



Participation of developing countries in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process: Ecuador case study¹

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This article assesses the quality of India's engagement in the WSIS processes and the influence which the various stakeholders had in WSIS 2 negotiation and outcomes.

A. Key National Characteristics

The Indian sub continent is the most populous democracy. It follows a Parliamentary system of Government with a bicameral parliament and three independent branches: the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. The country has a federal structure with elected Governments in States. There are 29 states and 6 Union Territories (administered directly by the Central Government).

Although the Indian economy stagnated around 3.5% from 1950 to 1980, it has been growing at rate of around 5-6% since the pro-business economic reforms of the 1980s and the economic liberalization of 1990s. It became the second fastest growing economy of the world in the year 2003 - 04. In the second quarter of 2005-2006 the GDP growth has averaged 8%. Since 1994, the Indian economy has seen an average growth rate of 6.8%. However, in comparison to many East Asian economies, having growth rates above 7%, the Indian growth experience lags behind.

The major driver of this growth has been the services sector, having the largest share in the GDP, accounting for 48% in 2000 up from 15% in 1950. The agriculture and allied sectors, and manufacturing contributing nearly 25% each to the GDP. India has a well diversified base of manufacturing, run both by the public and private sector.

The service sector, providing employment to 23% of the work force, is the fastest growing sector, with a growth rate of 7.5% in 1991-2000 up from 4.5% in 1951-80. It has Business services (including information technology (IT) and IT enabled services), communication services, financial services, hotels and restaurants, community services and trade (distribution) services are among the fastest growing sectors contributing to one third of the total output of services in 2000. The IT sector accounted for nearly 2% of the GDP and is expected to contribute to 7% of the GDP (Nasscom-McKinsey study). The annual growth rate of software industry has been nearly 20%, while that of IT-enabled services has been around 60%.

The telecom sector in India has been the core driver in the growth of services sector. The subscriber base in the mobile segment has been growing at around 50%, while fixed line has grown around 9%. The mobile teledensity has been increasing at more than 50% since the last five years. The overall teledensity has increased by 28% over the same period. The overall teledensity as of September 2005 was 10.36; the mobile teledensity was 5.96%, while that of fixed lines was 4.40%. While this growth rate appears good, in relation to the teledensity in the African continent, India's teledensity was higher than only eight countries in the continent.

The telecom sector has seen rapid increases of nearly 20% on a year-on-year basis for the last 5 years. The telecom sector's contribution to GDP has increased from

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2.30% in 2002-03 to 2.84% in 2004-05. This growth is seen as a consequence of the opening of the sector to private competition, tariff deregulation and increasing economic growth in the country.

The Indian Telecom Sector

The Department of Telecom (DOT) under the Ministry of Communications (that was later converted to the Ministry of Communications and IT (MOCIT)), was the sole provider of telecom services in the country before the deregulation in 1984. The sector was opened for private service provision in 1994. Significant facilitators for private entry were provided in the National Telecom Policy 1999 (NTP99) that to date provides a blueprint for the ongoing reforms (<http://www.trai.gov.in/npt1999.htm>). By 2003, six operators had pan Indian cellular footprint and four had pan Indian fixed service license.

The Department of Posts and Department of Telecom were separated in 1985. There were two incumbent operators -- MTNL, the service provider in Mumbai and Delhi and BSNL (erstwhile DOT) for the rest of the country -- providing local, long distance, and cellular services. International services were provided by VSNL, a state owned enterprise until 2002, when it was partially privatized. The Telecom Commission was constituted in 1989 as a policy and regulatory body in the DoT to oversee the developments in the sector. In 1997, the government set up the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) (Jain, 2001). The Department of Telecom (DOT) was corporatized as Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in October 2000.

The DoT is headed by the Secretary, DoT. It oversees policy and developments in the telecom sector, such as policies for rural telecom development, framework for private participation in fixed, mobile and other services etc. The Department of IT under the MOCIT oversees policy and developments in the IT sector such as evolving a policy framework for e-governance, focusing on problems of the Indian IT sector etc.

Although TRAI was earlier envisaged as the regulator for the telecom sector only, over time, it has also become the regulator for broadcast carriage. For example, while it has provided regulatory framework for telecom service provisions, it has also regulated the broadcast carriage sector (for example by mandating roll out of Conditional Access Systems in metros). Recommendations of TRAI are reviewed by the Telecom commission, DoT.

Given the history of existing organizational structures of policy and regulation, the decision-making is segregated in broadcast, telecom and IT, despite technological convergence. As per the existing decision making processes, there are few areas where the departments work together at the highest level. For example, it is possible to envisage that some members of the telecom commission could be from the IT or the broadcasting sector. It is politically very difficult to bring about such changes, given that most senior decision makers and the entire organization has worked along sectoral lines in the past.

For specific decisions or projects, the various departments do work together, but that is left to the initiatives of the individual decision-makers. For such tasks, inter-ministerial groups are formed. There is a multi party (political) Parliamentary Standing Committee consisting of ministers and Members of Parliament that reviews policies and issues related to the telecom and IT sector.

Regional Cooperation

India's policy is to cooperate on regional issues and there is significant participation through membership to decision making bodies in a variety of regional organizations, conferences etc. Indian government, both at the national and state level and civil society governments work actively with a number of multi lateral agencies such as the UNDP, World Bank, UNESCO and also participates in the various task forces. The UNICT task force is an example where India has participated. India is also an active member of a variety of policy and regulatory agencies in the region. Examples of participation in two key regional telecom related activities are:

- Asia Pacific Tele Community (APT): an intergovernmental body, set up by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific and the ITU. Service providers, research and development organizations, manufacturers of telecom equipment are members. DoT, MTNL, Centre for Development of Telematics (a research and Development organization under the DoT) and several private Indian companies are members. APT organizes several events that examine policy issues related to the telecom sector. (www.aptsec.org). It organized some conferences for the WSIS.
- The Asia-Pacific Development Information Program (APDIP) is an initiative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) that aims to promote the development and application of new ICTs for poverty alleviation and sustainable human development in the Asia-Pacific region. The program is managed by the various UNDP offices and the Advisory panel. Indian representation is both through the UNDP offices and also on the Advisory panel.

