

# HELPING THE WORLD COMMUNICATE

WSIS Geneva, 10-12 December 2003



**world summit  
on the information society**

Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005





# *HELPING THE WORLD COMMUNICATE*

*WSIS Geneva, 10-12 December 2003*



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# Foreword

The digital revolution in Information and Communication Technologies has not only transformed the way we communicate. It has also dramatically changed the way we work, do business, interact, play, seek information and learn. But the challenge facing us has been to harness the potential of ICT for development and to ensure that the benefits of this revolution are accessible to all. Overcoming this challenge has been the primary objective of the World Summit on the Information Society since it was first proposed at the 1998 ITU Plenipotentiary Conference and endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2001.

It is my privilege to say that the first phase of the Summit successfully created a framework for an inclusive Information Society and the shared values needed to support it.

Most significantly, world leaders agreed on the importance of ICTs in addressing many of the major social, political and economical problems and the critical role that the free flow of information, ideas and knowledge could play in reaching the development goals enshrined in the Millennium Declaration.

The global commitment to the Principles and the Action Plan of the Summit, which was endorsed by the 175 States represented, was made possible by the exhaustive preparatory process which included regional and thematic meetings, numerous Preparatory Committee meetings (PrepComs) and, most importantly, the dedicated involvement and significant contributions of representatives of all spheres of society: governments, international organizations, civil society and business.

The successful outcome of the first phase of the Summit is only the start of a long process however. We now need to transform the vision and plans adopted in Geneva into concrete action. Work has already begun and appropriate mechanisms are in place to monitor and evaluate progress.



*ITU 032736/J.-M. Ferré*

**Yoshio Utsumi**  
Secretary-General  
International Telecommunication Union



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We are proud of the achievements of the Summit, which are in no small way the result of an extraordinary level of cooperation and a unique multi-stakeholder strategy, as well as the dedication of ITU and United Nations staff. In particular we appreciate the efforts of the host country Switzerland in ensuring the successful outcome of a complex process. It is now critical that all stakeholders maintain the momentum so that the positive achievements of the first phase can be brought to fruition.

By working together towards the second phase of the Summit to be held in Tunis in November 2005, we can fulfil the great promise of the Information Society: a future where improved communication will make the world a more equitable, peaceful and sustainable place for all.

Yoshio Utsumi  
Secretary-General  
International Telecommunication Union  
Geneva





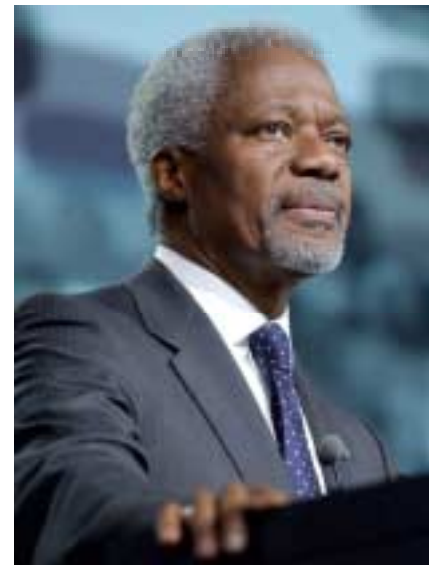
# Message from United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan

The digital revolution is transforming society. If harnessed effectively, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have the potential to greatly improve our social, economic and cultural lives. They can serve as an engine for development in areas ranging from trade to telemedicine, and from education to environmental protection. They are tools with which to advance the cause of freedom and democracy. And they are vehicles with which to propagate knowledge and mutual understanding.

Yet the majority of the world's population has yet to benefit from these new technologies. That is why, at the Millennium Summit in 2000, world leaders pledged to work together to put ICTs at the service of development as part of the eighth Millennium Development Goal: developing a global partnership for development.

The World Summit on the Information Society, convened by the International Telecommunication Union in Geneva in December 2003, was a unique opportunity for all key players to develop a shared vision to bridge the digital divide and create a truly global Information Society.

Any Summit is a formidable logistical and political undertaking. This one was especially demanding because it was the first time that many issues linked to the Information Society were addressed at the international level. But in the end, despite difficulties and differences, negotiators were able to agree on a declaration of principles and plan of action that will allow Member States, and their partners in the private sector, civil society and the media, to work together to realize the enormous potential of information and communication technologies. That is a significant achievement.



