Geneva, 20 March 2006

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- To Member States of ITU and UNESCO;

- To Associate Members of UNESCO;

- To ITU Sector Members and Associates;

- To All WSIS Stakeholders: Governments, Private Sector, Civil Society, International Organisations

Subject: **Global Symposium on Promoting the Multilingual Internet**
            Geneva, 9-11 May 2006

Dear Sir/Madam,

1   The *Tunis Agenda for the Information Society*, adopted at the Tunis Phase of WSIS, highlights the importance of multilingualism for bridging the digital divide.

2   The Tunis Agenda identifies ITU as taking the lead role in the implementation of information and communication infrastructure (WSIS Action Line C2), ITU/UNESCO for access to information and knowledge (WSIS Action Line C3), and UNESCO for cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content (WSIS Action Line C8). In this regard, ITU and UNESCO are jointly organizing a **Global Symposium on Promoting the Multilingual Internet**, which will examine issues highlighted in paragraph 53 of the Tunis Agenda, including:

   a) options for advancing the process for the introduction of multilingualism in a number of areas including domain names, email addresses and keyword look-up;

   b) options for implementing programmes, also in cooperation with other appropriate organizations, that allow for the presence of multilingual domain names and content on the internet and the use of various software models in order to fight against the linguistic digital divide and ensure the participation of all in the emerging new society;

   c) options for strengthening cooperation between relevant bodies for the further development of technical standards and to foster their global deployment.

3   This Symposium will be held in the International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG - http://www.cicg.ch/), from **9 to 11 May 2006**. This Symposium will review technical solutions and current experiences, identify open issues and discuss a roadmap for further steps in the direction of promoting multilingualism in the internet.

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Switzerland	Gr4:	+41 22 730 65 00		
ITU\SG\CIRC\.....				

4   A draft agenda of the Symposium is included in **Annex 1** and logistic details are provided in **Annex 2**. Background and updated information relating to the Symposium including the program, presentations as well as details and practical information will be available on the website at the following address: http://www.itu.int/ITU-T/worksem/multilingual/.

5   **Written contributions** are **invited** on the themes of the event and will be electronically available from the Symposium website in the language received, for discussion at the meeting. Documents should be sent to multilingual@itu.int as early as possible, but no later than **Tuesday, 25 April 2006**.

Yours faithfully,

Yoshio UTSUMI
ITU Secretary-General

Koïchiro MATSUURA
UNESCO Director-General

Annexes

ANNEX 1

Draft Agenda
Global Symposium on Promoting the Multilingual Internet
Geneva, 9-11 May 2006
For more details on this Symposium and updates to the agenda and programme, please check the Symposium web page at: http://www.itu.int/ITU-T/worksem/multilingual.

1.   Opening

2.   Symposium objectives and organization

3.   Overview of existing standards and technical solutions

4.   Presentation of operational experiences

5.   Organization of thematic sessions

6.   Discussion on existing solutions and experiences focusing on the identification of open issues

7.   Presentation of conclusions and recommendations of thematic sessions

8.   Preparation of a draft roadmap for further steps to promote the Multilingual Internet

9.   Closing of the meeting

ANNEX 2

Logistic details
Global Symposium on Promoting the Multilingual Internet
Geneva, 9-11 May 2006

1   The Symposium will take place in the International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG - http://www.cicg.ch/) and will open at 9:30 hours on the first day. Participant registration will start at 08:30 hours. All participants must get their badges via the Montbrillant entrance of ITU Headquarters, which is approximately 200 meters from the entrance from the CICG. Detailed information concerning the meeting rooms will be displayed on screens at the entrances to ITU headquarters and CICG. Interpretation will be provided in the six official languages of the Union.

2   The meeting will be audiocast over the internet and further details will be available on the event website.

3   Free wireless LAN facilities are available in the CICG for the use of delegates. Any problems should be reported through the helpdesk to the ITU network infrastructure team. Detailed information is available at http://www.itu.int/ITU-T/edh/faqs-support.html.

4   For participant's convenience, a hotel confirmation form is enclosed as **Annex 3** (see http://www.itu.int/travel/accommodations.asp for the list of hotels).

5   Voluntary contributions are solicited from ITU and UNESCO members to sponsor coffee breaks, lunch, evening meals/cocktails, etc. Parties interested in sponsoring any of the above during this Symposium should kindly contact multilingual@itu.int as soon as possible.

