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12-31-1994

National IT Policies: European and United States Perspectives

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PANEL 9

NATIONAL IT POLICIES: EUROPEAN AND UNITED STATES PERSPECTIVES

Panel Chair: **Tawfik Jelassi**, INSEAD

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F. Warren McFarlan, Harvard Business School
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As we are entering the twenty-first century, an increasing number of governments around the globe are formulating or implementing "national" IT policies. A major drive underlying these efforts is the recognition of the emerging world of the information highway and the networked society and the new business opportunities that lie ahead.

An essential component of these national IT policies is the establishment of a nationwide IT infrastructure, i.e., the integration of hardware, software, and skills that will make it easy and affordable to connect people with each other, with computers, and with a vast array of services and information sources.

This panel will present national IT policies in Europe and the USA and discuss the differences between them. Moreover, it will emphasize what underlies these differences, in particular the different approaches being taken to manage IT at the national policy level. Specific issues that the panel will also address include the following:

1. How does the national IT policy affect businesses, laws and regulations and when will it affect them?

2. What does the national IT policy mean for the average citizen and how soon will it mean it?

3. What are the international issues associated with the national IT policy?

4. What are the differences between the national IT policies in Europe and the United States (i.e., the Information Superhighway initiative)?

The panelists will tackle the above issues based on their country's approach. Their views will cover the national IT policies of Germany, France, some Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Norway and Sweden), and the United States.