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Memorandum

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Swedish Presidency of the European Union

*Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications
Division for Information Technology Policy*

Speaking note Opening session EuroDIG Sept 14 2009

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'm honoured by the chance to address you today, at this second ever European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG).

The EuroDIG is a great opportunity to openly and freely discuss ideas, experiences and concerns in a multi-stakeholder format. And it is a valuable preparation for the 4th Internet Governance Forum in Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt in November.

The multi-stakeholder process on Internet governance continues to provide an inclusive and effective mechanism for promoting global cooperation and needs to be further encouraged. The Internet Governance Forum is another good example of such a multi-stakeholder forum.

Information technologies have already made significant contributions to economic growth. And ICT has potential to bring renewed growth, create more jobs and improve energy efficiency throughout Europe.

Overall, ICT can turn Europe into a leading knowledge economy.

With this as a background, Sweden is during its Presidency primarily seeking to contribute to the dialogue of a renewed European policy agenda for the Information Society. This is addressed through a high level conference "Visby agenda: creating impact for an eUnion 2015" followed by Council conclusions.

We are opening up for a public consultation on this report and on the future of the European policy agenda. Please tag all your blog entries or tweets with "#visbyagenda" [hash visbyagenda]. We will be listening.

It is also my hope and truly belief that we will be able to reach an agreement and be able to adopt the telecoms package in the very near future, thanks to the great spirit of cooperation amongst the Member States, the European Commission and the European Parliament.

The international debate on Internet issues has been very difficult and challenging at times.

Recent political events have shown how important it is to maintain a single, global Internet for reasons of democracy, freedom of expression and freedom of information.

The Internet needs to remain a tool for democracy and open debate. It is important that we work together to keep the Internet free and open.

The importance of the Internet for our societies and economies has been continuously growing. Therefore, questions related to the management of what has become a global critical resource have also continued to gain importance.

The EU should actively engage with its international partners. And we need discussions on how to stimulate and support international dialogue and cooperation to implement agreed upon public policy principles for Internet governance.

The private sector organisations involved in the international coordination of key Internet resources need to have the highest standards of corporate governance and continuing efforts towards full transparency and accountability to all Internet stakeholders.

In conclusion, the Swedish EU Presidency would like to extend its sincere thanks to organizers of this EuroDIG forum, which is a good opportunity for European stakeholders to exchange ideas about how ICTs can improve our lives today and tomorrow, and to prepare for the upcoming IGF in November.

I look forward to seeing you all in Sharm El Sheikh!