



**International Chamber of Commerce**

*The world business organization*

An ICC initiative  
**BASIS**  
Business Action to Support  
the Information Society

## **Conference Report 24 October**

---

*Wednesday 17 October 2007, Dubai UAE*

Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chair and CEO, Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization, and Chair of ICC's Commission on E-Business, IT and Telecoms, and its initiative, Business Action to Support the Information Society (BASIS) opened the conference and welcomed participants. He emphasized that over the last few years there has been incredible growth in ICT penetration around the world, and particularly in the Arab world. Surveying the landscape of technical, regulatory and cultural change taking place, he felt compelled to consider whether there was any small degree of hubris in his and the panellists' roles as shapers, developers and catalysts for an information society in developing countries.

Talal Abu-Ghazaleh conveyed that there is no doubt that the development that we are engaged in and witnessing cannot be attributed to any single source or factor and that we are all together playing a critical role in promoting ICT-led development, which brings us again to the focus on the multi-stakeholder perspective of ICC and BASIS, the former UN ICT Task Force, the UN Global Alliance for ICT and Development and other forums. The Chairman of the conference then introduced Guy Sebban, ICC's Secretary General, and H.E. Sheika Lubna Al-Qasimi.

H.E. Sheika Lubna Al-Qasimi was appointed Minister for Economy and Planning of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in November 2004 and holds the distinction of being the first woman to hold a ministerial post in the United Arab Emirates. H.E. Sheika Lubna Al-Qasimi graduated from the California State University, Chico, with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science, and has an Executive MBA from the American University of Sharjah. She thanked ICC and TAGI for hosting this important event and for inviting her to open the discussions. She emphasized the importance of ICTs as a powerful tool for augmenting development, increasing efficiency and creating employment opportunities but also reminded the audience that in order to achieve these goals there needs to be an environment equipped to promote innovation, investment competition and entrepreneurship. Thus, the business community has a great role to play and needs to work together with governments to create loyalty vis-a-vis civil society, and to progress communications liberalization and competition.

ICC's Secretary General, joined the Chairman in welcoming H.E. Sheikha Lubna Al-Qasimi, stressing the importance of such opportunities for business and government to discussion ICT related issues. He underscored the critical role business plays in investment, innovation and entrepreneurship, and the expertise that business can provide as policy approaches are developed to ensure that they support these essential elements for ICTS to be used for economic development. Guy Sebban introduced ICC and BASIS to the participants and outlined key values that drive ICC activities on behalf of its global multi-sectoral membership: promoting trade, supporting business interests in global discussions and producing input to spur economic growth.

**International Chamber of Commerce**

38, Cours Albert 1er, 75008 Paris, France  
Telephone +33 1 49 53 28 28 Fax +33 1 49 53 28 59  
Website [www.iccwbo.org](http://www.iccwbo.org) E-mail [icc@iccwbo.org](mailto:icc@iccwbo.org)

29 October 2007 AH/amu



## **1) Creating an enabling environment to promote innovation, investment, competition and entrepreneurship**

Peter Hellmonds, Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, Nokia Siemens Network, Germany, was the moderator for the first session: he introduced the panellists and began the discussion by asking them whether innovation, investment, competition and entrepreneurship were relevant to their organization/company and whether these factors create an enabling environment for ICTs.

Abdel Hamid Mamdouh, Director, World Trade Organization( WTO),Geneva emphasized that having the right policies in terms of investment and competition is very important for creating a stable environment which generates market opportunities.

Jaquelynn Ruff, Vice President, International Public Policy & Regulatory Affairs, Verizon Communications, USA, added that innovation and entrepreneurship are very relevant to her company: in fact Verizon's goal is to be an innovative services provider and by offering broadband internet, it creates enormous opportunities for business and governments in term of health, environment, education, to name a few areas Art Reilly, Senior Director of Strategic Technology Policy, Cisco Systems, USA underscored that innovation, investment, competition and entrepreneurship are the foundations of ICTs which allow people to bring their ideas to reality, thus empowering the lives of many people all over the world.

The moderator introduced background findings from the World Development Report, prepared by the World Bank in 2005, which surveyed 26.000 companies in 53 countries and identified the following main barriers to a healthy investment climate:

- policy uncertainty
- macroeconomic instability
- arbitrary regulation
- unreliable infrastructure
- contract enforcement difficulties
- crime and corruption

The moderator then asked panellists to identify the main obstacles for the ICT sector from their experience and perspective. Art Reilly pointed out that for an investor, the main challenges are availability of opportunity, rule of law, policies and regulations. Jaquelynn Ruff added that the goal of the regulator should be to encourage new business models while providing certainty and stability at the same time.

