**WITSA News**

*The official publication of the World Information Technology & Services Alliance*

**July 3, 2020**

**SPOTLIGHT**

**Road-to-WCIT Malaysia**

The Road-to-WCIT Malaysia is a highlight of the TECHFEST LIVE and will be held November 18-20, 2020. The Road to WCIT Malaysia will feature the latest technology and innovation conversations and the 2020 Global ICT Excellence Awards. TECHFEST LIVE is a hybrid event, featuring physical events, a live telecast and a virtual technology festival.

In connection with the Road-to-WCIT Malaysia livestream event on November 18-20 ([https://wcit2020.org](https://wcit2020.org)), WITSA will also be holding its biennial General Assembly meeting on November 17th. The WITSA GA is WITSA's preeminent membership meeting, where a new Chairman and a new Board of Directors will be elected for the 2020-2022 term.

**Deadline Approaching for WITSA's First Virtual Global ICT Excellence Awards!**

This is a gentle reminder to send in your nominees for WITSA's first ever Virtual Global ICT Excellence Awards by the August 14, 2020 deadline. The Global ICT Excellence Awards will be held in conjunction with the November 18-20, 2020 “Road to WCIT Malaysia” – a live telecast event organized by The National ICT Association of Malaysia (PIKOM)! Further to our previous announcements, we have now added three new COVID-19 related award categories:
PUBLIC POLICY

June 30, 2020

TO: Members of the World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA)

FR: Anders Halvorsen, VP Global Public Policy

RE: Important WTO Update & Joint Industry Statement

Dear Colleagues,

Further to our June 8th announcement (below), we would like to thank all members who signed the joint industry letter, which encouraged WTO members to restart a full regular schedule of work online, rising to the challenge that the situation requires. The final letter is available here. Following the publication late last year of our policy statement entitled “Supporting Digital Trade Rules for Innovation and Sustainable Economic Development: A Case for a Trade Agreement” (https://witsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/2019_DigitalTrade-PR.pdf), WITSA developed an action plan on how best to support the ongoing efforts at the World Trade Organization to negotiate a new comprehensive e-commerce agreement. The Joint Statement Initiative on E-Commerce (JSI) presents a critical opportunity for the global trade body to prove its relevance in the current political environment and could lead to broader WTO reforms as well. WITSA is concerned about the very real risk that the significant achievements in multilateral trade liberalization since 1948 might begin to erode, as nations become introspective and protective in the face of global financial and economic challenges. This is a serious and complex issue for the global business community, affecting not just the future of multilateral negotiations, but – equally important – the future of global trade rule making and dispute settlement. A successful conclusion of the WTO e-commerce negotiations resulting in an agreement by the 2020 WTO Ministerial would invigorate global digital trade at a critical time and enhance the stature and relevance of the global trade body.

For your information, a summary of the latest JSI on E-commerce negotiations in Geneva is attached. On June 11, the JSI on E-commerce held its first virtual plenary meeting since February. Participants were asked to consider the way forward, especially in consideration of the COVID-19 crisis. Delegations expressed commitment to keeping the momentum and making progress using different formats. Participants are also committed to making use of
different technological tools, while ensuring transparency and inclusiveness, and being mindful of the needs of small delegations. Progress so far bode well for making substantive progress by the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) – new date still undetermined. The next plenary meetings are scheduled for July 3rd and 27th.

Best regards,

Anders

MEMBER NEWS

CAMTIC: 53% of companies will reduce IT investments in Latin America in the second quarter of 2020
According to IDC's economic, health and survey indicators, it is expected that countries in Latin America will take six to 11 months to realign in the face of the effects of COVID-19. This will largely depend on the recovery of each of the industries and segments, establishing a "new normal" in economic terms and IT projects from the first quarter of 2021.

AMETIC: Agenda III Meeting of Artificial Intelligence ("Artificial Intelligence to digitize the world")
July 8, 2020

Julian David re-elected as VP of DigitalEurope for a second term
In this morning's General Assembly, DigitalEurope, the umbrella organization of the European technology sector, has announced the results of the elections for
the Executive Board. Julian David, techUK CEO, and currently Vice-President of the Board in charge of National Trade Associations, has been re-elected for a second two-year term.

**Update from Graeme Muller, CEO of NZTech**

In the wake of COVID-19, as the demand for staff with IT skills increases, I was reminded there is still plenty to do to ensure digital skills are available. One of the major work streams being developed as part of the Digital Tech Industry Transformation Plan (ITP) is Skills. The challenge of bringing enough students through the system, with the right skills, is perennial and now with an increasing need to consider re-skilling, it isn’t going to get any easier.

**PARTNER NEWS**

**III Taiwan to Offer AI Course for WITSA Members - Register Today!**

If you have not already registered, don’t miss this opportunity for you and your members to sign up at no cost for this limited **Special Artificial Intelligence (AI) course** (max. 20 enrollees per Member Association). The AI course is offered in partnership with WITSA’s Global Partner, the Institute for Information Industry III of Taiwan.

The course will begin on **July 15, 2020**. It will be offered on Wednesdays and Fridays.

The course will last eight (8) weeks and conclude on **September 5, 2020 - Please register before the course fills.**
COVID-19 Accelerates Greater Trade Coordination in East Africa

"During the COVID-19 crisis various stakeholders realized that multisectoral coordination was key to unlocking trade flows which is a requirement by the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) through each country’s NTFCs."

