanced cooperation could be.

This is why the Swiss government proposed as a compromise proposal at last year's UN General Assembly to hold *interactive* multistakeholder consultations on enhanced cooperation: we should not just be repeating statements, but interactively listen and talk to each other and look for common ground despite all the divergence of opinions.

Therefore, I will not present you once more the Swiss view on whether enhanced cooperation is well ongoing or whether it has not started yet. What matters to my delegation is that we use this day to prepare the ground for an agreement on the next step towards enhanced cooperation – we do not care whether this step is considered the first one or step no. 57. (We might further elaborate on our substantive position later today – if there is time and if that would add to the debate.)

Our message for the time being is a plea to all stakeholders to listen to each other and to use today's discussion to try and identify a possible next step in the process of enhanced cooperation.

In the past days, different ideas and proposals have been circulated in formal or informal channels. Those include proposals to do a kind of mapping of the public policy issues related to internet governance and to analyze how these issues are currently addressed on global level and whether these processes allow all stakeholders, including governments to fulfill their respective roles and, if appropriate, to make proposals for improvements of these processes. The Swiss government thinks that these proposals should be looked at carefully and seriously and would propose that the CSTD, in its discussion during its annual session next week, has a look at these and tries to agree on a step forward on enhanced cooperation in a draft resolution.

To say it again, we are convinced that we have to find a way to get closer to a common understanding about what enhanced cooperation means – and that is probably done the easiest by agreeing on a next step until next Friday.

As the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) has been mentioned several times today, please allow one final remark regarding the IGF:

The Swiss government is one of the great number of stakeholders convinced that the IGF plays a very important role in promoting the development of public policy issues in the field of internet governance.

Whether the IGF and enhanced cooperation are two distinct processes or two coins of the same is again something that we do not really care about. What we care about is that things are happening and that development is taking place.

This is why Switzerland, since the beginning, has very committedly supported the IGF, EuroDIG as the European regional IGF but also UN entities and processes like the CSTD – not only with many hours of manpower, but also with significant financial support.

We note that there is extremely broad support of the IGF and other multistakeholder processes among governments, business and civil society. When it comes to actively contributing to the funding of these processes however, the situation is slightly different. We would therefore urge all other governments and other stakeholders, especially those who have done less of this so far, to seriously consider contributing appropriately to the “multistakeholder-funding” of these multistakeholder processes.

In the spirit of these lines I wish us all a constructive exchange and I would strongly support Canada's urge to let non-governmental stakeholders speak otherwise the CSTD would fail to fulfill the mandate given to us by last years UNGA resolution which said that these should be *multistakeholder* consultations!

Thank you for your attention.

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P.S.

This version of the statement was written after the holding of the oral statement, the spoken word takes precedence.