Mandate for DevNet to represent the Caribbean ICT stakeholders Virtual Community (CIVIC) in the CARICOM ICT Steering Committee (CISC)

Final English Version approved by CIVIC constituency on April 24th 2006 after having completed the approval procedure and renewed in January 2007

1. *Considerations*

o Whereas the "CARICOM ICT steering Committee (CISC)" is currently in its inception stage, and is projected as an important space for ICT coordination and policy making in the whole Caribbean Region (including coordination with non CARICOM states);

o Whereas CIVIC is a regional multi-ICT-stakeholder, multi-lingual and multi-national network that includes 200+ individual members interested in developing a regional perspective for the use of ICT for social and economic development of the whole Caribbean, that are also part of business, governments, Non-Governmental and Civil Society organizations, and academic institutions, regional organizations and cooperation agencies;

o   Whereas CARICOM has accepted the concept of a "collective representation of CIVIC" through a single organization, DevNet (depending upon CIVIC approval of this formal mandate);

o   Whereas DevNet is:
-   is a non profit organization active in the ICT4D area and is committed to supporting the Caribbean ICT Virtual Community
-   is based in Georgetown, Guyana where CARICOM's Headquarters are located,
-   has members who are part of CIVIC, and some of them since October 2002
-   has members who formed part of the working group that drafted this mandate

o   Whereas a CIVIC working group composed of members Errol Hewitt, Mustafa Toure, Nancy George, Jacqueline Morris, Vidyaratha Kissoon, Andrew Mancey, Felipe Nogera, Mick Reid, Stéphane Bruno and Yacine Khelladi discussed and approved the following mandate for submission to CIVIC's members which was renewed in January 2007.

The following mandate is approved by CIVIC's members:

2. Mandate

A.   DevNet is mandated to represent the Caribbean ICT stakeholders Virtual Community - CIVIC in the "CARICOM ICT steering Committee (CISC)", providing that it agrees to enforce all the principles and mechanisms described in items 3 and 4 below.

B.   This mandate is valid for 1 year only in the first instance and can be changed or withdrawn at any time as any CIVIC decision or mandate is revocable by the same collective decision making procedure which can be called by any member.

3. Principles for CIVIC representation in CARICOM ICT Stakeholders Steering Committee (CISC)

1- CIVIC views and positions established by formal discussions in the group must be

presented while respecting the diversity of sectors (public, private, international org, academic, etc.), cultures and languages of CIVIC's members. All members' inputs and opinions have the same weight.

2- CIVIC views and positions brought to the CISC are those of the virtual community, or network, of individual stakeholders. The support or approval of their institutions for any views and positions expressed is not implied, and cannot be taken to exist unless explicitly stated.

3- Special attention has to be made to include views and perspectives of non-CARICOM stakeholders of the wider Caribbean. This implies that CIVIC will always advocate for the CISC to be a coordination mechanism between CARICOM member states and the greater Caribbean.

4- In its interactions with the CISC, CIVIC should not only comment on documents and propositions submitted by the Steering Committee Coordination, but also be pro-active and present its concerns and proposals for inclusion in CISC's work plan.

5- CIVIC should, as far as possible, present consensus positions and inputs for the CISC. If no consensus is reached within CIVIC, then all the different positions should be voiced in the CISC, providing there are a minimum of five (5) members in support of each such position, in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner such that none are unduly enhanced or reduced.

6- Owing to the time difference in the interactions in the different forums, virtual in CIVIC and face to face debates in CISC, after presenting agreed positions, CIVIC's CISC representative can only explain or expand, not present new or un-approved positions. CIVIC inputs should be very carefully worded to avoid multiple interpretations.

7 - As far as possible, other CIVIC members who are members of the CISC should help the "CIVIC voice in CISC" in presenting CIVIC positions, and bring those to the knowledge of their national representatives. .

4. The Mechanism for CIVIC representation in CISC

The elements of the proposed mechanism are:

- The CIVIC constituency, which interacts via the CIVIC main mailing list
- The CIVIC Representative in CISC (initially DevNet if the mandate is approved by CIVIC)
- A core permanent working group of volunteer CIVIC members (to support the CIVIC representative in CISC, working via a specific small workgroup/list, and/or other online collaboration tools
- Occasional Volunteers who will work with the working group on specific issues/themes.

The CIVIC Representative in CISC will:

1- Proactively request of the CISC coordination mechanism, information in advance on agenda, issues, work plan, etc.
2- Request that the CISC consistently produce multilingual or satisfactory translated documents, at least in French, English and Spanish.
3- Liaise with CIVIC with regard to news of the CISC: agenda, issues, work plan.
4- Initially invite CIVIC members to be part of a permanent core working group (4-5 members) to support its work in bringing CIVIC positions to CISC. Suggested term is 6 months for the first group.
5- Manage and moderate this permanent working group (Dgroup list and other tools) for the working group (subscribe and unsubscribe, etc)
6- For each item that needs CIVIC input, call for volunteer members to join the working group temporarily for each topic. This expanded working group could, together with the permanent members, start working immediately on a specific issue/agenda/output. This would allow members that are only interested in a specific subject to contribute.
7- Manage discussions in a timely fashion, in this sub working group (define and implement a work plan which leaves enough time for approvals by CIVIC for each discussion)
8- After the working group has finished, submit to CIVIC (following the usual procedures for approval) each output before it is presented to the CISC as a CIVIC position. No document should be presented as CIVIC's if it has not been through the whole process. Enough time has to be reserved for the approval procedures.

9- Maintain updated related document archives (within the CIVIC resource document centre); create a folder for each item/submission containing the inputs, its translations, drafts and final approved outputs, with the report that was submitted to the CISC clearly identified.

10- Prepare standard headers, footers, disclaimers, for the inputs to CISC

11- Enforce the principles of CIVIC as articulated in the list (includes making efforts to include voices from different geographic and cultural entities of the Caribbean, present different opinions if no consensus position is reached, etc.)

12- Coordinate or articulate (as possible) presentations with other CIVIC members present in the CISC

13- Report back to CIVIC within 5 days after each intervention in the CISC.

14- Perform a self-evaluation/monitoring exercise every 6 months (or at members' request approved by CIVIC constituency).