e-Status

e-Status of the country could be measured by a number of parameters. For this study, we need a measure that reflects the Internet access as well as integrates it with the development context. We have selected the following:

- Digital Access Index (DAI) developed at the ITU
- ICT for Human Development (ICTforHD) using the UN
- ICT Opportunity Index
- Network Readiness Index

Digital Access Index

The Digital Access Index (DAI)

(http://www.itu.int/newsarchive/press_releases/2003/30.html) reflects the ability of each country's population to take advantage of internet communication technologies. It is a composite score of eight variables describing availability of infrastructure, affordability of access, educational level, quality of information and communication technology (ICT) services, and Internet usage. Annexure 1 gives the details of the index. According to the four digital access categories: high, upper, medium and low identified by this index and the country wise rankings, India ranks as medium access country, although its quite at the bottom of this group. In the medium access group, the highest digital access is 0.49 and lowest at 0.39, where 1 denotes the highest index. In this group, India has a ranking of 0.32. In relation to this, China's index was 0.39.

ICTforHD

The UNDP has recently come out with UNDP 'ICTforHD' index (http://www.apdip.net/rhdr/press/idx_techppr.pdf). It differs from other ICT development indices which have been developed so far in that it embeds its analytical framework much more closely into human development and incorporates some of the methodology used in calculating the Human Development Index (HDI). The need for such an index was felt post WSIS when the need to measure progress and achievements, in the ICT sector was felt.

In order to assess India's e-status on this index, we have used the information on (<http://www.apdip.net/projects/rhdr/exec-summary/report-extracts>) that ranks nine countries (Malaysia, China, India, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Vietnam, Mongolia, and Indonesia) in Asia.

Malaysia had the highest ranking, ahead of China and Thailand. The rankings of the next four countries — India, Mongolia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka — varied depending on the statistical method used (see below), while Indonesia ranked third from last and Vietnam last.

Middle-ranking Sri Lanka was placed high in terms of efficiency and connection speed, for example, taking into account usage costs, access, and IT training and education. India ranked high in targeting vulnerable groups for its high proportion of female professional and technical workers, public Internet access, laws on ICT use and competition among service providers. China, second overall, ranked sixth in this area.

Figure 1: Aggregate Index by RE method for nine Asian countries

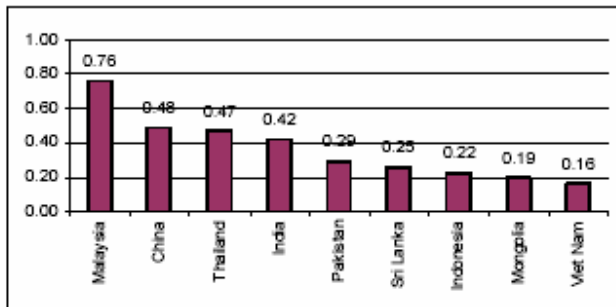
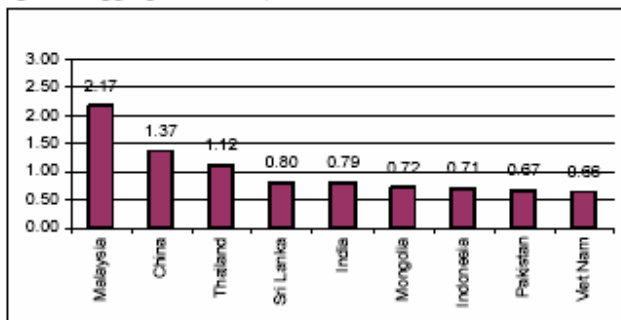


Figure 2: Aggregate Index by DM method for nine Asian countries



Source: 'Promoting ICT for Human Development in Asia 2004: Realizing the Millennium Development Goals. http://www.apdip.net/rhdr/press/idx_techppr.pdf

[UNESCO: Monitoring the Digital Divide and Beyond](#))

ICT Opportunity Index

The ICT Opportunity Index (ICTOI) combines aspects of the DAI as well as the previous work done by Orbicom (<http://www.orbicom.uqam.ca/projects/ddi2002/ddi2002.pdf>) to develop a conceptual framework that incorporates the following:

- Emphasis on developing economies
- A modeling approach that yields policy-relevant results
- Focus on ICTs, that is broader in scope and goes beyond connectivity measures.

In this index, countries have been divided into five categories: High, elevated, intermediate, medium, and low based on their "infostate"³. India comes in the

³ A country's ICTization or infostate is defined as the aggregation of info-density and info-use. Infodensity refers to the ICT capital and labor stocks and their role in the productive capacity of the economy. It includes ICT networks, machinery and

intermediate category. In terms of progress over time, India has not done as well as several other Asian countries that have progressed over India, over many of the dimensions.

Network Readiness Index

The Network Readiness Index (NRI) is defined as the communities or nation's degree of preparation to participate in and benefit from ICT developments (Chapter 1, Network Readiness Index, 2003-04; http://www.weforum.org/pdf/Gcr/GITR_2003_2004/Framework_Chapter.pdf). The objective of this index is to relate the impact of ICT on competitiveness of nations. The Network Readiness Framework (NRF) that is used to compute the NRI is based on the following premises:

- There are three important stakeholders to consider in the development and use of ICT: individuals, businesses, and governments
- There is a general macroeconomic and regulatory *environment* for ICT in which the stakeholders play out their respective roles
- The degree of *usage* of ICT by (and hence the impact of ICT on) the three stakeholders is linked to their degrees of *readiness* (or capability) to use and benefit from ICT.

The Network Readiness Index (NRI) is composite of three components: Environment, Readiness and Usage⁴. In terms of the spread of overall index over the 102 countries surveyed, the USA had the highest value for 2003-04 at 5.50 and Chad had the lowest at 2.09. India's rank was 45th, with a score of 3.54. China ranked 51st and had a score of 3.48. The countries from Asia that ranked ahead of India were Singapore, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong SAR, Korea, Malaysia and Thailand.

equipment, as well as ICT skills, indispensable for the functioning of information, knowledge oriented societies. Info-use refers to the uptake of various ICTs by households, businesses and governments and the intensity of their actual use.

