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– FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –

INTUG Meets in Hong Kong, Appoints New Chair, Highlights User Priorities

At a meeting in Hong Kong beginning today, the International Telecommunications Users Group (INTUG) appointed Danielle Jacobs, General Manager of the Belgian Communication technology and services user group BELTUG as its new chairman. Ms. Jacobs succeeds Rosemary Sinclair, who stepped down after her 3-year term expired.

Ms. Jacobs said, “I want to make sure our members, who represent international business users, can find their way in a rapidly changing ICT environment and that they can exchange their ideas and best practices through the INTUG community. We will see a new regulatory round while public networks are being upgraded for IP use. While consumerization has positive, disruptive effects on the wider ICT market, it also leads to a regulatory focus on consumer needs. One of INTUG’s demands is that future regulation clearly considers the necessities of enterprise users, since these differ fundamentally from what consumers need.”

During the three day meeting, INTUG is reviewing the top issues raised by its members and holding discussions with key industry players and influencers. Among their concerns are a number of examples where international trade suffers from market failures.

National Borders Still Hinder Business

Enterprises need seamless cross-border services, most notably for their mobile needs. They still suffer a patchwork of country-based offerings with different price structures and separate contracts.

The Cloud Needs Interoperability

Cross-border Cloud computing brings about contractual issues and raises questions on privacy and security. While the latter two are already an issue for consumers, enterprise users clearly need higher levels of privacy and security and better performance than consumers.

Vertical Integration Threatens Customers with Lock-in

While verticalization – closely coupled technology/solution/services – is driven partly by customers’ desire to consolidate their vendors, ICT companies try to lock their customers into proprietary service portfolios, something business users must avoid if they are to retain future choice. INTUG stresses the need for interoperability of services, which is essential for the development of a competitive market.

Relations with Global And Regional Regulators Is Critical

INTUG does not believe regulatory decisions which affect internationally operating business should be left solely for National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) to decide. Consistency through standards and harmonization is essential.

In Europe, INTUG works closely with the Body of European Regulators of Electronic Communications (BEREC), the umbrella organization for the European NRAs. Chris Fonteijn, head of BEREC, said they would “identify the inefficiencies transnational players experience due to administrative barriers as a first step to ensure better offers and more choice for business users.”

INTUG also continues to consult with European Commissioner for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes, to ensure the user voice is heard. In a meeting last year, Ms. Kroes asked INTUG to update her on specific issues of concern as they come up, apart from submissions to commission consultations.

In Asia Pacific, INTUG continues to contribute regularly to APEC-wide discussions on communications policy and regulatory developments Guest Status in the APECTEL Working Group and its Australian member, ATUG, is deeply involved in Australia’s world leading National Broadband Network.

INTUG also participates in the twice yearly meetings of OECD’s Communications, Infrastructure and Services Policy Working Party (CISP) as an Expert Advisor, and submits papers to ITU, where it has permanent observer status. In all these groups, INTUG focuses on the importance of effective outcomes for enterprise users when networks cross borders.

About INTUG

INTUG is the global association representing business users of communications services. Founded in 1974, and registered in the Netherlands with an international Board, INTUG provides information for business users through its web site intug.org and news updates, position papers, conference presentations and formal responses to regulatory consultations.

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