



GLOBAL INTERNET POLICY INITIATIVE

GIPI Progress Report 4th Quarter 2002

GIPI works in developing and transitional countries to promote the adoption of legal and regulatory frameworks that will support the growth of an open, affordable and user-controlled Internet – an Internet that can drive economic growth and advance human development.

GIPI's local policy coordinators are working in 16 countries to convene dialogue and build informed consensus among all stakeholders, providing objective expertise on policy issues, commenting on draft legislation, and assisting policymakers and civil society in achieving a better understanding of the legal environment needed for the Internet to develop. Further information about the need for GIPI, its approach and its role in policy development can be found at <http://www.internetpolicy.net>.

-- Highlights

In the fourth quarter of 2002, GIPI had a major impact on Internet policy development, both in advancing progressive legislation that will support growth of the Internet and in convincing governments to withdraw regulatory measures that would stifle growth and free expression. Key accomplishments included:

- GIPI's analysis helped convince the government of India to partly open the ISM band (2.4 GHz) to unlicensed communications uses.
- In Ukraine, GIPI worked with the Parliament to convene a roundtable and create an online forum on draft telecommunications laws. Stakeholder comments submitted online were incorporated in a revised draft. To our knowledge, this is the first time in Ukraine's history that citizen comment affected the legislative process.
- GIPI submitted detailed comments on telecommunications laws in Bulgaria, Nigeria and Serbia, a communications law in Russia, and a mass media law in Belarus.
- Due in large part to GIPI's efforts, the government of Armenia decided to eliminate burdensome licensing requirements on ISPs, and the government of Azerbaijan reduced a proposed fee for Internet users.
- Building local policy networks, GIPI helped establish an ISP association in Armenia and improved the institutional capacity of ISP associations in Azerbaijan, Nigeria, the Kyrgyz Republic and Yugoslavia. GIPI also created Internet Society chapters in Belarus, India and Tajikistan, thereby creating forums for Internet policy development.
- Internet exchange points (IXPs) are being created with GIPI support in Nigeria and India. These IXPs will bring down the cost and increase the quality of Internet service. An IXP in the Kyrgyz Republic commenced operations in October.

- An ICT forum in Belarus organized by GIPI attracted over 400 participants.
- GIPI provided expert advice on e-commerce legislation in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan and cybercrime legislation in Indonesia
- To educate policymakers and the public, GIPI launched new web sites in the Kyrgyz Republic and Armenia and expanded the content on the main GIPI web site, <http://www.internetpolicy.net>.

-- **Priorities**

While GIPI responds to local needs, we see common themes emerging across the countries in which we work. Almost everywhere GIPI is active, its priorities include:

- Developing national ICT strategies that emphasize market solutions, innovation and user control;
- Reforming telecommunications regulatory policy, to introduce or strengthen competition;
- Eliminating or streamlining burdensome licensing requirements for ISPs;
- Crafting e-commerce framework legislation that provides certainty while avoiding unnecessary regulation;
- Securing effective management of country code top level domains (ccTLDs);
- Creating Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) to improve national access and bring down the cost and improve the quality of Internet service;
- Addressing security concerns through balanced cybercrime legislation;
- Promoting e-government;
- Improving local policy networks and building capacity of local institutions.

-- **GIPI's Roles – Convenor, Expert, Advocate, Coalition-builder**

In pursuit of these objectives, GIPI plays a variety of roles.

- As convenor, GIPI brings together stakeholders, often for the first time, for dialogue and consensus building on practical solutions to policy issues.
- As legal expert, GIPI's advice is sought by governments, parliamentary committees, international donors, and the private sector, to analyze draft laws and to educate policymakers on ICT policy.
- As advocate, GIPI supports competition and seeks to ease regulatory burdens on ICT companies.
- As a coalition builder, GIPI works to create and support an ISP Associations, Internet Society chapters, and other institutional capacities for stakeholders to become involved in the policy process.

COUNTRY PROGRESS REPORTS

Armenia

Reforming the Regulatory Treatment of ISPs: GIPI-AM worked throughout 2002 to streamline or eliminate burdensome licensing requirements on ISPs. These efforts began to show substantial progress in the fourth quarter of the year.

- In November, acting upon GIPI's suggestion, the World Bank made simplified ISP licensing procedures a condition for subsequent loan installments. Armenia's Ministries of Finance and Trade also supported introduction of simplified licensing procedures, and the Prime Minister ordered the Ministry of Transport and Communication to develop measures to simplify and clarify ISP licensing procedures. To further encourage the implementation of these reforms, GIPI submitted to the ICT Council specific recommendations for reforming the ISP licensing procedures.
- In December, due in large part to GIPI's efforts, the Government of Armenia announced changes to the licensing requirements for Internet services. Legislation to replace individual licensing with simplified class licensing procedures was approved by the government and submitted to the National Assembly.