*ITU 032749/J.-M. Ferré*

**Kofi Annan**  
Secretary-General  
United Nations



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We now look forward to the Summit's second phase, which will take place in Tunisia in November 2005. In the meantime, we must do our utmost to build on the foundations of the Information Society that have already been put in place, and draw concrete results from the many partnerships and proposals that blossomed in Geneva.

Kofi A. Annan  
Secretary-General  
United Nations

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**Connecting the World**



*ITU 032764/J.-M. Ferré*

Heads of State and Government with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and ITU Secretary-General Yoshio Utsumi on the opening day of the World Summit on the Information Society, 10 December 2003, in Geneva.



# Connecting the World

The digital revolution has impacted the world in deeply intrinsic ways, perhaps more profoundly than the advent of the telegraph and the railway; some would say even more than the industrial revolution itself. What becomes increasingly certain is that the Industrial Society of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is rapidly giving way to the Information Society of the 21<sup>st</sup> that is now set to transform the world at a frenetic pace. This dynamic process, fired by the engines of Information and Communication Technologies, has already wrought fundamental changes in the way people think, behave, communicate, work and earn their livelihood. It has forged new ways to create knowledge, educate people and disseminate information. It has restructured the way the world conducts economic and business practices, runs governments and engages politically. It has provided for the speedy delivery of humanitarian aid and healthcare, and a new vision for environmental protection. It has even created new avenues for entertainment and leisure. As access to information and knowledge is a prerequisite to achieving the development goals enshrined in the Millennium Declaration, it has the capacity to improve living standards for millions of people around the world. Moreover, better communication between peoples can go a long way towards resolving conflicts and attaining world peace.

Paradoxically, while the digital revolution has extended the frontiers of the global village, the vast majority of the world remains unhooked from this unfolding phenomenon. With the ever-widening gulf between knowledge and ignorance, the development gap between the rich and the poor among and within countries has also increased. It has therefore become imperative for the world to bridge this digital divide and place the Millennium Development Goals on the ICT-accelerated speedway to achievement.



ITU 034151/A. Longchamp

Connected to the world from the Cybercafé at WSIS, Geneva



ITU 031038/J.-M. Ferré

Students in Geneva connect to schools in Uganda and Tanzania via videoconference link during WSIS PrepCom3, 18 September 2003.



ITU 032508/M. Ardito

Delegates working on the WSIS documents at the Intersessional meeting in Paris, July 2003.



ITU 031069/J.-M. Ferré

The PrepCom in session in Geneva.

## Preparatory Framework

Recognizing that this new dynamic requires global discussion, the International Telecommunication Union, following a proposal by the Government of Tunisia, resolved at its Plenipotentiary Conference in Minneapolis in 1998 to hold a World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and place it on the agenda of the United Nations. In 2001, the ITU Council decided to hold the Summit in two phases, the first from 10 to 12 December 2003, in Geneva, Switzerland, and the second from 16 to 18 November 2005 in Tunis, Tunisia. This was endorsed by the UN General Assembly (Resolution 56/183) while according the lead role to ITU in cooperation with other interested organizations and partners. It further recommended that preparations for the Summit take place through an intergovernmental Preparatory Committee – or PrepCom – that would define the agenda of the Summit, decide on the modalities of the participation of other stakeholders, and finalize both the draft Declaration of Principles and the draft Plan of Action. While recommending representation from governments at the highest level it also invited participation by all relevant UN bodies and other intergovernmental organizations, international and regional institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector to establish a truly multi-stakeholder process.

In order to coordinate the efforts of the United Nations family in the preparation, organization and holding of WSIS, a High-Level Summit Organizing Committee (HLSOC) was established under the patronage of United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan. It is composed of a Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Executive Heads of the FAO, IAEA, ICAO, ILO, IMO, ITU, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCHR, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNU, UPU, WFP, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO, UN Regional Economic Commissions, and the World Bank. It also includes IADB, OECD, UNITAR and UNV as observers. The Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union serves as Chairman of HLSOC. Mr. Kofi Annan appointed Mr. Nitin Desai as his Special Adviser to WSIS.



