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Initial comments by the European Union and the acceding countries Romania and Bulgaria, on the report of the Working Group on Internet Governance

The EU welcomes the WGIG report as a framework to guide discussion for the Tunis phase of the World Summit on the Information Society. The EU attaches high importance to a positive outcome on Internet governance within the WSIS process and will work constructively towards that end.

The EU's position on Internet Governance has been outlined by the EU Council of Ministers during its 27/28 June 2005 meeting. The Council stated that the main issues of the debate on the internationalisation of Internet Governance were the management of the Internet's core resources, namely the domain name system, IP addresses, and the root server system.

The EU advocates a new co-operation model, in order to concretise 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 organisations. 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. The respective roles of the international and intergovernmental organisations within the field of Internet Governance should be clarified.

In this respect, the EU recognises the contribution made by international and intergovernmental organisations and encourages cooperation in this field. The new cooperation model should be based on the current bottom-up public-private partnership; it should also provide a platform for policy dialogue in the interest of all governments in a light, fast reacting and flexible approach.

The new model should be based on the following principles:

- 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, including governments, the private sector, civil society and international organisations;
- 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 Stresses:

- a) That governments 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;
- b) The importance of respecting the architectural principles of the Internet, including interoperability, openness and the end-to-end principle;
- c) That stability, dependability and robustness of the Internet remain a high priority; security and spam are important issues in this field.

A global common understanding of the issue of internet security must be developed. This includes the use of security policies in general at all relevant levels.

With regard to spam there is a need to adopt common principles of action concerning cooperation in this field. Anti-spam efforts should not be based only on legislation and cross border enforcement, but also on industry self-regulation, technical solutions, partnerships between governments and the Internet Community, as well as awareness- raising.

- d) The importance of ICTs for the competitiveness of industry and therefore encourages active involvement of the private sector in the Internet governance discussions during the second phase of WSIS.
- e) That the European Union will work towards a positive outcome of the Internet Governance discussions in the WSIS framework. It will also encourage the implementation of the Tunis results in a way that enables multistakeholder involvement. In this context the European Union will take into account the future development of the Internet, including technological and usage aspects.