Building Local Capacity: GIPI's efforts to establish an ISP association succeeded with the founding of the Union of Telecommunications Enterprises in November. The organization's primary goals are to hasten the introduction of telecommunications competition and to ensure ISPs fair access to the local loop. GIPI drafted the charter and other legal documents needed to establish the new organization.

Reforming Telecommunications Policy: GIPI-AM assisted Armenian ISPs throughout 2002 with issues arising from the incumbent telecommunications operator's abuse of its monopoly position. In the fourth quarter, GIPI-AM sought to identify legal and administrative solutions that would eliminate or minimize the anti-competitive effects of ArmenTel's continuing violations of its service contracts with local ISPs.

GIPI worked with the local ISOC chapter on a regional project on telecommunications in the South Caucasus. The project, which is funded by the Eurasia Foundation, analyzed relevant legislation in the region and produced a concept paper on regional development of telecommunications.

At the request of the Prime Minister, GIPI prepared a comparative overview of the regulatory treatment of VoIP services in NIS countries, the EU and the US. Working with a local ISP, GIPI prepared a paper on the legal basis for IP telephony in Armenia.

Advancing Implementation of the National ICT Strategy: GIPI has been collaborating with the ICT Council, the government's consultative body on ICT policy, and with other policymakers to implement Armenia's national ICT plan. At the request of the Ministry of Transport and Communication, GIPI developed specific recommendations for a realistic ICT development plan. A summary assessment of the implementation of the ICT strategy was published on the www.gipi.am web site.

Developing a Regulatory Framework for E-Commerce: GIPI continued to work on a proposed law on e-documents and e-signatures, providing expert assistance to government Ministries and the ICT Development Council.

Promoting E-Government: GIPI worked with EU officials and the World Bank to develop specific recommendations on e-government projects suitable for Armenia. GIPI's recommendations become the basis for an EU project.

Educating Policymakers and the Public: With financial support from OSI/Armenia, GIPI created a second Armenian language website (<http://internet.media.am>) that discusses the achievements and challenges in Armenia's efforts to develop the Internet. This site also provides news, local laws, draft laws and regulations, articles, interviews and other information. (GIPI's first Armenian language website is <http://www.gipi.am>.)

Azerbaijan

Promoting a Legal and Regulatory Framework for ICT: As a member of the government's multi-sector working group on e-commerce legislation, GIPI participated throughout the year in discussions about legislation on e-signatures and e-documents. Draft laws were developed, but they were flawed in various respects. GIPI analyzed the laws in light of international models and drew on the expertise of international experts.

- GIPI organized discussions of the draft law in several forums, with representatives of the parliamentary commission, the presidential apparatus, state ministries, banks and other organizations. GIPI's regional coordinator for the NIS was invited by the government's policy coordination body to present her expert analysis on the draft laws and on the draft ICT Development Strategy. GIPI's analysis focused on the importance of ensuring that the law not impose unnecessary licensing or registration requirements and that the law be technologically neutral.

Improving the Regulatory Treatment of ISPs: GIPI-AZ continued its efforts to reform the pricing mechanisms affecting Internet access. GIPI worked with the local ISOC chapter and the AZ ISP Association to oppose price increases for telephone lines that fell unfairly on independent ISPs. Also, GIPI and ISOC filed an appeal with the Ministry of Communications against a proposal to increase Internet access charges paid by individual subscribers. In response, the Ministry agreed to review the issues.

- In December, the State Tariff Council, considering a GIPI/ISOC request, agreed to reduce the proposed \$5 fee for Internet users. This was a major victory for the Internet community. GIPI is continuing to work on this matter to ensure that this reform is implemented by the Ministry.
- GIPI also worked to ensure the implementation of several policy reforms that were achieved in previous months. The President of Azerbaijan issued a decree in September adopting new rules for the licensing of entrepreneurial activity and eliminating the licensing requirement for ISPs. However, the Ministry of Communications ignored the decree. GIPI worked with the ISP Association to change the Ministry's position.

Developing a National ICT Strategy: GIPI continued to collaborate with government officials to develop a recommended structure and mission for a new national ICT committee that would be established in conjunction with a National ICT Strategy project.