The table compares infostate figures:

	Info-density		Info-use		Info-state	
	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000
India	1.1	4.9	2.7	5.1	1.7	5.0
China	2.6	11.0	4.1	11.5	3.3	11.3
Malaysia	15.2	37.2	16.5	35.0	15.9	36.1

⁴ The Environment index is designed to measure the degree of conduciveness of the environment that a country provides for the development and use of ICT.

The Readiness index aims to measure the capability of the principal agents (citizens, businesses and governments) to leverage the potential of ICT.

The Usage index aims to measure the degree of usage of ICT by the principal agents (citizens, businesses and governments).

In terms of the spread of overall index over the 104 countries surveyed in 2004-05, the Singapore had the highest value at 1.73 and Chad had the lowest at 1.69. India's rank was 39th, with a score of 0.23. China ranked 41st and had a score of 0.17. The countries from Asia that ranked ahead of India were Singapore, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong SAR, Korea, Malaysia and Thailand.

In terms of the component indices, India maintained its relative ranking for Environment, had a rank of 50 for Readiness component and a rank of 44 for the Usage component. In the 2002-03 rankings, India had ranked 37th overall over a base of 82 countries.

Summary

Overall, the different indices measure very similar aspects and have some components that are common such as the state of the telecom infrastructure, cost of services, literacy or education, regulatory environment etc. To that extent, there is likely to be correlation in rankings. A separate study could indicate the correlations and the differences.

Based on the data gathered over the four indices, it is evident that within Asia, India is in the "middle" group. It is not a leader in that it does not rank among the top five countries in Asia on any index; neither is it a "laggard" that it comes in the bottom five.

The article is based on

1. Analysis of WSIS meetings and documentation, questionnaires and interviews and secondary research on the Internet. A review of meeting agendas, participants, and issues under discussion helped us to document the decision making process in some detail.
2. Interviews with a wide variety of people who were involved or attended the WSIS. (A list is provided in Annexure 2).
3. Questionnaires were circulated to all the 39 participants of WSIS from India, both for phase 1 and 2. We got four responses to it. Given that most participants were in very senior position, in India, it was unlikely that they would have responded. Questionnaires were followed up with telephonic enquiries and reminder emails.
4. Internet search was used to assess the quality of reporting, and participation levels of Indians and Indian Organizations in a variety of WSIS activities.

The National Decision Making Process

The International Relations (IR) Division within the Department of Telecom (DoT), Ministry of Communications and IT, is the concerned department for all international activities related to telecom within the government. Since ITU took the lead role in the conceptualization and management of WSIS and since IR is responsible for all communications related to ITU, it took the lead role in WSIS. The Secretary, DoT, as the executive head of DoT spearheaded the WSIS preparation.

The sequence of events and outcomes of the various meetings is given below.

- A three member Indian delegation led by Secretary (T) participated in the Summit Preparatory Process, (Prep. Com-I) on WSIS held in Geneva from 1 to 5 July 2002. It provided inputs to the deliberations of the sub-committee meetings dealing with the rules of the procedures including arrangements for accreditation and participation for the NGOs and the private sector and draft guiding principles and themes of the summit. In the view of the DoT, its inputs were adequately reflected in the final document that emerged after the meeting.

Phase I

The Indian involvement in the formal WSIS phase 1 process evolved over three ministerial/departmental meetings starting in January 2003. The objectives of the meetings were to set up an agenda for the forthcoming Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting in January 2003 and ultimately for WSIS. The committee included representatives from two of the industry association (Internet Service Providers Association of India (ISPAI) and Telecom Manufacturers Association (TEMA)), the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B), Department of IT (DIT), and several senior people from the DoT. Although invitations had been sent to other telecom service providers they did/could not attend. The meetings sought statements from the stakeholders on general set of principles and themes for the conference. While there was an initiative to involve "outside the

government” parties, the participation in the regional conferences was seen limited to DoT.

- In the first meeting and the subsequent follow-up, the I&B ministry submitted a write up on two major schemes of the government: Cable head end expansion for expansion of network of AIR and licensing framework for Community Broadcasting. The DIT highlighted the projects it had supported such as Simputers, E-governance, Technological Development in Indian Language, etc. There were brief inputs from the Department of Higher Education, Ministry. DOT did not consider these examples as matching with the objectives of WSIS. It’s view was that India’s e-governance applications were more relevant. (Due to India’s intervention in Prepcom I, ITU started hosting ICT success stories and was seen as a mechanism for getting visibility to e-gov projects).

The outcome of the meetings was a consensus that the Indian delegation should highlight Indian government’s achievements in the various ICT sectors. The second meeting was to share the outcomes of Prepcom II. The DoT requested involvement of Ministry of Human Resource Development, Ministry of Health, DIT, I&B ministry and BSNL on a draft document on the Declaration of Principles and Action Plan that had emerged as an output of Preparatory Meeting held in Geneva (17th – 28th Feb. 2003).

- The Indian delegation also participated in the intersessional intergovernmental drafting committee meeting at Paris held, 15-18 July 2003 to advance the negotiations using draft Declaration of Principles and Action Plan as a basic document.
- The third meeting was a review meeting prior to PrepCom III, The Secretary (T) was very positive about the inputs from the Indian side and especially the Indian suggestion of the “Digital Solidarity Fund”. In this meeting, the DoT requested other participants for inputs on the outcomes of Prepcom 2. The I&B Ministry submitted a detailed note, that basically stated that all issues

highlighted in the Draft Action Plan had already been addressed by the Ministry. It also submitted the papers of the First Conference of the Ministers of Information and Broadcasting – Asia Pacific Region held on May 28th, 2003 at Bangkok as inputs for the Indian side. The conference objective was to prepare recommendations reflecting the priorities of broadcasters to be submitted to ITU for WSIS and in the view of the Ministry; these reflected its own agenda.

The DoT critiqued the inputs from the I&B Ministry, citing that points that were specific to India, would not be relevant in the WSIS processes while those that had larger influence could be considered. For example, while DoT supported the creation and maintenance of diversity in media as a principle, including cultural diversity, it did not support the principle of reation of regulatory mechanism to support public and private broadcasters or the creation of fund for development of fund for artists and ensuring the protection of IPRs due to the artists as this was a a specific action plan rather than a set of principles that could be endorsed at the global level.

- In a response to the Meeting by Secretary DIT for UNESCO’s Round table of ICT Ministers in Oct 2003, DOT emphasize its own role in WSIS, in relation to the DIT.

