

**INTERNATIONAL INTERACTIVE
TRAINING SEMINAR**

STUDY PERIOD 2010-2013

**English only
Original: English**

Kuala Lumpur, 1 July 2010

STUDY GROUP SPECIAL G – CONTRIBUTION 50

Source: AUSTRALIA (MUHAMMAD FAHEEM)

Title: Oppose having only e-meetings

ABSTRACT

E-Meetings may have its advantage in reducing the GTO's carbon footprint, expenses, and in making use of modern technology. However, there are practicality and feasibility aspects worth considering especially when a global collaboration is called for.

INTRODUCTION

In order to cut cost and reduce the GTO's contribution factors to carbon emissions, having virtual meetings seem to be the ideal solution. Nevertheless, advanced as a technology can be, not all problems can be addressed and resolved. To sacrifice spending could still bring forth an entirely new problem to the success of GTO in achieving its mission & visions. The stand in this case is not to oppose e-meetings entirely but to propose a combination of both physical and virtual meetings.

E-MEETINGS ONLY: REASONS TO OPPOSE

The following enumerates reasons to oppose having e-meetings only:

1. Global e-meetings raise questions on the timing of virtual collaboration so that each individual from different time-zones can rendezvous at the same time as others;
2. For some MSs, having sufficient high-speed electronic communication facilities to participate in effective, global electronic meetings will actually increase costs;
3. Members could host physical meetings at no additional cost to GTO;
4. Physical absence leads to a less conducive environment for a meeting; how does a chairman judge the 'mood of the room' when they cannot see everyone? Is the principle of "silence is agreement" applicable to such environment?, etc.

CONCLUSION

As a recommendation, I would propose that meetings held for GTO should not resort to electronic means entirely. Apart from time-zone and infrastructure cost factors, human-related factors are not to be excluded. Human accents and expressions are difficult to perceive especially across borders. Using e-meetings as a medium of communication will add more "friction" to it. It is the best interest of every member that a global decision or consensus to be achieved with minimal misconceptions as possible. Therefore, taking advantage of both means (physical and virtual meetings) will increase efficiency of our collaborative efforts globally.