Working Regionally to Educate Policymakers: As a member of Azerbaijan's national delegation, the GIPI-AZ representative participated in the Pan European Regional Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Bucharest, Romania.

Belarus

Developing a Legal Framework for ICT and E-Commerce: To educate policymakers and members of the public on the ICT and e-commerce framework, GIPI-BY helped organize two major international conferences, both of which were held in November.

- GIPI organized the “International Conference on E-Trade in NIS Countries and Eastern European Countries,” held November 4-6. More than 150 people participated. GIPI presented a report at the conference describing the preparation process for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). In response to GIPI’s report, the first deputy head of the CIS Executive Committee proposed several joint projects between GIPI and the Executive Committee.
- GIPI was a main organizer of the 4th Belarus Internet Forum, held November 29-30. Activities, including a one day training seminar and special classes, took place at three locations. Over 400 people attended the forum, making it the central event of the Belarus Internet community in 2002. The event received wide coverage in the local media. For the first time, sufficient local funding was obtained from corporate and other sponsors to launch the event absolutely free of charge to all participants.

Promoting Open Media: GIPI prepared a detailed report analyzing the provisions of the draft law on mass media that would require registration of online information sources and websites as mass media outlets. GIPI’s comments aroused great interest in the press.

Building Local Capacity: In November, at GIPI’s request, a variety of local organizations with interests in Internet policy met to discuss forming an ISOC chapter in Belarus. GIPI took the lead in the creation of this new organization and drafted the charter and articles of incorporation for the new group. In December, GIPI finished organizing the ISOC chapter and the new organization elected its first officers.

Promoting Effective Management of Domain Names in the ccTLD: Building on its prior work, GIPI prepared a report entitled “Regulation of the Domain Name Space: International Practice and Its Status in Belarus,” identifying specific areas in the national registrar policy that contradict international practices. The report generated a broad policy discussion online and in the local media among government officials, NGOs and others. In response, the current registrar asked to discuss GIPI’s concerns and recommendations.

Educating Policymakers and Stakeholders: In November, the GIPI country coordinator delivered a report at an international conference on “Computer Technologies for Systems of Legal Information.” The report discussed personal data protection and the challenges associated with balancing the right to information and the right to personal data protection in the global information space. GIPI’s report was incorporated into the recommendations adopted by the conference, which circulated to relevant governmental institutions.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Promoting Competition in Telecommunications : GIPI's regional manager gave a keynote speech at a symposium organized by the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA), Bosnia-Herzegovina's telecom regulatory agency. The conference was convened to discuss the possible consequences of allowing BiH's ISPs to offer Internet telephony to their customers. The GIPI presentation, outlining the advantages of liberalizing Internet telephony, is online at the GIPI website, <http://www.internetpolicy.net/telco/>

Developing a National ICT Strategy: During the last two months of 2002, GIPI entered into discussions with the Bosnian Ministry for European Integration, which has been tasked with developing a process for defining the country's ICT strategy. We are discussing a possible role for GIPI in that process, which we have said should focus on promoting public participation in the development of the ICT policy.

Bulgaria

Reforming Telecommunications Policy: GIPI's activities focused heavily on the proposed new telecommunications law, which suffers from serious flaws. GIPI policy director Jim Dempsey participated in a conference in Sofia on October 4 to educate policy makers and stakeholders about problems in the draft law. A wide variety of governmental, NGO, civil society and commercial organizations attended and discussed their concerns with the draft. The conference brought together for the first time all Bulgarian IT associations, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, and the independent regulatory body (the Communications Regulation Commission or CRC). The conference resulted in an agreement among stakeholders to draft for Parliament specific recommended changes to the draft.

- Also as follow up to the conference, GIPI assisted in organizing an open letter to the Parliament requesting reform of the draft bill. More than 300 prominent people from Bulgaria's Internet community and from other countries signed the letter, which received prominent coverage in Bulgaria's largest newspaper.
- The GIPI country coordinator met with senior Members of Parliament on the draft bill. As a result of these efforts, at the first public hearing on the draft, the Parliamentary Commission on Transport and Telecommunications invited local NGOs to submit comments on the draft law. GIPI was among the local organizations that submitted a formal statement on the draft.
- By the end of the year, GIPI's efforts to reform the draft telecommunications bill were producing results. Due largely to concerns raised by GIPI, the PCTT submitted the draft law to the Parliamentary Committee on European Integration, which will in turn determine whether the draft law complies with policy standards adopted by the European Union. Although Parliament had been scheduled to consider the draft bill before the end of 2002, further action was postponed in order to address the concerns raised about the draft.