Phase II

- An initial task was setting up the Inter ministerial Group for World Summit on Information Systems (WSIS), September 2004. A presentation on WSIS triggered the setting up of a committee for follow up action on the Plan up action document adopted in the WSIS. The committee members were from DOT (Annexure 3).
- It was decided to coordinate with I&B Ministry, HRD, DIT, Health, Culture, Agriculture and request them to appoint senior personnel as nodal officers for follow up action on the WSIS. The objective was to gather inputs from other

departments and Ministries on WSIS and evolving the Indian position on Internet Governance (IG).

- On 25th January, 2005, FICCI organized an interactive luncheon meeting with the then Ambassador, David A Gross, US coordinator for Information Policy, WSIS.
- Working Group on Internet Governance discussed the IG issues based on the report prepared of DDG (I), TEC. Members included senior staff from DIT, DOT, VSNL, Sify, Ministry of External Affairs, ISPAI, and MTNL (Annexure 4). CEO, Sify requested to put together the various inputs on IG for presentation in Feb 2005 in Geneva. The inputs were presented in February in Geneva on the meeting of the WGIG. The Indian inputs are presented in Annexure 5.
- Involvement of Permanent Mission (India) (PMI), Geneva for preparation to Prepcoms and Tunis Summit.

PMI's assessment was that a consensus could emerge regarding the contents of the final document, except WGIG, since it was a contentious issue. The PMI felt that India had not made sufficient efforts at making itself visible in Phase 1. Possibly, India needed to focus on development role of ICTs rather than its progress in the business and commercial sector alone. India should allot prime time to CEOs of corporation that have played a key role in ICT in the Plenary. WSIS Secretariat had already sent invitation to Mr Narayan Murthy, Infosys and Mr Mukesh Ambani, Reliance. The PMI's contended that DOT could review suggestion by the Greek delegation to modify the plenary and Round Table format to bring about better interface between the side events and plenary and also suggested mechanism to change the format of the round table.

DoT felt that ICT for development as a theme should get more prominence than in Phase 1, where DoT felt that its efforts on this aspect had not been adequate. Although DoT was in support of involving the private sector, its

concern was how to regulate the selection of such people and their presentations.

- Participation by India in an International Conference sponsored by UNESCO. “UNESCO between the Two Summits”. The objective was to draft recommendations for determining UNESCO’s position on further implementation of the main provisions of the WSIS

Perceptions of Indian Team Regarding Their Own Participation

Formally, the three member Indian delegation led by Secretary (T) that had participated in a variety of WSIS related meetings was satisfied with its inputs and felt that it had influenced the outcomes. It recognized that Indians may not be able to gain visibility in subsequent rounds, and therefore, participation of senior people in early stages would help to put across the Indian perspective early.

Analysis

- The Indian participation driven by the DoT, focused on the Indians showcasing their capacity and capability in the IT sector. This was more pronounced in the first phase. In the second phase, the agenda had been set and there was discussion on the issue of IG. There was little focus on the other agenda issues. There was some attempt at highlighting India’s capability in the IT4D space, both in phase 1 and 2. On this aspect, it was left to DoT to push DIT to provide inputs as DIT was the concerned department for overseeing some e-governance activities.
- Even though the DoT acknowledged the need to highlight ICT4D projects, it only contacted the DIT, and other government departments for identifying projects. Many significant e-government projects have been undertaken by the state governments, NGO, and public-private partnerships. These would be left out of consideration by the exclusive involvement of Central ministries/departments.

- Although DoT attempted to involve several ministries/departments, there was significant response from only the DIT, and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Possibly, other departments did not see any direct and visible gains from participation.
- DoT's focus was more on the infrastructure and "technology", rather on information and its availability.
- The perspective that the Summit should be used to highlight India's capabilities dominated the discussion, rather than focusing on strategies for regional/strategic cooperation. Although there was an assessment that US would take strong position, there was no initiative to think of regional strategies and/or cooperation.
- The Indian delegation participated in all regional conferences.
- In their own perceptions, the DoT had provided "valuable" inputs, since some of the suggestions provided by them were incorporated in the final documents.
- While the Secretary, DoT was involved in (Prepcom 1) drafting the initial processes for involvement of NGOs, at the national level, this mechanism was not translated in to a process for involving the civil society or media.
- While the inter ministerial/department meetings were held formally, a more open mechanism such as a consultation paper or seminars/workshops could have been adopted to increase the diversity in participation as well as broaden the scope of discussion and debate.
- The DoT attempted to involve the various Industry associations in the telecom sector, this exercise was more pronounced in Phase 1 than in Phase 2. However, the private sector participation was limited to a few meetings. Many

of the Indian private players had been separately invited by the WSIS secretariat, as they represented several other groups such as International Chamber of Commerce or were internationally eminent people in their own right (Mr Narayan Murthy, Mr Mukesh Ambani).

- There was a systematic and ongoing process followed by the DoT in holding meetings and follow up and sharing outcomes after each event.
- While no other department/ministry challenged DoT's dominant role, or provided significant inputs, the PMI, Geneva considered itself a significant player, possibly because of its proximity to Geneva. It gave a framework for participation and made several suggestions, some of which DoT adopted.
- In involving the private sector, DoT had reservations regarding the selection process as well as the content, although this approach was at variance with its stated objective of showcasing Indian achievement in the ICT sector. This, as is well known, has been led by the private sector.

Summary of Discussions with Various Decision makers (Annexure 2)

The Indian decision makers felt that due to the hegemony of the US and its dominant position in world trade, significant outcomes that would be relevant for India would not emerge.

Regarding the setting up of the Task force on Financing Mechanism, the Indian delegation felt that by making contributions voluntary, there was nothing very new or innovative.

Regarding Spam, Porn and Security, the Indian delegation felt that these issues had to be worked out in the context of specific countries within their cultural, social and legal norms, and there was nothing specific on which the Indian delegation had any inputs.

There were number of Internet related issues that countries needed to solve on their own such as mirror servers, migrating from ipv4 to ipv6, or making more bandwidth available. Indian government was of the view that civil society could participate only after a "selection" process and as the civil society was fragmented and not very significant in its ability to influence national outcomes. Thus, it had very little role to play in the WSIS process.

