



Joint Contribution from Saudi Arabia and Syria to the Dedicated Group on Internet-Related Public Policy Issues

New, Alternate Internet Based on Innovative Technologies

1. Introduction

Despite its phenomenal growth, the existing Internet was not conceived with its multiple uses, internationalization, and the WSIS principles in mind. The evolution of the Internet, from both the technical and the governance perspectives, has been slow, difficult, and based on a suboptimal platform. Among its weaknesses, which need to be addressed and improved, are:

- Internet governance which is not fully internationalized;
- Limited security features, including susceptibility to malware and spam; and
- Limited facility for multilingualization, non-Latin scripts, and local content.

A feature that has characterized Internet development and governance over the last two decades has been an apparent commitment to avoid fragmentation. This monopolistic approach does not appear consistent with paragraph 62 of the Tunis Agenda which calls for Internet governance that promotes an enabling environment for innovation, competition, and investment. Further, competition is widely recognized as a cornerstone for progress with significant benefits for users and for all sectors of society, in terms of development of innovative technology, cost savings, revenue streams, services, and user rights. The ITU has, in the last decades, been at the forefront of encouraging and enabling competition in all forms of telecommunications/ICT, including the fixed infrastructure which had been controlled by monopolies for the past century.

Extrapolating from the successes of policies, programmes, and initiatives in other areas of telecommunications, there appear to be substantial benefits to be gained from competition, in particular from a new, alternate internet based on innovative technologies that address current challenges and whose protocols and governance are optimized from the beginning to support, *inter alia*:

- Full internationalization with an appropriate infrastructure design and a decentralized governance structure in line with WSIS principles;

- Cybersecurity, including coordinated measures against malware, botnets, phishing, spam, etc.;
- All forms of e-transactions and in particular e-government;
- Ease of implementing multilingualism, diverse scripts, and local content; and
- The needs and requirements of developing countries through their participation in the design of the new, alternate internet and its evolution.

The competition and innovation provided by one or more new, alternate internets can be expected to lead to improvements in all internets. The core technology that powers the existing Internet, for example, has changed little since it was invented, and the existing monopolistic situation has not been effective in addressing current challenges.

It would be necessary to ensure interoperability among internets while presenting options for those countries which choose to use a new, alternate internet.

The need for a new, alternate internet has been recognized by many relevant organizations and work has started. Such work, however, appears to be uncoordinated.

2. Proposals

In addition to the requirements for improvement of the existing Internet, the following proposals apply to a new, alternate internet:

1. To support development of the technology, protocols, and governance required for a new, alternate internet optimized for international applications and for WSIS principles, including innovation, competition, and investment.
2. To prepare guidelines, from the perspective of Internet-related public policy issues, regarding those characteristics required of a new, alternate internet.
3. To leverage the experience and expertise of the ITU and to recommend that the ITU lead the coordination effort on development activities of a new, alternate internet.
4. To instruct the ITU Secretariat to study those activities already underway in support of a new, alternate internet, both within and exterior to the ITU, and to provide a summary of those activities.
5. To establish a coordinated effort among ITU-T, ITU-D, and relevant UN organizations regarding international agreements and treaties required for a new, alternate internet optimized for international applications.