USCIB INPUT ON ICANN BOARD GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE GNSO REVIEW

NOVEMBER 30, 2007

The United States Council for International Business (USCIB) appreciates the opportunity to provide input to ICANN on the Board Governance Committee (BGC) Generic Name Supporting Organization (GNSO) Review working group proposals.

USCIB, whose membership includes some 300 leading U.S. companies, professional services firms and associations, is a founding member of the GNSO Business Constituency and was very active in the formative stages of ICANN. USCIB members are active in numerous other constituencies, including Registries, ISPs, Registrars, and Intellectual Property. The technical coordination of the Internet is of critical importance to all of our members given the amount of their business that is conducted over it. As such, we support constructive efforts to improve the functioning of the GNSO.

USCIB would like to voice its general support for the proposals to examine new working group models, improve the policy development process (PDP), and enhance GNSO communication within itself and with other ICANN bodies. ICANN and the GNSO should adopt a phased approach to implementation, focusing on the less contentious issues in the near term and putting off the more contentious issues, e.g. restructuring, until greater consensus is reached.

USCIB continues to discuss the proposals and to monitor the discussions within various constituencies. We look forward to engaging further in the improvement of the GNSO, particularly as it relates to facilitating business participation.

Working Groups
USCIB fully supports efforts to enhance participation of stakeholders in bottom-up policy development. USCIB members endorse consideration of new models to enhance participation of stakeholders in ICANN processes, while also improving effective and efficient development of policy with realistic timelines for policy development.

Policy Development Process (PDP)
USCIB is also supportive of suggestions regarding greater flexibility in PDP timelines, in particular of providing earlier notification of policies under consideration and longer response periods in order for stakeholders to develop positions in the PDP. This is especially important for trade associations and organizations like USCIB, where developing consensus positions across a variety of stakeholders is a time consuming process. The deadlines for comment as prescribed in the PDP process need to be extended to allow for consensus building while remaining efficient.

Relationships with Other ICANN Bodies
USCIB endorses all the BGC WG's recommendations to improve relationships between the GNSO, ICANN staff, and other Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees. Better lines of communication between these groups to enhance coordination on policy in appropriate areas will greatly benefit the GNSO and ICANN as a whole.

Intra-GNSO Communication
Furthermore, we would suggest consideration of methods to improve intra-GNSO communication between the various constituencies. Oftentimes constituency positions form and harden without understanding of other interests, which can slow the PDP when constituencies discuss issues at the Council level. Given the broad range of constituency interests within USCIB's own membership, we understand the value of cross-constituency discussion throughout the policy development process, beginning at an early stage, and suggest the GNSO examine ways to engender similar communication among its variety of constituent stakeholders.