GLOBAL NEWS

ICANN68 Governmental Advisory Committee Communiqué Now Available

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia – 27 June 2020 – Today, the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) issued the GAC Communiqué – ICANN68 Virtual Policy Forum.

ICANN Webinar: Third Accountability and Transparency Review Team Final Report

The third Accountability and Transparency Review Team (ATRT3) invites the community to participate in a webinar on
its Final Report [PDF, 3.92 MB]. There are two opportunities to participate:
15 July 2020 at 15:30-16:30 UTC
16 July 2020 at 07:00-08:00 UTC
During the webinar, the ATRT3 will present an overview of the recommendations in its Final Report and answer questions

SECRETARIAT'S CORNER

WITSA's Secretariat and Chairman's Activities & Highlight Report

Since WITSA's inception in 1978, as a global consortium of ICT associations, few could have imagined how Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) would transform the world; while at the same time, propelling WITSA as the recognized Voice of the ICT Industry with a grand vision of Fulfilling the Promise of the Digital Age. WITSA has evolved in its over 42-year history into a globally recognized organization.

The purpose of this report is to attempt take stock in what (highlights) has occurred during its long history and reflect back, as well as to look forward to another 42 years of WITSA's progress and global impact. This report is not meant to be totally inclusive of all that has transpired within WITSA. There are numerous accomplishments, key moments (magic moments as Chairman Emeritus Bob Laurence affectionately referred to them) and special contributions that have not been added. However, it is hoped that what has been provided will give the readers an opportunity take pride in WITSA.

Over the next several issues of this WITSA Newsletter, we will highlight one section of the report. This month, we take a look at some of the key figures who have shaped our organization over the past two decades:

A TRIBUTE to WITSA CHAIRMEN

 Needless to say, there are many individuals to thank for the success of WITSA over the years. The many WITSA directors who contributed their time, energy and resources to WITSA are owed a great deal of thanks. A special thanks to Yannis Sirros, WITSA's Deputy Chairman and longest serving Director. To our World Congress host associations who worked tirelessly to achieve enormously successful events - thank you.

One group in particular deserving of a special TRIBUTE are WITSA's Chairmen who have, over the years, dedicated countless hours, energy and personal commitment and leadership to the success of WITSA.

Bob Laurence, CHAIRMAN EMERITUS (USA)
As we know WITSA today, we owe a great deal of thanks to WITSA's first chairman, Bob Laurence. Bob's futuristic vision for WITSA, his dedicated leadership and uplifting spirit set WITSA on its present course. Bob, WITSA would not exist without you. Thank you Bob!
George Newstrom, CHAIRMAN EMERITUS (USA) assumed the reins from Bob Laurence and led WITSA as its longest serving chairman (8 years). During George’s tenure, WITSA’s brand and prestige around the globe were greatly enhanced with the hosting of the 1998 (USA), 2000 (Taiwan), 2002 (Australia), 2004 (Greece), 2006 (USA) and 2008 (Malaysia) World Congresses. We sincerely appreciate your long and accomplished tenure with WITSA. Well done, George, and thank you!

Dan Khoo, CHAIRMAN EMERITUS (Malaysia) after orchestrating a spectacular world-class World Congress in 2008, Dan became WITSA’s 3rd Chairman, overseeing numerous improvements within WITSA’s operations and global stature; while overseeing the 2010 World Congress in Amsterdam and the 2012 WCIT in Montreal. Thanks also goes to Dan’s association, PIKOM, for their financial and human resources support of WITSA. Thank you, Dan!

Santiago Gutierrez, CHAIRMAN EMERITUS (Mexico) Santiago was responsible for leading WITSA during its strongest financial epoch. Awarding a total of four World Congresses (Taiwan 2017, India (2018), Malaysia (2020) and Bangladesh (2021) was an unprecedented feat perhaps never to be surpassed. Santiago also presided over an immensely successful World Congress in Mexico in 2014. Furthermore, Santiago elevated WITSA by designing the most comprehensive and well-thought-out Business Plan in our history; thus once again growing WITSA to an increasingly mature and respected global organization. Thank you, Santiago!

Yvonne Chiu, CHAIRMAN (Taiwan) Yvonne, always upbeat and positive, remains totally dedicated to the success of WITSA and has as traveled to over 40 countries, proudly, expertly and tirelessly representing WITSA and the ICT Industry. Yvonne was responsible for Taiwan’s hosting of the 2017 highly successful and enjoyable World Congress, in Taipei. Yvonne played a pivotal role in the establishment of our relationships with a number of key international and multilateral institutions and organizations. Thanks to Yvonne, WITSA has a beautiful (ASIA/Pacific) office suite in a very prestigious business district in Taipei. Special thanks to the government of Taiwan for its tremendous support of WITSA. Yvonne continues to dedicate herself to WITSA. She has made an enormous contribution to WITSA. Thank you, Yvonne!

WITSA's Business Excellence Certification Program (BECP)

The Business Excellence Certification Program (BECP) was designed by WITSA to recognize companies, in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) industry, who consistently operate with a high degree of business professionalism and integrity. There are two main criteria established as qualifiers for this program.

1. **Integrity**: the company shows a high-level of respect, strong ethics, professionalism and commitment to their clients;
2. **Performance**: the company has a track record of consistently delivering results with a high-level of business practices and standards, to include addressing their customers’ concerns, in a timely and satisfactory manner.

All WITSA member associations in good standing are invited to participate in this program. For more details on how your association can launch the Business Excellence Certification Program in your country, please contact molly@witsa.org

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