Statement by the Internet technical and academic community on the Commission on Science and Technology for Development Working Group (CSTD WG) on improvements to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

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Representatives of the Internet technical and academic community today call for an extension to the mandate of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development Working Group (CSTD WG) on improvements to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF).

The Working Group has met twice but, despite the best efforts of all parties, it has not been able to complete its work in the allocated time. We strongly believe the IGF effectively brings all stakeholders together to increase their understanding of the interplay of public policy, business and technical forces in Internet governance. With the extension of the IGF mandate, it is now vital to take the time needed to carefully consider options for the further development of the Forum.

The technical and academic representatives to the CSTD Working Group on improvements to the IGF would like to express their gratitude to the Chair of the WG, Mr Frédéric Riehl, and the CSTD Secretariat for the effort they put into facilitating the WG meetings and discussions.

We are pleased that the CSTD WG embraced multistakeholder participation during its deliberations, and was able to compile and review inputs from all stakeholders on improvements to the IGF. We believe there were many useful contributions submitted in response to the questionnaire drafted at the first meeting of the WG in Montreux. Unfortunately, due to time limitations, the WG was not able to discuss those contributions in detail, or to produce a report of recommended improvements by the end of its second meeting, held in Geneva. The technical and academic representatives, like many of the other WG participants, had travelled large distances to attend both two-day meetings of the WG, held in February and March 2011. We had also taken the time to respond in significant detail to both calls for submissions to the WG.

The technical and academic representatives strongly support the IGF model and are committed to seeing it improve, both in response to ongoing changes from within the IGF process itself, as well as from the improvements requested in the UN General Assembly Resolution on “Information and communications technologies for development”, approved on 24 November 2010. Only through such improvements will the IGF be better able to meet the needs of all stakeholders in Internet governance.
This statement was written by the Internet technical and academic community representatives to the CSTD WG on improvements to the IGF:

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