Developing E-Commerce Legislation: In November, the GIPI-BG country coordinator was nominated by the e-government minister of state administration to lead a working group that will draft an e-commerce law for Bulgaria. The working group held its first informal meeting in November. GIPI met again with government officials in December and learned of funding limitations for the e-commerce draft. If sufficient funding is not secured in January, the project may not go forward.

Georgia

Developing a National ICT Strategy: GIPI continued to work with the UNDP and the Ministry of Transport and Communications to establish a project that will develop a national ICT policy.

Reforming the Telecommunications Regulatory Framework: GIPI is working to create a more competitive telecommunications environment within Georgia. Specifically, GIPI is working jointly with experts and stakeholders in the South Caucus countries to develop recommendations for national ICT-related legislation.

Improving Management of the ccTLD. GIPI-GE organized a series of consultations and a roundtable to discuss concerns associated with the current management of the .ge ccTLD. In particular, current policies prevent local entities using the .ge domain name from hosting their content outside Georgia even though foreign hosting services tend to offer better quality and lower prices than national providers. The local Internet community does not wish to involve the government in the resolution of this dispute and therefore GIPI is actively involved in negotiating a solution that is acceptable to all interested parties.

Educating the Public. GIPI worked with a local journalism school to create a television program on the challenges of developing the Internet in Georgia. The program, which included an interview with the local GIPI representative, was broadcast in October.

India

Opening the ISM band to Broader Communications Uses: Over the course of the past year, GIPI has been urging the government to permit greater unlicensed use of the 2.4 GHz spectrum. In October, the Minister for IT and Telecommunications announced that the 2.4 GHz spectrum would be de-licensed for limited “in-campus” uses. In November, the government officially announced that users of Bluetooth and IEEE 802.11b wireless devices will no longer be required to obtain a license for indoor uses. GIPI will continue to work on getting the ISM band de-licensed completely, so that it can be used for last mile Internet access and for ICT applications in public places.

Supporting Telecom Policy Reform: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) issued a consultation paper on basic tariffs, which included a chapter on Internet pricing. GIPI India alerted various stakeholders about the consultation process and the importance of reducing tariffs for calls made to access the Internet. GIPI India submitted comments urging the TRAI to consider a range of pricing mechanisms that would be favorable to Internet

access. GIPI's recommendations were supported by a variety of consumer and user organizations, including the Computer Society of India, VOICE and the leading consumer group in Bangalore.

Supporting Creation of a Local Internet Exchange Point (IXP). The Internet Service Provider's Association of India requested that GIPI gather information from other countries documenting the benefits of IXPs to ISPs and Internet users. Towards that end, GIPI organized discussions between leaders of the ISP association in India and experts from Nepal on the lessons learned when Nepal established its first IXP. These conversations proved quite useful to India's ISP community and provided information that was used to refine the budget estimates for the local IXP project. GIPI assisted in drafting the legal documents needed to formalize the IXP.

Developing Local Policy Networks and Collaborative Relationships: GIPI India prepared the materials needed to form a local Internet Society chapter in Delhi. In November, GIPI initiated the process of drafting the chapter's by-laws and forming the first managing committee.

Educating Policymakers: GIPI presented a paper at the ITU's Asia/Pacific meeting on consumers and the telecom sector. GIPI India attended the meeting as a member of the official Indian delegation. GIPI's paper described the growth of the Internet industry in India and other developing countries. The paper recommended specific policy initiatives like creating an Internet exchange; de-licensing the ISM band; creating more local content; and permitting flat rate tariffs for Internet access. The paper is online at <http://www.internetpolicy.net/principles/>.

GIPI worked with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce to invite Larry Irving, former Administrator of the US National Telecommunications and Information Administration, to speak at the Indian Telecom Summit. As one of the keynote speakers, Irving made a strong case for further liberalization of India's telecommunications market to expand the nation's ICT infrastructure.

Indonesia

Reforming Telecommunications Policy: GIPI conducted a review of national telecommunications policies and drafted a paper for a key Member of Parliament that recommends several reforms. This paper also is being circulated to other local stakeholders for comment.

After Telkom, the monopolist operator, announced a plan to increase telephone tariffs, local stakeholders requested the assistance of GIPI-ID in protesting this price hike. GIPI's position is that increases in telephone tariffs are necessary in the long run but that they must be cost-based and that the operator must be held to make promised improvements in service, which have not yet been fulfilled.