Summary

Although DoT had taken the lead role in the WSIS preparation, it had a narrow view of the scope and participants that could play a significant role. It was limited to involving the government departments and industry association and players in the sector. It was unable to involve the NGOs, the media and other entities.

The concerned ministries were not proactive in participation and DoT had to repeatedly seek various inputs. The perception among the senior decision makers was that the agenda of the WSIS was not very relevant and useful to India's aspirations from the summit. Their quality of involvement in the process was partly driven by the perception of the lack of opportunity to influence the outcome in any significant way.

Analysis of the Questionnaire

We received four responses from the 39 questionnaires that were sent. The respondents were representative from NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Services Companies), Tata Consultancy Services (software company), Midas Communications Technologies Limited (R&D company associated with low cost introduction of Internet in rural areas), and ISPAI (Internet Service Providers Association of India). Of these respondents, one said, he had been too little involved to respond to questions meaningfully. The other respondent did not answer many of the questions. (details of the responses are with the author).

None of the respondents were involved in the face to face policy related meetings Geneva or Tunis, although the ISPAI had been involved with the DoT meetings in India and in email and web based discussion on the issue of IG with the WGIG.

Regarding the contributions of WSIS, the perception was that it had contributed to making the issue of Internet penetration and IG visible. There was participation from civil society and it was reasonably well organized. The civil society was able to create awareness in the minds of policy makers about its domains of operations.

The constraints to influencing the policy processes was the lack of financial support for participation, lack of networking support for collaboration, and requirements of knowing English for effective participation and assimilation of information on the web.

The legacy of the WSIS was felt to be the "provision for an effective alternative to ICANN" and "succeeded in bridging the digital divide" "and formulating a strategy ICT organizations for rapid penetration of Internet".

Media Coverage

During the WSIS Summit, there were several articles in the popular press regarding the format, agenda, processes and the likely outcomes. While the coverage on format, agenda, and processes was largely fact based, there were a few pieces that analyzed the likely outcomes.

Several articles focused on the contentious issue of Internet Governance (IG). While there were some articles that dwelt on the general issues, only a few articles highlighted India's position regarding the report of the WGIG. Annexure 6 gives the Indian position on IG. India had advocated IG through a UN body or member governments, for which it had the support of China, Brazil, Russia and Saudi Arabia.

Annexure 7 provides a summary of the media coverage on WSIS.

Analysis

The English language press has carried out articles on the drivers for the WSIS, its scope and expected outcomes.

- There was only one article that gave an in depth analysis of factors driving the WSIS, the role of civil society, and the outcomes from a civil society perspective.
- Most articles wrote on IG issues and the perspective of US and other developing countries. There was no or very little critique of the Indian position.
- While the WSIS phase 2 had other issues such as the Internet Financing, mechanism, very little reference was made to it. Possibly, this was a reflection of the wider environment of the WSIS in which the IG issue took up the central space.
- One of the reasons that the issues of the digital divide did not receive adequate attention in Tunis and hence in the press relates to the fate of the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms (TFFM). The TFFM was convened as an invited space by UNDP and could not be transformed into an open space by civil society as was the case with the WGIG. This affected its outcomes, which were more limited.
- The media referred to the DoT paper on IG, but hardly critiqued it. Nor did any publication question the process adopted by the DoT to develop the agenda for the WSIS. For example, there was no comment on the government's non-involvement of any NGOs for consultation, the media, academicians, or other professionals, especially for Phase 2. Subsequent to phase 1, there was an attempt to involve professionals to come up with an agenda paper for IG.

- There was only a spurt attempt by the media to comment on the WSIS issues. The articles appeared a little before, during and after the various WSIS events. This may be reflective of the need to report on “current events”, rather than the media viewing the WSIS as a longer term process. In addition, this attitude may also have been driven by the perception that the outcomes of WSIS were not likely to be “actionable”, unlike say that of WTO.
- Moreover, since the Indian delegation did not see itself as shaping the outcomes, there was little impetus for it to seek visibility. In addition, ICT issues get lower media attention than commercial issues such as WTO.
- There was only one article that looked at the ICT4D aspect.
- While the Indian side had pushed for local language domain name registration as a part of the IG report, there was very little coverage on the WSIS in the local language press. And it is difficult to assess the actual extent of coverage, as these web sites are not keyword searchable.
- The inability of the media to engage in public debate, especially with a focus on India, may reflect either indifference of readers to be involved in issues which they may not see as directly relevant. This could be true in the middle class Indian context, where readership may be high, but developmental issues may not be directly impact them. Another possibility is that the journalists may not have had the deeper understanding or the wherewithal to continue with a prolonged education process.

Involvement of Civil Society and Private Sector

Civil Society

While WSIS started as an inter governmental exercise led by ITU, an organization that primarily deals with telecom infrastructure, the two year period over which the Summit was designed to be spread out (from 2003 to 2005), created opportunities for a range of civil society organizations to get involved.

Significant areas where civil society played a key role were in the area of IG, gender, funding, and ICT4D. The setting up of the WGIG as a multi stakeholder group with representation from public, private and the government sector, gave the civil society visibility in participation. The IGF will constitute a global public policy space open to all stakeholders. The creation of forum for ICT4D in WSIS was another opportunity for civil society participation. Another significant area for civil society intervention was around gender issues vis-à-vis information society and development.

There were several Indian civil society organizations that participated in the WSIS summit. The participation was on an individual entity basis, rather than as a group activity at the national level. Several of the civil society organizations were showcasing the ICT4D activities, usually funded by multilateral agencies. One example of such organizations is SEWA (funding through infoDev, IDRC?). There were other presentations in the ICT4D space (Akshaya project, www.akshaya.org). Several others (such as Ambedkar Center for Justice - www.ambedkar.net) participated as members of larger groups Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO).

There were a number of workshops in which civil society from India participated. For example, the WSIS Grassroots Caucus that was formed at Prepcom2 of the Tunis Phase, deliberated on issues relating to the WSIS through e-discussions organized two consultations one in Delhi (from 10th – 12th July, 2005) and the second in Lusaka (from 26th – 28th July, 2005). Many civil society organizations participated in this. The large number of Indians that could participate in this consultation was possibly due to the fact that this meeting was organized in India. This provided the grassroots caucus members opportunities to have face to face discussion regarding the WSIS process.

