Government, Civil Society and Private Sector
Informal Round Table discussions

Sponsored by CENTR (www.CENTR.org)

Wednesday 1st November (10-15am to 12-45pm)
@IGF Athens, Greece

Paul Kane, Chair of CENTR, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants and those listening remotely via the Internet. The structure of the informal meeting was to encourage participant debate on issues of common interest.

Theme 1
Bottom-up Policy / Best Practice development in a rapidly changing market explained (real world examples)

Paul M Kane, UK – real world examples of bottom-up policy development successfully working today
> **Presentation is at 20061101.Athens-IGF-Kane.ppt**

Bottom up policy development is working today in many organisations simply because the Internet market is changing so rapidly having effective customer orientated services is essential for success. To remain viable and retain user support, service providers need to ensure the highest level of efficiency in policy development because if their policy or procedures are too slow to keep up with the market, users will either circumvent the procrastination, or take their custom elsewhere.

All elements of the Internet's standards are determined in an open and inclusive manner, using a bottom up rough consensus basis. Technical standards are determined by the IETF process, IP address allocation by Regional Registry Policy Development, and ccTLD Registries frequently conduct open consultations and surveys on issues of interest to their user community. Many in the Internet Industry concur there needs to improvements in awareness of the bottom up inclusive process where their Policy Development forums are open to all, respecting local culture, linguistic and operational diversity. By working together changes are possible in an efficient and coordinated manner.

RIPE, Filiz Yilmaz, Amsterdam – How RIPE's policy development process works – i.e. everyone is invited to be involved and Rough consensus explained.
> **Presentation is at 20061101.Athens-IGF-RIPE-Policy-History-Filiz.Yilmaz.ppt**

Filiz presented RIPE's Policy Development Process (PDP). Policies are developed and changed where there is user demand. All Policy Development meetings are open to members of the Public and comments are welcome. RIPE developed some basic principles that ensure decisions are supported by a rough consensus among the Internet community without rigid structures and time-consuming processes that may be out-of-date by the time a prescriptive regulatory type policy is in place.

Rough consensus does not require that all participants agree although this is, of course, preferred. In general, the dominant view of the working group shall prevail, unless there is a valid objection raised that clearly demonstrates an adverse effect on the objectors operations.

All members of the Internet user community are welcome to participate in RIPE's open process for Policy Development. http://www.ripe.net/

Hiro Hotta, Japan – ccTLD Policy Development in the Japan.
Presentation is at: [***20061101.Athens-IGF-ccTLD-Policy-Development-Japan.Hiro.Hotta.ppt***](20061101.Athens-IGF-ccTLD-Policy-Development-Japan.Hiro.Hotta.ppt)

Hiro gave an overview of the history of the .jp ccTLD. Nowadays mechanism are installed to ensure that the JPRS registry fulfils their role as ccTLD manger in a way that is acceptable from a public interest point of view and satisfies (or exceeds the expectations of) .JP customers.

Public consultations are held whenever there is a proposed change of Policy both with the Internet Community and Government who obviously form part of the Internet Community. http://jprs.co.jp/en/

Theme 2
Creating the market conditions for Market forces to stimulate customers.

Michael Silber, South Africa - a changing market framework driving investment and services

Mr Silber explained the history of the way in which the .ZA was initially assigned to a member of the South African User Community and the desire of the Government of South Africa to seek to gain control of the .ZA TLD. Having achieved control 6 years ago, little has been done by the Government for fear of "breaking the Internet" or introducing a policy that by the time it is implemented would be either irrelevant as users will have deployed a work around or even if well intentioned may cause harm to the .ZA user community who by the nature of competition on the Internet would register in a TLD other than .ZA to circumvent the regulation and satisfy their needs.

In addition, unlike members of the Internet Community who frequently make their careers in developing Internet technology and processes to optimise services to their Community, Government officials change their responsibilities relatively frequently. Consequently this means there is a high probability that the Government official responsible for Internet Issues will have changed their position before they understand the complexities of the Internet. This results in stagnation of Internet Policy mandated at a Government level and by virtue of South African law, the User Community are powerless to make changes at a Policy level which under law is now the responsibility of the Government.

Martin Boyle, UK Government – creating the environment for stimulating Electronic Commerce.

