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## FIJI

**Dear Sir,**

Please accept the official Fiji Government contribution for the WSIS Intersessional. The World Summit on the Information Society is critically important to Fiji's development and we look forward to adoption of a *Declaration* and *Action Plan* that will benefit all.

Participants at a Pacific Islands Regional ICT Consultation, held in Suva, Fiji, from 9-11 April, have been preparing Pacific Island countries and organisations to participate effectively in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). The objective of the Consultation was to ensure that the unique contributions and needs of Pacific Island countries and peoples including groups with special needs are fully recognized and represented throughout the WSIS process and ultimately reflected in the Declaration and Action Plan to be adopted at the Summit in Geneva in December 2003.

The Fiji Government Intersessional submission is based largely on the final report of the Consultation (available at [www.itc.gov.fj/docs/piric.doc](http://www.itc.gov.fj/docs/piric.doc)).

### **Reinstatement of the Islands Paragraph**

The Fiji Government calls for the reinstatement of the Islands Paragraph adopted at the WSIS Asia Regional Conference and unchanged at Prepcom2:

*“Special circumstances of Small Island Developing States (SIDS): These countries, with fragile ecosystems vulnerable to environmental hazards, and characterized by small, homogenous markets, high costs of access and equipment, human resource constraints exacerbated by the problem of “brain-drain”, limited access to networks and remote locations, will require particular attention and tailored solutions to meet their needs.”*

The Fiji Government is supported by all Pacific states and a significant number of other SIDS on this issue. We believe the above SIDS characteristics are unique and will require the *Action Plan* to pay particular attention to and create tailored solutions to meet our needs.

### **Formation of Development Fund**

The Fiji Government calls for the re-direction of existing funds or formation of a *Global Development Fund (GDF)* to finance the expansion of successful ICT4D projects to regional and global scale. We believe it is the responsibility of individual Governments to fund national programs (albeit with the assistance and loans of intergovernmental agencies), the GDF would be used only for projects that have reached maturity (economies of scale) in a national setting and could be replicated (via franchise models, mergers & acquisitions, or takeovers) on a regional or global scale.

The priority deployment model of the GDF would be Multi-Sector Partnerships (MSP) and we would recommend agencies such as the Global Knowledge Partnership to administer the fund, who in turn would engage agencies such as TakingITglobal to deploy youth-related projects.

### **Appointment of a Regional Commissioner**

The Fiji Government repeat a call made for Prepcom2; the 2003 Summit will issue a *Declaration of Intent* and this shall be reviewed at the Summit in 2005. Multi-lateral agencies maintain and publish several indices that indicate the state of ICT development per country. We believe that the WSIS should appoint Regional Commissioners responsible for ensuring countries show a marked ICT improvement by the 2005 Summit.

We would further call for the appointment of a Pacific Commissioner separate from the usual bundling with Asia. The Pacific bowl comprises of 15 countries with a total population of less than 10 million and an estimated GDP of US\$2 Billion. Most countries comprise of distant islands with a significant rural population. Most Pacific Island countries have very large Diaspora communities in Australia, New Zealand, the United States and increasingly the United Kingdom.

ITC Services is the official IT Dept for the whole of the Fiji Government providing Information Technology & Computing (ITC) Services. These services include ICT policy advise and formulation, consultancy, project management and systems development, IT infrastructure building and management, research and training, and a customer support centre. Delivery of these services is through minicomputers and client/server systems across GOVNET, the largest wide area network in Fiji.

ITC is the Govt Dept responsible for E-Government including policy formulation, 3-year strategy plans, and the implementation or project management of outsourced E-Government applications. At present we are working to issue a Policy document and comprehensive Strategy Plan by early next year. The first pilot E-Govt project is the development of a dynamic website for the Immigration Dept allowing customers to apply, pay for and receive Immigration services online.

Regards,

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