Creating a National ICT Policy: The Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration (MMT) invited GIPI to contribute to the formulation of a national policy for information services

standards in the areas of manpower and transmigration, central to the MMT's efforts to develop information systems that support e-government. GIPI submitted recommendations to the MMT in October.

Developing the Legal Framework for ICT Development (Cybercrime Legislation):

GIPI-ID is working with a variety of local ICT stakeholders and the anti-cyber crime task force established by Indonesia's national police force to strengthen the legislative framework relevant to cyber-crime. For the cyber-policy discussion group that GIPI-ID founded and hosts, GIPI-ID drafted a white paper on cybercrime laws.

Promoting E-Government. GIPI is a member of the E-Government Task Group under the Ministry of Communications and in that capacity prepared proposals on institutional capacity building, authorization, information exchanges and private sector roles that have been incorporated in the proposed National Policy on E-Government.

- The National Policy for E-Government was submitted to the President for her approval. If approved, a presidential decree on e-government strategy and implementation will be issued. In the meantime, GIPI-ID and several local organizations explored the idea of creating a working group to monitor the planning, development and implementation of e-government activities in Indonesia.

GIPI-ID also made presentations at several recent e-government conferences, including a workshop sponsored by the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration and a seminar sponsored by the Regional Autonomy Forum.

Developing Local Policy Networks and Collaborative Relationships: In October, Indonesia's GIPI representative was appointed as the secretary of the steering committee to the General Assembly of MASTEL, the Indonesian Telecommunications Society. GIPI will be responsible for drafting MASTEL's 2003-2006 working programs. In addition, GIPI is continuing to work to form an ISOC chapter in Indonesia.

Kazakhstan

Developing a Legal Framework Supporting e-Commerce and ICT: GIPI's Kazakhstan coordinator worked with Pragma, a USAID contractor, to explore possibilities for collaboration on e-commerce policy activities.

Promoting E-Government: GIPI-KZ has developed a detailed proposal for an e-government project, including e-government trainings for government officials. GIPI's proposal also suggested a website containing training materials and background information on e-government. GIPI is seeking funding for the project from OSI. GIPI also agreed to work with the UNDP and Pragma on e-government projects. A first step is to identify e-government solutions for the government of Kazakhstan that would be inexpensive, easy to implement and responsive to local needs.

GIPI is seeking to launch a half-day training session on e-government for local journalists. The sessions will be conducted in Russian and will educate journalists on Internet applications that the government can incorporate into its daily operations to increase efficiency.

Educating Policymakers: The GIPI coordinator became a member of the regional drafting committee for the development of ICT policy recommendations for the CIS countries. A presentation by the GIPI coordinator on the ICT situation in Kazakhstan was circulated to the Committee for Communication and Informatization.

GIPI initiated discussions with the UNDP, the British Council and Pragma about organizing a roundtable for ICT stakeholders early in 2003. This event would allow various stakeholders to meet and discuss common issues of concern in ICT policy. In December, a representative from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe also requested GIPI's participation in organizing a forum for ICT development stakeholders in Central Asia.

Kyrgyz Republic

Developing an Effective Legal Framework for E-Commerce: As a member of the State ICT Coordinating Council, the GIPI regional coordinator for the NIS assisted in the development of policy recommendations to the government on a range of ICT issues.

- Consideration is being given to amending the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic. GIPI worked with the Association of Lawyers in Kyrgyzstan, the Soros Foundation-Kyrgyzstan and other NGOs to formulate recommendations for amending the Constitution to more explicitly recognize the right to seek, produce and access information, a change that would support development of the Internet by providing more effective protection against inappropriate government regulation of Web sites and ISPs.
- GIPI also participates in a working group developing measures to attract investment in the ICT sector. Working group members include the President's special representative on investment attraction; Ministry of Transport and Communications; Ministry of Trade and Industry; and the UNDP.

Promoting Telecom Competition Policy Reform: GIPI hosts the regular meetings of the Association of Communication Service Providers, which includes almost all participants in the communications service market, and provides expert advice and strategic assistance to the association. In the fourth quarter, GIPI, in concert with the association, developed and submitted to the Communications Regulatory Agency a proposal for transparent rate-setting by Kyrgyz Telecom. As the exclusive right of Kyrgyz Telecom for international communications service ends in January 2003, GIPI worked with the association to prepare for the competitive market.

The department of communications and information in the Ministry of Transport and Communications asked GIPI to review the Agency's proposed plan to liberalize the market for long distance and international communications. GIPI's comments emphasized that the proposed regulations would impose additional licensing requirements on communications carriers, thereby hindering rather than facilitating sound competition. The Communications Agency itself sought GIPI's expert analysis of draft rules for interconnection and licensing of IP telephony services.