5   In order to enable the organizers to make the necessary arrangements concerning the organization of the Symposium, the registration form in **Annex 4**, duly completed (one per participant), should be submitted as soon as possible by fax (No: +41 22 730 5853), by e-mail (tsbreg@itu.int) or via the on-line form at http://www.itu.int/ITU-T/worksem/multilingual/, , but **not later than Friday, 21 April 2006**. **Please note that, as indicated above, onsite registration and badging of this event will take place at ITU headquarters.**

6   Participants are reminded that citizens of some countries are required to obtain a visa in order to enter and spend time in Switzerland. The visa must be requested and obtained from the office (embassy or consulate) representing Switzerland in your country or, if there is no such office in your country, from the one that is closest to the country of departure.

7   If problems are encountered by **UNESCO Member States, UNESCO Associate Members, ITU Member States, Sector Members or Associates**, and at the official request made by them to ITU, ITU can approach the competent Swiss authorities in order to facilitate delivery of the visa. Visa requests should be made by official letter from the administration or company you represent. This letter must specify your name and function, date of birth, passport number as well as the date of issue and expiry. The letter must be accompanied by a photocopy of your passport and completed registration form and must be sent to ITU, bearing the words **"visa request"**, by fax (No: +41 22 730 5853) or e-mail (tsbreg@itu.int). Please note that ITU needs at least one week to process all papers required for the delivery of a visa. **Please also note that ITU can assist only representatives of UNESCO Member States, UNESCO Associate Members, ITU Member States, ITU Sector Members or ITU Associates.**

ANNEX 3

Ce formulaire de confirmation est à **adresser directement à l'hôtel** de votre choix
*This confirmation form **should be sent directly to the hotel** of your choice*
Dirija directamente este formulario de confirmación **al hotel** que elija

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UNION INTERNATIONALE DES TÉLÉCOMMUNICATIONS
INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION
UNIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE TELECOMUNICACIONES

SECTEUR DE LA NORMALISATION DES TÉLÉCOMMUNICATIONS
TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION SECTOR
SECTOR DE NORMALIZACIÓN DE LAS TELECOMUNICACIONES

Atelier		du	au	Genève
Workshop	------------------------------------ *from* --------------- *to* ----------------- *Geneva*
Taller		desde el	al	Ginebra

Confirmation de la réservation faite le   A l'hôtel
Confirmation of the reservation made on ---------------------------- *To hotel* ------------------------------
Confirmación de la reserva efectuada el   Al hotel

au prix préférentiel offert à l'UIT / *at ITU preferential tariff* / **al precio preferencial ofrecido a la UIT**

chambre simple/double	du	heure d'arrivée	au
------------*single/double room*	*from* --------------	*time of arrival*	------------ *to* -----------
habitación indiv./doble	desde el	hora de llegada	al

Nom / *Name* / Apellido   --

Prénom / *First name* / Nombre   ---

Adresse / *Address* / Dirección   ---   Tel: ----------------------------

---   Fax: ----------------------------

---   E-mail: ----------------------------

Carte de crédit en garantie de la réservation
Credit card to guarantee this reservation: AX/VISA/DINERS/EC --
Tarjeta de crédito que garantiza la reserva   autre / *other* / otras

No --- validité / *validity* / validez ---

Date/*Date*/Fecha -------------------------- Signature / *Signature* / Firma ---

ANNEX 4

Global Symposium on Promoting the Multilingual Internet
(Geneva, 9-11 May 2006)

REGISTRATION FORM

To be returned to ITU (Fax: +41 22 730 5853 / <u>tsbreg@itu.int</u>) by 21 April 2006

☐ Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Ms ☐ Miss

_____
Family Name

_____
First Name

☐ ITU Member State

☐ ITU Sector Member

☐ ITU Associate

☐ UNESCO Member State

☐ UNESCO Associate Member

☐ Other

Name and complete address of Administration or Organization:

_____   Tel: _____

_____
_____   Fax :_____

_____   **E-mail :** _____

Hotel :

_____   Tel. : _____

NOTE to delegates attending other ITU meetings: You are kindly requested to register to this Symposium in addition to your registration to attend your ITU meeting of interest.

Date: _____   Signature: _____