Mr Boyle, Assistant Director International Information Economy Policy, Department of Trade and Industry, explained the UK's approach. OFCOM is the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries, however Ministerial Decree specifically excludes the Internet Industry from regulation. This exclusion was intentional specifically because the UK Government holds the view that in a rapidly changing market, Industry is better and more efficient at driving service improvements than Government Departments. The Government does not need to invest its scarce resources in areas where the Private Sector is better able to serve the community and risk its capital.

So before OFCOM is permitted to consider regulation they must demonstrate by holding consultations with the Community that having a regulation is the only possible solution before the process of formal involvement can be justified. "So a good day at the office for the Regulator is being able to justify that Regulation is not needed", Mr Boyle said to the interested audience.

That is not to say the Government does not have regular contact with the providers of Internet Services in the UK. The UK Government has many informal meetings to ensure efficient dialogue so issues may be addressed, but does not instruct or advise the Private Sector as to how or when they should invest their money to deliver quality of service to the user community. So the UK Government is obtaining an efficient Internet community service at no cost to the public purse with E Commerce in the UK running at Euro 140 billion per year, it is in Industry's interests to ensure efficient Internet services.

All citizens and companies in the UK must comply with UK law in both the real and virtual world, i.e. stealing is illegal in the real world and is illegal on the Internet too. In the UK the legal framework is to stimulate competition, ensure protection of data and the rights of citizens, and satisfy general trading laws thus having industry specific legislation is not needed.

Mr Pankaj Agrawala, Government of India, - facilitating enterprise by fostering research and inward investment.
Presentation is at: 20061101.Athens-IGF-India-IT-sector-next-step.Pankaj.Agrawala.ppt

Mr Agrawala, Joint Secretary, Department of Information Technology, Government of India explained why Research and Development is so important for a country like India. It is an ongoing process so regulations and policy developed in the formal sense is almost always out of date before implemented. As a consequence the Indian Government took the strategy of ensuring the framework is available to stimulate inward investment into research and development, as a result many of the world's leading companies have a R&D unit based in India.

The objectives of the Indian R&D programme for IT in India is to ensure the: Timely development of replacement of products being phased out, Reduction of production cost to increase yield, Reduction in environmental effect, Reduction in energy consumption, Innovation to open up new markets, Innovation to increase market share, R&D to increase production flexibility.

The strengths of R&D in India are that there is: a Large pool of intellectual capital Cheap availability of manpower, Global recognition of Indian brains and skills, Rapid approach to globalization, English as a medium of education, Fast growing middle class group, Quality at low cost.

On the subject of market abuse by the incumbent operator, Mr Agrawala indicated collected action by the user community highlighted the demand for new, alternative services which generated an opportunity for the private sector to provide services to the identified user community. So whilst the incumbent tried to erect barriers to entry, the community was able to collectively provide services to themselves in a form of cooperative and as a consequence many states in India have a competitive market that stimulate economic growth, employment and improvements in standards of living.

Theme 3
Capacity Building - what it means? what is needed?

Mr Vladimir Radunovic (Serbia) presented the vision behind the Internet Governance Capacity Building Programme (DiploFoundation http://www.diplomacy.edu/). The capacity building they are talking about is human capacity building, both for educating people interested in Internet Governance, but also thinking about strategies to force governments and institutions to make use of the expertise in their countries and in the International community.

Mwende Njiraini, Telecommunications Regulator, Kenya, illustrated the work of the Capacity Building programme in her country where the focus is to educate and enlighten Government officials from the traditional "control" centric model of the past and focus on delivering efficient service to the community for the future. Emphasis was placed on using experts from outside of Kenya to bring their knowledge and services to the Kenyan community. Enabling such outsourcing means that many barriers that frustrate the process of reform, usually deployed by the incumbent operator frequently favouring the traditional nepotism of Governmental control. Increasingly the regulatory market in Kenya is making use of new partners to leapfrog to the latest technological advances at the smallest expense to the public purse.

In conclusion:

Paul Kane thanked all participants for allowing the discussion to over-run the allocated time by virtue of the quality of the debate, the excellent questions and discussion, and looked forward to the next opportunity for continued dialogue.

CENTR, RIPE and many of the Internet institutions welcome discussion on areas of common interest, and everyone interested in this area is encouraged to get involved in the process to ensure the development of the Internet satisfies their individual needs and collectively services the community received from suppliers.

The meeting closed at 13-20pm.

Presentations are available at
http://www.wwtld.org/meetings/cctld/20061101.Athens-documents.html