Improving the Regulatory Environment for ISPs: GIPI's work with the Association of Communications Operators includes assisting local ISPs to better articulate and advocate for their policy concerns.

GIPI played a major role in working with ISPs for the creation of an Internet exchange point, helping to draft the necessary agreements and explaining to ISPs the value of being connected to the IXP. The IXP became operational in October. Information of the IXP is available online at: www.connect.kg.

Educating Policymakers and Stakeholders: GIPI-KG launched a new web site: <http://www.gipi.kg>. In cooperation with IREX, GIPI developed plans for a series of training courses for government officials on Internet basics.

Nigeria

Crafting a Policy Framework for ICT. GIPI's Nigeria coordinator was invited to be part of an IT legislation committee set up by the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA). The work of the committee began with a review of existing legislation and the development of workable draft legislation based on international models and responsive to local priorities. The GIPI coordinator has recommended the organization of a national workshop at which all stakeholders in the IT community and the larger Nigerian society would provide their input.

- At the request of the Director General of NITDA, GIPI participated in a consultative meeting on the revised national information technology development bill and pointed out elements of the bill needing improvement. GIPI also provided expert assistance regarding the bill to senior staff in the National Assembly.
- GIPI also plays a key role in a NITDA committee charged with identifying concrete steps required to implement the national IT policy. In November, the IT policy implementation committee submitted its report to NITDA, and NITDA included key recommendations of the committee in his presentation to senior government officials on e-government.

Reforming Telecommunications Policy: In September, the Senate Committee on Telecommunications announced that it was considering draft telecommunications bills prepared by the Executive Branch. GIPI submitted comments and gave public testimony on the draft proposals, emphasizing the need for: independence of the telecommunications industry regulator (NCC); rules permitting public consultation and participation in the rulemaking process of the regulator; strong transparency provisions in the granting and revoking of licenses; and narrowing of the overly-broad criminal provisions to safeguard freedom of expression and the right to communicate.

Strengthening Local Capacity: GIPI has been providing expert assistance to the ISP Association of Nigeria (ISPAN) on a variety of issues facing the ISP community in Nigeria.

- A key goal of GIPI has been the establishment of an Internet Exchange Point for Nigeria. This effort received a significant boost when the GIPI coordinator obtained private sector commitments for both the initial set-up equipment for the IXP as well as technical support for the IXP workshop.
- In November, GIPI was finally able to achieve the official registration of the ISPAN, which had been bogged down in bureaucratic delays for two years before the GIPI coordinator intervened. The registration is also key to establishment of the IXP and the convening of the IXP workshop, now scheduled for early 2003.

Opening Access to the ISM Band. The NCC issued a directive requiring ISPs to vacate the ISM spectrum by February of 2003. GIPI-NG participated in a series of meetings with ISPAN and key government agencies seeking to reverse this requirement.

- A committee was set up comprised of the key stakeholders, including the NCC, ISPAN, and GIPI to prepare a report to serve as the basis for reviewing the NCC directive on the ISM band. The report was prepared in November and submitted to the NCC.

Promoting Effective Management of the .ng ccTLD: GIPI Nigeria engaged in extensive personal discussion with ICANN CEO Stuart Lynn and senior ICANN officials when they were in Africa. GIPI facilitated a meeting between Nigerian stakeholders and the ICANN team regarding the crisis in management of the .ng ccTLD. The GIPI coordinator also educated government officials on the need to participate in the work of the Government Advisory Committee to ICANN.

- The meetings with senior ICANN officials resulted in the Nigerian stakeholders achieving a better understanding of what is needed to achieve ccTLD redelegation and the ICANN team pledging their support in the process.

Educating Policymakers and the Public: GIPI gave several presentations at a major conference on the e-readiness of West Africa's banking and financial services sector, including on the role of trust and authentication as a basis for e-commerce.

Russia

Promoting Telecommunications Liberalization: GIPI continued to coordinate the efforts of an informal working group discussing the proposed new Law "On Communications," which would regulate the provision of various communications services in Russia. GIPI Washington, in consultation with a group of US-based experts, prepared detailed comments on the draft. GIPI provided expert assistance to senior staff of the State Duma developing revisions to the draft law. Also, GIPI coordinated the efforts of other NGO experts preparing recommendations on the draft law.