- The MDGs and WSIS.
- The role of ICT enabled knowledge centers at the grassroots to accelerate the MDGs.
- Issues underpinning WSIS plan of action.

Similarly, there was the participation of grassroots women in Prepcom2 in which many of the Indian organizations participated.

- Although the national process did not take into account the involvement of civil society, the civil society deliberations and groups sought each other and were able to network.
- The Indian government views NGOs with suspicion, given that several of them are conduits for illegal funds. There has been no attempt to accredit them. There are few NGOs that are pan national. There are hardly any who see themselves in the "Information Society" or policy advocacy space at the national or global level. Most Indian NGOs deal with developmental problems in a regional context and may have adopted ICT4D as solutions. However, extremely few are involved in the national ICT policy. When they are, it is with a view to influence the telecom sector policy and regulation and removes constraints for access. The participation of the civil society was absent from the regional events, as in India, only the delegation from DoT represented India.
- The lack of participation of civil society in significant areas of policy in India may be reflective of the need for capacity building within these organizations. The capacity building has to be both in terms of the "knowledge of technical issues" and also with processes at the international level that may have a bearing on national policy outcomes. Case study of Association for Progressive Communication could be a model for such an endeavor. For example, the Report of Task Force on Financial Management provides significant scope (the uses of public finance, the promotion of community and local government networks, a renewed mandate to Universal Access Funds) for civil society participation in India. However, there is very little civil society participation in this space.

- In earlier years, the Indian government saw itself as the designer, implementer and funder of development, and thus there was little space for policy advocacy by grassroots organizations. This may be another reason why the civil society in India has not been able to build the capacity to operate in the policy advocacy space effectively. This requires an ability to understand the power dynamics involved in engaging with governments, the private sector and international organizations.
- Participation in national activities that aim to influence policy and regulation is expensive as it involves travel. Air travel, especially international travel is expensive vis-à-vis the budgets of most civil society organizations. It would be unrealistic to expect them to effectively participate on an on-going basis without external budgetary support.
- On its part, the government needs to understand that to in an increasingly knowledge based society; the civil society can play an important role in putting forth the agenda for development from the grass roots. Also, it helps in development of policy outcomes that are more inclusive and representative.

Private Sector

The Indian private sector was involved primarily in the exhibition of the ICT4D pavilions. The objective was to highlight Indians IT capabilities. In terms of participation in the WSIS process, significant contribution in decision making was only from Mr. R.Ramaraj, MD, Sify Limited (an ISP). His participation in the WSIS process was based on both in his personal capacity as a member of International Chamber of Commerce and the recommendations of the Inerministerial/department committee organized by the DoT, referred to above.

- Thus, it is evident that the Indian private sector participation in the decision making process was limited. The Indian private sector possibly wanted space for business opportunities and did not agree with the Indian government's

view that ICANN should be managed through a multilateral process. This divergence, DoT's own perceptions (how to regulate selection of and content from private enterprises, if they were to be involved at the national level), and the fact that they were fewer spaces for the "Technical" showcasing could have led to lower participation from the Indian private sector.

- The private sector did not take sufficient initiatives to mobilize itself or media. There was a meeting, organized by the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (referred to above), but none organized by the telecom sector industry associations.

Involvement of Indians in other WSIS Processes/Conferences

This section analyses the various WSIS processes and conferences outside the plenary and the main summit. We analyzed the participant data on these conferences to assess the level of participation and whether it had any impact.

The conferences/workshops in which Indians had any participation were:

- ITU Workshop on IG: Mr. Shyamal Ghosh, USO Administrator for India was the Chairman. There were several presentations and formal record of statements made by country representatives. None of these was by an Indian. In fact all presentations listed on the website (other than one) were from the western part of the world. The remaining paper was from Asia.
- WSIS Thematic Meeting on Countering Spam: There were three Indian participants. It was not clear whether they played any role in the outcomes
- UNESCO – Multi lingualism for Cultural Diversity and Participation of All in Cyberspace: There was a presentation

from a senior officer in the Ministry of Communications and IT. This was an e-discussion.

- WSIS Thematic Meeting on Cybersecurity. The chairman and panelist were Indians.

Annexure 8 provides information on the topics, participants by country represented, and level of participation in satellite events.

From the limited participation, both in terms of the number of conferences attended and quality and level of participation, Indians had little influence even in the satellite events. While several country delegations made separate statements, there were none from India.

Conclusions

There was a mismatch between what the Indian government expected out of the WSISF or/and actual outcomes. For example, the government viewed in Phase 1, as an opportunity to highlight India's capabilities in the ICT sector, while the WSIS outcomes were more Internet policy based. In the second phase, the Indian delegation was not able to get acceptance for the Digital Solidarity Fund, that was based on its own recommendations.

The Indian preparatory processes and the media focused on the computers and Internet, ignoring the role of mass media in an Information society. The engagement in the preparatory process was highly skewed, with the government playing the overwhelmingly dominant part. Some space was given to the private sector, but none to civil society. The Indian government has not recognized the role of an informed civil society in bringing about more inclusive policies. On the other hand, the civil society in India has yet to build size, effectiveness and credibility in the policy advocacy space. The role of the media in shaping policy outcomes was minimal.

For a more effective engagement process, attitudinal changes on the part of the government and capacity building for civil society and media are necessary. Explicit funding for accredited organization and selected personnel can go a long way in helping developing countries participate in international policy processes more effectively.

The WGIG report made four sets of recommendations –

- on the need for a forum to discuss broad public policy issues related to the Internet,
- on oversight models for Internet governance, on measures to promote development and access to the Internet and on capacity building for developing countries to participate more effectively in Internet governance.
- With the exception of the issue of oversight models, civil society participation was decisive in the other three issues. And the issue of a forum became the key point of consensus in the Tunis summit.
- So the decision in Tunis to establish an Internet Governance Forum (IGF) was a result of civil society initiation of the idea within the WGIG and a factor of the multi-stakeholder process that enabled stakeholders to interact. It is worth recalling that the idea of a forum had been opposed by the US government and the private sector during the second phase of WSIS until it was clear that it had broad support.