Art Reilly also said that regulations stability comes out of flexibility and that there is a real need for global standards regulating ICTs. Hamid Mamdouh added that global standards are certainly important but they cannot come from one singular body and that is why it is important that organizations like ICC help the regulatory process.

Peter Hellmonds concluded the discussion summarizing that ICTs are certainly essential tools for development but they cannot be effectively exploited without the right enabling environment and regulatory regime in place.



## **2) Securing and protecting information**

Joseph Alhadeff, Vice President Global Public Policy and Chief Privacy Officer, Oracle Corporation, USA, was the moderator for the second session: he introduced the panellists and began the discussion asking panellists what they thought of the security issues related to the Internet.

Christopher Kuner, Hunton & Williams, Belgium, stated that there is an obvious need for frameworks to provide legal protection for consumers and governments should be flexible and keep the global nature of the Internet in mind in developing policy and legislation. He also added that transparency online should be improved in order to give more confidence to users. Zahid Jamil, Jamil & Jamil, Pakistan added that different regional approaches should be consistent and governments should avoid conflict between frameworks.

The moderator focused the discussion on how the decentralization of the Internet impacts policy and regulatory frameworks. Christopher Kuner conveyed that since everything has moved to the user level, there are new privacy issues and users had to be aware of new rules and potential risks. Baher Esmat, Middle East Liaison of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, ICANN, Egypt, noted that having 130 root servers located in different geographical locations adds security and stability to the domain name system.

Zahid Jamil added that the fact that the Internet has a distributed nature but works on a single system leads to more access to information for developing countries and has led users to a greater privacy and security.

Joseph Alhadeff noted that there is a necessity for more awareness as information will help combating frauds. Bertrand de la Chapelle emphasized the need for enforcement and implementation regimes and that stakeholders should be engaged in the drafting of these rules.

## **3) The Internet and bringing its benefits to more people around the world**

Karen Northey, Head of Regulatory and Government Affairs Asia Pacific, Middle East & Africa, BT, Hong Kong, moderated the third session: she introduced the panellists and began the discussion asking panellists what their organization/company is doing to bring the Internet benefits to people around the world.

Paul Twomey, ICANN, answered that as of October, ICANN introduced 11 new languages into the domain name system in a test for the introduction of internationalized domain names (IDNs) which will greatly improve access for people in many countries and who use non-ASCII scripts and language groups.



Marcus Kummer, Executive Coordinator of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Secretariat in Geneva, participated via videoconference, and provided participants with a an update on the range of issues that will be discussed at the next IGF in Rio in November 2007 which include substantive discussions on access and diversity issues, including the development of local content and language related matters. The IGF is a multistakeholder discussion forum which provides an opportunity for participants from government, civil society, business and the technical community to discuss Internet governance policy issues with an aim to spreading the benefits of the Internet and the Information Society to more people.

Bertrand de la Chapelle, Special Envoy for the Information Society, French Foreign Ministry, France, France etc said that the French Government is trying to identify the social, economical and political dimension of every issue related to the Internet as a development tool. David Appasamy, Chief Communications Officer, Sify Limited, India, added that, given the diversity of languages in India, the government is moving quickly to provide the major services online in local language.

Fadi Kwar, Director of Finance Operations, Mobily, Saudi Arabia, shared that in his view to increase investments and innovation, governments shouldn't be too involved in the regulatory process but more in the resolution of disputes.

The moderator then asked what the primary issues were in addressing Internet governance related issues: Bertrand de la Chappelle replied one of the main challenges is privacy and Paul Twomey added that one of the biggest issues is the reduction of costs of access. The moderator asked the panellists what in their opinion is the role of the private and public sector respectively in bringing the Internet to more people. Talal Abu Ghazaleh replied that the first step for both sectors is to educate the people to ICTs.

David Appasamy agreed, stressing the importance for governments and private sector to work together in these issues. Panellists then shared many examples of interesting educational opportunities facilitated by ICTs and the Internet. Fadi Kwar added that governments will have to work with the private sector to face the challenge of education and training in telecommunications.

Talal Abu Ghazaleh concluded the discussion saying that the Internet is at its beginning and therefore needs more discipline, not in terms of regulation but in terms punishment for wrong doings. The Chairman then thanked all the moderators, speakers and audience and the Etisalat Academy in Dubai for hosting the event.