- In November, GIPI convened a major roundtable on the proposed new law "On Communications." Over 60 people participated, including representatives of the key Parliamentary committees and ministries, IT companies, communications operators, lawyers and NGOs.

- At GIPI's initiative, a public working group was created, with representatives of the relevant ministries, the Duma, industry and NGO to develop revisions to the draft law. On November 29, the revised draft received its first reading in the Duma, and GIPI continues to participate in discussions of further revisions.

Expanding Electronic Access to Government Information: Officials in the government's Department of Informatization asked GIPI to review draft legislation on access to government information, which includes a section on providing access through the Internet.

Improving the Legislative and Regulatory Framework for ICT: GIPI was invited to participate in a discussion of new approaches to information regulation, which is being conducted by an experts group within the Federation Council.

Supporting the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Process: GIPI Russia continued to work extensively on the WSIS preparation process. GIPI was officially invited by the Ministry of Communications and Informatization to assist in organizing discussions regarding the preparatory work. Moreover, the Ministry included GIPI's Russia coordinator as the NGO representative on the national delegation to the WSIS preparatory conference in Bucharest.

Tajikistan

Developing a National ICT Strategy and Legal Framework: GIPI was one of the organizers of a seminar/workshop on Internet policy that gathered representatives of government ministries, ISPs, ICT trade associations and international organizations. The event produced a set of recommendations to the Ministry of Communications.

- In close collaboration with other stakeholders, GIPI helped plan the first national conference on ICT, held on December 19-21. One of the main goals of the conference was to speed up development and implementation of a national strategy on ICT development. The conference attracted over 100 participants from over 50 organizations.
- The conference produced a resolution with concrete recommendations for the government. Following the conference, the Ministry of Communications informed the UNDP of its willingness to create and support a stakeholders ICT working group.

Building Local Capacity: GIPI has supported the creation of an association of Internet users. In October, after a series of meetings initiated by GIPI, ISOCToj was established and a board of directors was elected. Members include representatives of service providers, government bodies, and universities, as well as individual Internet users. GIPI drafted the bylaws and provided legal assistance in registering the new organization. On December 12, ISCOToj was registered with the Ministry of Justice.

Promoting Effective Management of the ccTLD: The Minister of Communications created a working group consisting of the Ministry's informatization department and GIPI to work on the problem of the .tj ccTLD. The report of this group was submitted to the Ministry and the President's Administration. To follow-up, a broader group of experts was

created, including GIPI and key stakeholders. GIPI provided expert assistance to the group, based on the analysis prepared by GIPI Washington.

- The group of experts drafted appeals on behalf of local stakeholders to the Government of Tajikistan and ICANN asking for support of ccTLD redelegation. Thereafter, the group of experts met with the senior ICANN official responsible for ccTLD matters.
- The Prime Minister, with the support of stakeholders, recommended that the .tj ccTLD be redelegated to the Information and Technical Center (ITC) of the President's Administration. Stakeholders further agreed that domain name registration policy should be developed by a body containing representatives of all stakeholders. GIPI is working with the ITC to assist in creating a coordinating council to meet this need.

Ukraine

Reforming Telecommunications Legislation: A major priority for GIPI Ukraine has been our work to bring Ukraine's telecommunications policies into compliance with international standards. In the fourth quarter of 2002, GIPI worked with the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament to organize a roundtable meeting on the two draft telecommunications laws that have been submitted to the Parliament. GIPI Ukraine prepared a variety of analytic materials related to the drafts, and encouraged all major ICT stakeholders to prepare their opinions and recommendations. GIPI posted its own materials and those of other stakeholders at the GIPI website, <http://gipi.internews.ua/rus/about/anons/>.

- On November 13, the roundtable was conducted in the national Parliament, organized by the parliamentary Committee on Construction, Transport and Communications with support from GIPI and the University of Indiana Parliamentary Development Project. In addition to MPs, participants included over 120 representatives of government bodies, Internet associations, individual businesses, civil society and international organizations. The roundtable was a success on several levels:
 - Based on the preliminary work of GIPI with key MPs, during the roundtable a compromise draft was presented, combining elements of the two competing drafts. The compromise draft was introduced in Parliament on November 22.
 - The process of developing a new telecommunications law was opened to all interested parties for public comment.
- To permit wider public participation in the legislative process, GIPI, with support of the ISP Adamant, created an online forum at <http://www.gipi.internews.ua>. Representatives of businesses and NGOs as well as members of the public were able to use this online resource to comment on the draft law. Within the first six days, 180 comments were posted by 30 experts. Most notably, about 20% of the comments were reflected in the combined draft law. As far as we know, this was the first time in Ukrainian history that the results of a public discussion influenced the legislative process.

