

## "Driving Development with ICTs and the Internet"

Wednesday 17 October 2007

Etisalat Academy Hotel, Dubai, UAE

**11:00h – 12:30h Session 1:**

### ***Creating an enabling environment to promote innovation, investment, competition and entrepreneurship.***

Panelists:

- Art Reilly, Senior Director, Cisco Systems, USA
- Abdel Hamid Mamdouh, Director, WTO, Switzerland
- Mohammad H. Omran, President and CEO, Etisalat, UAE
- Dr. Tarek Kamel, Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Egypt (via video-link)
  
- Moderator: Peter Hellmonds, Nokia Siemens Networks, Germany

First, we will start off the session by having each panelist come on stage from the audience one by one. The moderator will introduce each briefly (short biography would be helpful) and asks every panelist a few brief introductory questions before going on to invite the next panelist on stage.

First set of questions would be centered around the following:

- Why are innovation, investment, competition and entrepreneurship relevant to you (your company, ministry, organization)?
- Why should anyone outside of your organization care about these issues?
- Why do these need an enabling environment in your opinion?
- What would be some characteristics of an enabling environment for you?

The purpose of this round of questions would be to flesh out for the audience that the social and economic development of a society or country depends to a large extent on a thriving private sector, as the allocation of resources is best determined by a competitive marketplace.

After that round of introductory questions, we could explore together how different measures could be introduced that would improve the environment to make it an enabling environment. To start this round off, the moderator introduces findings of a World Bank report:

*The World Development Report 2005 had the following to say about challenges to the investment climate. The World Bank surveyed 26,000 companies in 53 countries in their Investment Climate Surveys and benchmarked regulatory regimes in more than 130 countries. Here's a list of the greatest barriers to a healthy investment climate:*

- *Policy uncertainty*
- *Macroeconomic instability*
- *Arbitrary regulation*
- *Unreliable infrastructure*
- *Contract enforcement difficulties*
- *Crime and corruption*

*Of the barriers mentioned above, 51% of the perceived risks are associated with two factors alone: policy uncertainty and macroeconomic instability. Another 39% of the perceived risks relate to taxation, regulation and corruption.*

These are general challenges to any business, but for the sector of ICT, it would be useful to explore also sector-specific impediments to an enabling environment, i.e. questions like:

- What do you as investor or innovative company or as government see as sector-specific challenges and how would these possibly impact upon your goals?
  - Complexity of technology
  - Speed of innovation
  - Global nature of ICT
  - Skills development
  - New business models
  - Disruptive technologies
- How can we address these challenges?

This would then open the round of discussions.

We would also accept questions from the audience....