Annexure 1: The Digital Access Index

The Digital Access Index is calculated as a weighted average of 8 variables in 5 categories. The variables, listed below, measure access to and usage of ICTs as well as education level of the population. Each category is of equal importance, although some variables within categories are assigned unequal weights. See below:

Category	Variable	Weight
1.Infrastructure	1. Fixed telephone subscribers per 100 inhabitants	10%
	2. Mobile cellular subscribers per 100 inhabitants	10%
2.Affordability	3. Internet access price as percent of GNI x 100	20%
3.Knowledge	4. Adult Literacy	13%
	5. Combined primary, secondary, and tertiary school enrollment	7%
4.Quality	6. International Internet bandwidth per capita	10%
	7. Broadband subscribers per 1000 inhabitants	10%
5.Usage	8. Internet users per 100 inhabitants	20%

Annexure 2: List of people who were interviewed

1. Mr. Y.S. Bhave, Additional Secretary, DOT.
2. Mr. M.K. Jain, DDG (IR), DOT.
3. Mr. Nambiar, Secretary DIT
4. Mr. B.S. Bedi, DIT
5. Mr. R.S.P. Sinha, MD, MTNL

Annexure 3: List of members for the first meeting settling up the inter ministerial group (WSIS, Phase I).

1. Member (T)
2. Sr. DDG (SU)

3. Sr DDG (VAS)
4. DDG (IR)
5. DDG (BS)
6. Sr. DDG, TEC

Annexure 4: Members present in the working group on IG meeting

1. Chairman, TC,
2. Addnl Secy, DoT,
3. Member (T), DoT
4. JS(DIT), DIT
5. JS (UN, MEA),
6. Sr DDG (TEC),
7. DDG (I), TEC),
8. Director (T), MTNL,
9. DDG (BB), BSNL,
10. Dir (O), VSNL,
11. CEO, Sify, Secy, ISPAI.

Annexure 5: Indian Inputs on WGIG

1. Definition of IG.
2. Public Policy issues related to the IG.
3. Development of a common understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of governments, existing intergovernmental and international organizations and other forums as well as the private sector and civil society from both developing and developed countries.
4. Prepare a report on the results of this activity to be presented for consideration and appropriate action for the second phase of WSIS in Tunis in 2005.”
5. The WGIG (India) concerned about Multi lingual Domain Name issue in addition to other issues.

Annexure 6: India's Position

- Push for dilution of control of US-supported Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) over global Internet governance.
- Suggest setting up an inter-government organisation to co-ordinate issues related to Internet and IP-based services.
- Object to the IP address allocation mechanism deployed by ICANN on the grounds that it was leading to huge routing tables, leaving fewer resources for traffic. "It is proposed that allocation of IP addresses should be country-based, taking into account the country's population, level of development and potential. This may facilitate simple and efficient routing, monitoring and policy enforcement."
- Seek decentralization of the location of root servers. Currently, there are 13 root servers, out of which 10 are in the US, two in Europe and one in Japan.
- Push for domain name registration in local languages. "We are of the opinion that for citizens to access information through ubiquitous ways through the Internet, domain name in Roman script is a big impediment and we, therefore, feel a strong need for the multilingual domain name registration."

Annexure 7: Summary of the media coverage on WSIS

The Hindu

- *The Hindu outlines the public policy issues involved in WSIS1. It highlighted how little information was available to the public, despite the fact that there issues of "vial public interest". It contrasted the Indian civil society's indifference with the enthusiasm of the African, Asian, and Latin American groups; although the WSIS processes had left them disenchanted. The disenchantment was both over the processes adopted as well as the lack of adequate coverage of issues such as human rights and gender in the Draft Declaration of Principles and focus on Internet rather than on mass media.*

<http://www.hinduonnet.com/mag/2003/12/07/stories/2003120700190400.htm>

- *The Hindu Business Line (Sep 5, 2005) reported on the issues and framework identified by WGIG. It analyzed the role of the US vis-à-vis the different elements of the WGIG report.*

The article also discussed the US position on the WGIG recommendation of creation of a forum with adequate representation of private sector, governments and civil society and the implications of its stand for the future of ICANN.

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/ew/2005/09/05/stories/2005090500290400.htm>

- *Op-Ed of Oct 26, 2005: Discussed the issue of IG and development. While many nations want a multi lateral agency to manage the Internet, the US wants oversight by US government on the existing private management of ICANN. The article highlighted how the issue of IG has shadowed discussion of other challenges in developing countries. While the Tunis agenda calls for*

involvement of governments, private sector and NGOs, to implement the agenda, and suggests that these countries should aim at creation of a global forum that will aid countries in the use of Internet and ICT4D, the US has been pushing for private sector involvement with US government oversight.

<http://www.hindu.com/2005/10/26/stories/2005102602281000.htm>

[m](#)

- *The article on (Nov 16, 2005) focused on various governments' perspective on who should control the Internet. It brought out the US perspective of having ICANN under private management with oversight from US government vis-à-vis the civil society's contention that this perspective is driven by the broader underlying theme of rich and poor nations.*

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2005/11/16/stories/2005111601770400.htm>

- *The third article (Nov 15, 2005), highlighted the issue of IG and mentions the involvement of C-DAC, HCL and others at the ICT4All pavilion.*

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2005/11/15/stories/2005111501990400.htm>

The Hindu: Consulting Editor (Anand Parthasarathy)

The story of a rural woman, who is a "reporter" for a "local" channel that broadcasts specially designed content generated by the villagers themselves, highlighted the role of more traditional broadcasting media such as TV and relevant content in providing useful information to villagers for their livelihoods. What was striking was that she was the only media person who was selected to speak in the plenary session. The article also brought out the shortcomings in the traditional print media and Internet (on which the WSIS was largely focused) to address the needs of rural poor.

Economic Times

Dec 3, 2003,: Highlights the issue of US dominance in IG and identifies other important issues as Network security, harmonization of cyber laws, ICT4D, e-governance and good governance.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/336369.cms>

DataQuest

December, 2005. Sums up by saying that WSIS was a "critical UN Summit on expanding Net access around the world has ended in Tunis marred by controversy over censorship and who runs the Internet". It highlights the digital divide across developing and developed nations.