Developing E-commerce Legislation: In December, GIPI entered into a memorandum of cooperation with the parliamentary Science and Education Committee to provide expert assistance to this committee. Among other laws being considered by the Committee is a draft law “On the usage of open formats and free software in government agencies and the economic sector.” GIPI is seeking to sign similar memoranda of cooperation with other parliamentary committees.

Developing a National ICT Strategy: GIPI is a member of the experts group developing the “Concept of the National Information Policy.”

Improving Management of .ua ccTLD: In November, GIPI co-organized a seminar on domain names as intellectual property. Participants included representatives of the ccTLD administrator and the State Department of Intellectual property. About 30 leading Ukrainian patent agents and lawyers attended, obtaining information about new rules for the .ua domain that came into force in November.

Supporting Establishment of E-Government: GIPI is working with the State Committee on Communications to conduct an online discussion of the “Electronic Ukraine” program. The discussion is scheduled to be held at the beginning of 2003 on the GIPI website.

Uzbekistan

Developing ICT Framework Laws: GIPI participated in drafting the program for the development of e-commerce for the period 2003-2010. GIPI is reviewing a draft law on e-commerce.

- A major international seminar on the “Status and Prospects for Development of Information and Communications Technologies in Uzbekistan” was held November 26-27. The seminar was organized by the government, the UNDP, and the NGO UzInfoCom, with the participation of GIPI. GIPI Field Manager Bob Horvitz gave one of the keynote presentations, which is available at the GIPI web site, <http://www.gipi.uz>
- GIPI completed research on the intellectual property law of Uzbekistan and began planning for a series of seminars in the first quarter of 2003.
- GIPI worked with the UNDP on developing amendments to the Criminal Code and a new act on cybercrime

Promoting Competition Policy for Telecommunications: GIPI met with officials within several ministries to discuss the problems associated with the continuing monopoly in the ICT sector.

Implementing sound management policies for the .uz ccTLD: GIPI provided policy guidance in support of efforts to obtain redelegation of the .uz ccTLD.

Educating Policymakers and the Public: GIPI expanded its website to include further information on the ICT policy process. GIPI supported the development of content for the new Russian version of the official web site of the ICT Council, <http://www.ictcouncil.gov.uz> .

Yugoslavia

Building Local Capacity: GIPI took advantage of the major regional policy conference on “Telecommunications for Development” to start its Balkan ISP association workshop series. At the invitation of GIPI, the president of the European ISP Association spoke on best practices in managing an ISP association and dealing with government and telecom officials. Participants included leaders of the ISP associations of Bosnia, Bulgaria, Serbia and Slovenia. GIPI helped draft new Articles of Association, new management structures and a Code of Ethics for the ISP association.

Promoting competition in the telecommunications sector: The government of Serbia has drafted a new law on telecommunication, which will have a decisive impact on the future evolution of the Internet in Serbia. GIPI organized a group of Serbian telecom experts to provide written comments on the draft law, and Jim Dempsey, GIPI’s chief lawyer in Washington, also submitted detailed comments. In response, the law’s author offered to meet with critics of the draft, including GIPI, to find common ground, and we are hopeful that meaningful changes can be made in the draft even before parliament starts debating it in February 2003. GIPI’s country coordinator has been providing expert advice to the head of the parliamentary committee on that will be considering the draft law.

- In December, GIPI joined with the Belgrade-based Center for Internet Development, the Yugoslav ISP Association and 6 individual ISPs in petitioning Serbia's constitutional court for a ruling on whether Telekom Srbija's monopoly rights violate the Serbian constitution. The court's judgment is expected in February.

Reforming Management of the .yu ccTLD: GIPI is a member of the working group on reform of the .yu ccTLD, advising the group on international best practices and ICANN policies for ccTLD registries. GIPI insisted on informing and involving the broader Internet community in Yugoslavia in the process of reform, using a well-established ICT policy mailing list to keep all interested users apprised of the process.

Educating Policymakers: GIPI was asked by the Serbian Government's Office for IT and Internet to help in organizing ISP and NGO panels at the major regional conference on public policy in telecommunications. The conference, “Telecommunications for Development,” took place in Belgrade on October 28-29 and gathered all regional ministers of telecommunications, representatives of national telecommunication regulatory agencies, telecom operators, major ISPs and NGOs engaged in area of ICT development. Materials about the conference are online at <http://www.eSEuropeConference.org> .

February 14, 2003

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