



**Chief Executives Board
for Coordination**CEB/2004/HLCM/16
20 July 2004

**ICT NETWORK
Third session
Rome, 17-18 May 2004****Third Meeting of the ICT Network****Summary Conclusions****Agenda Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda****Agenda Item 2: Contribution to HLCP/CEB discussion on “Bridging the Digital Divide”.****Agenda Item 3: Preparation of Secretary General’s report in response to the General Assembly Resolution 57/295 requesting the development of a comprehensive information and communications technologies strategy for the UN system.**

1. The meeting was briefed on the impending report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the possible e-strategy for the system as well on the need to address the issue of bridging the digital divide. The latter will be on the agenda of CEB at its second regular session of 2004.

Decision 1

The Network decided to set up a Working Group to prepare a contribution to the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly this fall on a broad system-wide strategy and an accompanying action plan. The Network also agreed on the attached TORs for the Group which includes the need to integrate the broader goal of addressing the “digital divide”. The Group, led by Mr. David Benfield (FAO), and consisting of representatives from IAEA, FAO, UN, World Bank, WFP, UNCC and UNDP, **will finalize its initial report within 6-8 weeks for submission to ICT Network for its consideration. The approved text will be transmitted to HLCM and HLCP.**

Agenda Item 4: Progress report on CEB projects.**(i) Extranet:**

2. The Network reviewed progress in the implementation of phase II of the Extranet project and content management and application sharing. The UN representative presented a “content management tool” **-iSeek-** for the Extranet. This management tool would allow decentralized

control for adding content. The contributor content guide details are available at “iSeek Content Contributor Guide v1.pdf”.

Decision 2

(a) The Network requested the four organizations that had yet to join the Extranet, to do so as quickly as possible.

(b) All organizations were requested to **consider how the Extranet could be used for co-locating the “White Pages” for UN system organizations.**

(c) The Network welcomed an offer from **CTBTO and IAEA to share**, at the next meeting of the Network, **the outcome - ‘proof of concept’** - of their feasibility study on the **sharing of staff contact information using LDAP protocol** directory based upon 5 organizations even though they use different email systems.

(d) In regard to **the establishment of an emergency email network** to allow communications to all UN system staff, **each organization was requested to provide the CEB Secretariat with a broadcast email account or organizational nominated security focal point who will ensure that the information would be transmitted to it’s organization's staff members.**

(ii) UN system search engine

3. The Network was informed that while UN/ITSD still had to complete the “crawling” of all websites of member organizations (a few organizations still have not provided URL information), it is now possible for participating organizations to start testing the search engine. **UN will create search forms that will be distributed to each of the Network’s organizations.** These search forms will allow searches to be conducted on all organizations’ sites or just one organization’s site.

Decision 3

All organizations are requested to continually clean their websites. Each organization was asked to provide feedback to the CEB Secretariat on their search results tests as soon as these are completed.

Agenda Item 5: ICT related policy issues

(i) Information security

4. The Network was informed of the view expressed by the UN system legal advisors that it may not be practical to have a common position on the issue of information security. They stood ready to assist the CEB in this regard, however.

Decision 4

(a) Organizations were reminded of the request by the HLCM Secretary (30 April) to provide information on their current information policies to the CEB Secretariat.

(b) The CEB Secretariat was asked to complete the work on a survey of existing policies in the area of information security and to continue to pursue the matter with ICT and HR managers with the assistance of the legal advisors. The Secretariat will also continue to develop a matrix position paper around the UN System current Information Security policies.

(ii) Relations between ICC and ICT Network (Report of the Secretary-General on United Nations system common services at Geneva)

5. The Network found the relationship ICC has with the Network organizations to be mutually beneficial. It was agreed that organizations would utilise ICC services when required.

(iii) Follow-up on HLCM decision regarding costs of ICT

Decision 5

Mr. Clive Chin, UNHCR will lead the working group to develop the costing methodology and a number of organizations (in Geneva and New York) will work together in this area for the UN System to follow up on the decision of HLCM VII on this issue. A progress report of this work will be shared with the next ICT Network. The results of this work group will be used as part of the UN common ICT Strategy Paper under Strategic Framework Standard Costing Models (see Network mandate paragraph 9.).

Agenda Item 6: Other matters.

(i) Secretariat support for the ICT Network

6. In the context of the state of coordination in the area of ICT, a number of participants on the video link from Geneva believed that there was uncertainty as to the goals and objectives of ICT Network. They argued for more “practical” coordination - one that is useful and relevant to day-to-day IT business of respective organizations. They also said that the TORs of the Network do not seem to be clearly stated or even readily available. One member maintained that it was better under the former ISCC.

7. In the ensuing discussion, it was pointed out the ISCC was not responsive enough especially to management concerns of HLCM. The dissatisfaction of Member States with ISCC was also recalled; this had resulted in the withholding of funds by ACABQ for the ISCC Secretariat. Others noted the considerable and concrete progress that had been achieved in many areas of internal system-wide ICT coordination over the past two years. This included the Extranet project, the UN system search engine, among others, that demonstrated the value-added of ICT Network to Member States. They also recalled the progress that was being made to address larger policy issues such as work on UN system e-Strategy and on the issue of bridging the digital divide, which would have far reaching implications for the organizations of the system.

