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| **Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues**  **Tenth meeting – Geneva, 20-22 September 2017** |  |
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Contribution from the United States of America

CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION COUNCIL WORKING GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL INTERNET-RELATED PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

**Introduction**

The United States is pleased to submit this contribution to the ITU Council Working Group on International Internet-Related Public Policy Issues (CWG-I). We look forward to participating in the open consultation on “Public Policy Considerations for OTTs” and to the further discussion at the meeting of the CWG-Internet.

The number and diversity of responses from interested stakeholders representing civil society, academia, private industry, the technical community and governments themselves from many regions of the world reinforces our long-held belief that all Internet-related discussions should be conducted in and by a fully multistakeholder process. The exchanges that occur in the CWG-I can only benefit from the perspectives provided by non-governmental stakeholders through the open consultations.

**Discussion**

The United States is of the view that the research and analytical studies, as well as the statistical and anecdotal evidence of the benefits of OTT offerings, cited in many of the submissions to the open consultation provide valuable insight into the workings of OTT offerings. We urge Member States to consult this evidence and research results in their deliberations on OTT offerings.

There are several key points emphasized in many of the submissions with which the United States concurs. These include: (1) OTT offerings represent innovative platforms and service models, yielding social and economic benefits; (2) OTT offerings flourish in an enabling environment of minimal or no regulation and a competitive marketplace; (3) OTT offerings stimulate demand for fixed and mobile broadband; (4) there is no internationally agreed definition of OTT offerings; (5) public policy deliberations regarding OTT offerings are more appropriately undertaken on a country-by-country basis; and (6) there are important differences in the delivery, function and range of OTT offerings that should be recognized by domestic regulators.

**Conclusion**

The United States believes the submissions to the open consultation provide invaluable insight into the role of OTT offerings in the digital ecosystem, as well as the appropriate public policy constructs that can facilitate continued innovation. OTT offerings have clearly driven Internet access and the expansion of Internet traffic, and are projected to add $1.36 trillion to total economic output by 2020.[[1]](#footnote-2)

It is equally clear that there cannot be a single, global approach for OTT offerings that would be appropriate for the diverse markets in all regions of the world. As many commenters have noted, work is underway in a variety of multistakeholder organizations dealing with various aspects of the Internet, and we urge the ITU to explicitly recognize such activities. Finally, the United States concurs with the sentiment expressed in many comments that the ITU is not and cannot become the worldwide regulator of the Internet.

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1. Accenture and Oxford Economics, Digital Density index (March 2017), available at <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insight-digital-density-index-guiding-digital-transformation?c=strat_digidens_10000001&n=otc_0315> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)