# FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE GLOBAL BUSINESS DIALOGUE ON ELECTRONIC COMMERCE (GBDe)

## BRUSSELS, 29th OCTOBER 2002

## I. General electronic commerce policy approach and priorities

1. Electronic commerce and electronic business practices are activities of major importance to the development of our economies and significant contributors to economic growth and job creation in the Information Society.

2. Mounting evidence has clearly demonstrated the central contribution of effective and widespread deployment of information and communication technologies (ICT) to global economic growth, productivity and competitiveness.

3. Deployment of ICT and electronic commerce should therefore be encouraged to develop on a global scale and governments should co-operate on policies affecting electronic commerce in order to facilitate cross-border electronic transactions, increase user trust in electronic commerce, and promote international trade.

4. Market players, notably businesses and consumer organisations are encouraged to co-operate closely with public authorities in the development of policies to promote global electronic commerce.

## II. Governmental support for the GBDe

5. We welcome the achievements of the GBDe in drawing the attention of governments world-wide to private sector policy recommendations and guidelines agreed between businesses from different industrial sectors and different regions of the world and covering a wide range of key electronic commerce policy issues.

6. The GBDe is a welcome response to the need for the active involvement of the private sector at the global level in contributing to the development of electronic commerce policies in a fast-moving and dynamic sector and in close collaboration with governments.

## III. General Recommendations to the GBDe

7. We urge the GBDe to pursue and reinforce its activities through the continued commitment of its high-level business leadership and by expanding its membership – in particular in emerging economies and among small and medium-sized enterprises.

8. We encourage the GBDe to continue seeking dialogue and co-operation with other organisations, including inter-governmental organisations, business organisations, and consumer organisations, in particular to encourage widespread diffusion and awareness and, where appropriate, practical implementation of those GBDe recommendations that have found a broad and positive response from these communities.

9. We encourage the GBDe to put forward proposals for the practical implementation of its policy recommendations and guidelines, where appropriate, and include mechanisms

through which implementation could be measured and companies held accountable, for example through collaboration with other stakeholder organisations.

10. We call on the GBDe and the private sector at large to work effectively with government administrations in the field of e-government and to pursue further co-operation and information-exchange on best practices.

11. We encourage the GBDe and the private sector at large to adopt good online business practices (such as codes of conduct, trust marks and alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms), which take into account the global dimension of e-commerce, and to support and promote such initiatives through joint efforts and alliances with other organisations, particularly those representing consumers. Such activities will demonstrate the accountability of the organisation and its ability to work with stakeholders to implement GBDe recommendations.

12. We encourage the GBDe and the private sector at large to support the development of open and transparent technological solutions for e-commerce to enhance security, protect the critical infrastructure, and build trust and confidence in electronic commerce, including online dispute resolution mechanisms, digital rights management systems (DRMS), and network security and privacy-enhancing technologies.

13. We encourage the GBDe to implement good corporate security practices and promote a culture of security among the business community at large, notably in accordance with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for the Security of Information Systems and Networks – Towards a Culture of Security, and also the Council of Europe Convention on Cyber Crime which should be ratified as soon as possible.

14. We encourage the GBDe to continue facilitating the growth of the digital economy in developing countries and helping to reduce the digital divide by supporting private sector investment, encouraging partnerships between businesses in developed and developing countries and by collaborating on public-private projects, capacity-building and technical assistance projects. In this regard, we welcome the joint statement agreed between the GBDe, the Global Information Infrastructure Commission (GIIC), and the Global Digital Divide Initiative of the World Economic Forum (WEF).

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