The article provides a critical analysis of the outcomes of the summit, stating that no specific solution on funding the Internet access was discussed. The article gave the background on the debate surrounding ICANN and oversight of Internet. This article, unlike others, also focused on the role of Civil Society participation and their call for "action to balance the rights of all digital citizens".

India's position in WSIS was dictated by larger issues and it made no specific comments on IG issues. India focused on showcasing some of the ICT4D applications, telemedicine. The magazine claims that the Indian pavilion made a "huge impact", although it is not clear on what dimensions.

<http://www.dgindia.com/archive/listArchive.asp?mode=seek>

Financial Express

Financial Express (19th Nov, 2005: The article discussed the IG issues highlighted in WSIS. It brought out the role of EU as an intermediary between US, and China and Iran. Reports on the lack of backing for the Digital Solidarity Fund.

The article also describes some of the ICT4D applications. It provides the civil society perspective questioning the freedom of press, and controls on Net content by Tunisian government, especially since it was the host of the Summit that pre supposes freedom of generating and sharing content.

http://financialexpress-bd.com/index3.asp?cnd=11/19/2005§ion_id=4&newsid=7195&spcl=no

Financial Express (21st November, 2005): Debate over ICANN Ownership (Nasscom)

While US expresses the need for private enterprise in Internet, its own oversight over ICANN does not lead to a coherent view. The article focuses on US perspective of ICANN oversight. Suggests "denationalization of ICANN rather than "internationalization" a better outcome and suggests organizational mechanisms (multi stakeholder Board participation, independent financial audit etc)

http://www.financialexpress.com/fe_archive_full_story.php?content_id=109205

Annexure 8: Assessing India's Participation in Satellite Events at WSIS2

Level of Participation	ITU - Workshop on Internet Governance	Nationality
Chairman	Mr. Shyamal Ghosh, <i>Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, India.</i>	Indian
Participants	Mr. A.K Chatterjee., <i>Permanent Mission of India</i> Mr. Pankaj Saran, <i>Permanent Mission of India</i>	Indian
Presentations	<i>No presentations made by India</i> For presentations by other countries , please contact rekha@iimahd.ernet.in	
Remarks	<i>No Statement from India</i> For statements made by Brazil, China, Denmark, Japan, Syrian, please contact rekha@iimahd.ernet.in	

Level of Participation	WSIS Thematic Meeting on Countering Spam	Nationality
Participants	Mr. Suresh Ramasubramaniam <i>Manager, Antispam Operations for Outblaze</i> Mr. Shaji Abraham Senior Research Officer <i>Telecom Regulatory Authority of India</i> Mr. Vineet. K. Agrawal Senior Research Officer <i>Telecom Regulatory Authority of India</i>	Indian Indian Indian
Presentations	<i>No presentations made by India</i>	
Remarks	<i>No statements made by India</i>	

Level of Participation	Government of the Republic of Belarus/UNESCO/ UN/UNDP Office in the Republic of Belarus - "information Technologies and Law" (Legal Informatization – 2004)	Nationality
Presentations	<i>No presentations from India</i>	
Remarks	<i>No statements made by India</i> For statements made by other participants, please contact rekha@iimahd.ernet.in	

Level of Participation	Workshop on CODATA (ICSU) WSIS Session	Nationality
Chairman	Krishan Lal, <i>Indian National Science Academy, CODATA</i>	Indian
Presentations	<i>No presentations were made by India</i> Presentation by H.E Adama SAMASSEKOU, President of the African Academy of Languages For presentations by other countries , please contact rekha@iimahd.ernet.in	
Remarks	<i>No statements made by India</i>	

Level of Participation	Meeting on ILO/ITC/OECD/UNCTAD - Economic and Social Implications of ICT	Nationality
Participants	<i>No specific information about participant's country of origin</i> For related information, please contact rekha@iimahd.ernet.in	
Presentations	<i>No presentations given by India</i>	
Remarks	<i>No statements made by India</i>	

Level of Participation	Conference on UNESCO - International Conference on Freedom of Expression in Cyberspace	Nationality
Participants	<i>No specific information about participants country of origin</i> For related information, please contact rekha@iimahd.ernet.in	
Presentations	<i>No presentations made by India</i>	
Remarks	<i>No statements made by India</i>	

Level of Participation	Meeting on UNCTAD/OECD/ITU/UIS/UN Regional Commissions/UN ICT Task Force/World Bank - Measuring the Information Society	Nationality
Participants	<i>No specific information about participant's country of origin</i> For related information, please contact rekha@iimahd.ernet.in	
Presentations	<i>No presentations were made by India</i> For presentations made by other countries, please contact rekha@iimahd.ernet.in	
Remarks	<i>No statements made by India</i>	

Level of Participation	Meeting on Government of Canada and UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues - Indigenous Peoples in the Information Society: Delivering on the Plan of Action	Nationality
Participants	No specific information about participant's country of origin. For related information, please contact rekha@iimahd.ernet.in	
Presentations	No presentations made by India	
Remarks	No statements made by India	

Level of Participation	Meeting on UNESCO - Multilingualism for Cultural Diversity and Participation of All in Cyberspace	Nationality
Participants	No specific information about participant's country of origin. For related information, please contact rekha@iimahd.ernet.in	
Presentation	Multilingualism for Cultural Diversity and Participation of All in Cyberspace Om Vikas, Senior Director, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, India	Indian
Remarks	No statements were made by India	

Level of Participation	Meeting on UNESCO and the Club of Rome - World Conference on ICT for Capacity-Building: Critical Success Factors	Nationality
Participants	No specific information about participant's country of origin.	
Presentation	No presentations made by India	
Remarks	No statements made by India	

Level of Participation	Meeting on UNESCO - Cultural Diversity in Knowledge Societies	Nationality
Participants	No specific information about participant's country of origin	
Presentations	No presentations made by India	

Remarks	<i>No statements made by India</i>	
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Level of Participation	WSIS Thematic Meeting on Cybersecurity	Nationality
Chairman	Suresh Ramasubramanian <i>Manager, Outblaze, India on Developing Watch, Warning and Incident Response Capabilities</i>	Indian
Panelist	Suresh Ramasubramanian <i>Manager, Outblaze, India The Way Forward - Frameworks for International Cooperative Action and Close of Meeting</i>	
Presentations	<i>No presentations made by India</i>	
Remarks	<i>No statements made by India</i>	