8. The Director of CEB Secretariat pointed out that cooperation and coordination depended on the willingness and participation of Network members themselves. The Secretariat cannot force it. He saw the key priorities for the Secretariat to facilitate discussion on the main policy challenges for the UN system in ICT area and to advance practical issues that befitted the membership at large. He noted that the Secretariat had provided mechanisms for facilitating communications among the Network members (e-Workspace) and it was up to members to use it. He underlined the importance of continuous consultations and cooperation. This was a responsibility shared by Network members and the Secretariat. In this context he drew attention to the problems encountered in setting up the 'agenda' for this meeting of the Network. Despite repeated e-mail reminders as well as telephone calls and personal appeals including at the ICC Management Meeting in Washington DC, the Secretariat received little input from many of the members who were calling for greater engagement.

9. This notwithstanding, the CEB Secretariat remained determined to continue efforts to strengthen the capacity of the secretariat to support substantive work of the ICT Network. The Director hoped that members of the ICT Network would respond in a positive manner and support the efforts of the secretariat in this regard.

10. He briefed the Network on specific measures being taken to strengthen the secretariats' capacity to support ICT coordination. These measures included utilizing an established P5 post in New York to serve as ICT manager while using the P-4 Geneva post for more technical functions in Geneva, exclusively for ICT matters. Network members were invited to assist in the search for suitable candidates.

Decision 6

The Network took note with appreciation of these ongoing efforts and asked the Director to keep it fully briefed on progress achieved.

(ii) Update on the work of the Open Source Task Force

Decision 7

UNCC (with Mr. Tony Salmon as focal point) was requested to **examine use of Open Software Source within the UN System via an inventory analysis of the UN system organizations and then develop a common UN system strategy plan with regard to Open Software Source with strong emphasis business returns** (see Network mandate paragraph 14.).

(iii) Inventory and procurement issues

11. The UNCSD has sent out a survey to all UN Agencies asking them to list all available Long Term Agreements (LTAs). Over 1,000 LTAs have been collected so far. **UNCSD will place the agreements on its site, when the collection process is completed.** In addition to LTAs, a list of other contracts with preferential rates for UN System purchases should be maintained. If this does not belong on UNCSD, it will be posted on the Network's e-Workspace.

(iv) ICT Network communication tools—e-Workspace

Decision 8

The Network thanked UNAIDS for hosting the CEB Networks e-Workspaces via their e-communications tool. **CEB Secretariat will follow up on issues related to infrastructure and maintenance costs with UNAIDS. CEB Secretariat will be requesting moderators to aid the different ICT working groups.** All moderation can all be done via email.

(v) Follow-up to World Bank hosted web conference

12. The World Bank representative briefed the Network on the first Web for Development Conference hosted in Washington, DC on 20-21 November 2003. The goal of the Conference was to begin building a working community of Web teams involved in development programmes and issues from international agencies, NGOs and government offices. Local chapters are being set-up e.g. New York and Washington, DC have one for 2004. More information will be released via the ICT Network.

(vi) Follow-up to Dec 2003 ITAG meeting

13. The report of the last meeting of the Inter-Telecoms Agency Group (ITAG), held in Brindisi in November 2003, is available to the Network (through the e-Workspace). The next meeting will take place in New York on 3 and 4 June 2004 and will be hosted by UNDP.

14. ITAG has a very specific mandate –“working level” e.g. VSAT deployment compression. Currently the group’s scope of work encompasses telecommunications co-ordination; attempting where feasible, to integrate all existing, on-going or planned United Nations telecommunication projects, focusing on the priority areas defined by the HLCM committee.

Decision 9

CEB Secretariat will review ITAG’s scope of work and see how to integrate its good work more closely with the Network.

(vii) ITU-T Recommendation for Management of the .INT domain name.

15. ITU-T is currently working on developing an ITU-T Recommendation to clarify the management of .int, in particular to clarify which organizations can or cannot register a domain name under .int. The Network took the view that it would support all measures that would protect the interests of the UN family, and this includes the “.INT” domain management.

Decision 10

The Network approved the following statement:

The ICT Network endorses the position expressed by IAEA and UNFCCC (in ITU-T Study Group 2 TD 174) on the proposed revised text for draft Recommendation E.int concerning Management of the .INT domain. The organizations of the UN System expressed particular concern for their requirement that the name of an organization may be registered in all official languages and the need for

registration of institutions, programmes and subsidiary organizations that may be established by the treaty organization.

(viii) Date and venue for the next meeting of ICT Network.

16. A number of organizations (on video conference from Geneva) suggested the possibility of convening the future meetings of the Network either immediately before or after the ICC Management Committee meetings in order to **enable organizations to lower their travel costs** and capitalize on the fact that most IT Directors attend both the ICCMC and the ICT Network. ICC representative suggested not linking Network meetings with Management Committee meetings, a view shared by most participants. Concern was expressed that if both meetings were arranged for the same time period it would be impossible for an organization's CIO to be absent from his/her office for a full week of meetings in a single time period. Given the reporting requirements, it was generally felt that in determining the timing of the Network's meeting, the schedules of the two high-level Committees HLCP/HLCM need to be considered.

Decision 11

It was agreed to hold the next meeting in Geneva in September prior to the meetings of HLCM and HLCP (15-17 September). CEB Secretariat will consult on the exact date.