An Executive Secretariat, with Mr. Pierre Gagné at its head, was established under the authority of HLSOC to assist in the preparation of the Summit with a mandate to:

- Facilitate the Summit preparations
- Prepare progress reports on the preparation of the Summit
- Develop an operation plan and a timetable for preparation of the Summit
- Obtain sponsorship and funding

The host countries, Switzerland and Tunisia, also established executive secretariats, while governments set up a Bureau to give guidance to the Preparatory Committee. On the basis of consultations carried out with the regional groups of the United Nations system, the Preparatory Committee elected 17 members of the Bureau by acclamation: Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Japan, Latvia, Libya, Mali, Mexico, Pakistan, Romania, Russian Federation, South Africa, United States of America, Switzerland (host country for the first phase), and Tunisia (host country for the second phase). The First PrepCom elected as its President Mr. Adama Samassékou of Mali, who made it his mission to ensure that information and communication technologies “be put into the service of all people, regardless of language, culture, gender or geographic location.” He stressed, “We are creating a path from the Information Society to a society of shared knowledge that will lead to greater solidarity among peoples and nations.”

## Making the connections

Having recognized the value of information and communication technologies in improving the quality of life, social services and economic growth for the citizens of the world, governments became involved in intense negotiations to draft the Principles that would form the bedrock for the Information Society as well as an Action Plan to meet concrete targets to ‘connect the world’ and bring the benefits of ICTs to all nations. Three Preparatory Committee meetings, or PrepComs, were scheduled in Geneva in July 2002, February 2003 and September 2003, to lay the groundwork for the first-ever global summit on ICTs and the Information Society.



ITU 031086/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Pierre Gagné, Executive Director of the WSIS Secretariat, in discussion with Mr. Adama Samassékou, President of the WSIS Preparatory Committee.



ITU 032424/M. Arditto

Ms Lindall Shope-Mafole (second from right), Chairman of the Working Group for the Draft Declaration of Principles and the Draft Action Plan at PrepCom2 along with Ambassador Daniel Stauffacher of Switzerland (right) and others.



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ITU 032603/M. Arditto

The Latin American Regional Conference meeting in Bávaro, the Dominican Republic, 29-31 January 2003.

“The enthusiastic participation of more than 1500 participants is reflected in the comprehensive nature of the work produced, and in their collective belief in developing new and innovative partnerships between Member States, civil society and the business sector in order to bridge the digital divide,” said Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of ITU. “However, to achieve the vision of the Information Society that we have outlined, we need to do more work as well as gain the support and political will of the leaders of the world.”

Adding support to the WSIS process and in preparation for the Summit, regional conferences were held in Africa, Europe, Latin America, Asia-Pacific, and West Asia. Mali hosted the African Regional Conference in Bamako in May 2002 with representatives of 51 African countries, delegates from many other countries and people representing African and global organizations, the private sector and civil society. The Conference resolved to harness ICTs for “the fair, balanced and harmonious development of all the people of the world with particular attention to the needs and aspirations of the most disadvantaged in society and those of African people in particular.”



ITU 022713/M. Arditto

The Pan European Regional Conference meeting in Bucharest, Romania, 7-9 October 2002.

The Pan European Conference met in Bucharest, Romania, in November 2002 outlining the vision of an Information Society, “where all persons, without distinction of any kind, would exercise their right to freedom of opinion and expression, including the freedom to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

The Latin America and Caribbean Regional Conference followed next in January 2003, meeting in Bávaro, Dominican Republic, with a firm resolve to overcome the digital divide that “both reflects and is a factor in the differences that exist between and within countries in terms of economic, social and cultural aspects, education, health and access to knowledge.”

In January, too, the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference was held in Tokyo, Japan. And in February 2003, the Western Asia Preparatory Conference meeting in Beirut, Lebanon, resolved to promote the transition of countries in the region into the Information Society of their choice and envisaged this as a means of fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals and attaining sustainable development.

An Intersessional meeting under the auspices of UNESCO was held in Paris in July 2003 to advance negotiations ahead of PrepCom3. More than 750 participants from governments, the private sector, intergovernmental agencies, civil society and the media participated to refine the draft Declaration of





Principles and the Draft Plan of Action. ITU, the United Nations specialized agency for telecommunications, called for a consensus to shape the international community's response to the tremendous expectations raised by the emergence of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as essential components for social and economic development. "In the Information Society, no human being should be left behind," said Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of ITU, who noted that "bold decisions and bold actions are required, as the success of the Summit will be judged by measurable progress toward implementing the plan of action to be adopted in Geneva in December." Mr. Marc Furrer, Director-General of OFCOM and Head of the Swiss Delegation, stated, "It is important to highlight that this Summit is not about technology, it is about using the new tools of ICTs for development and to reach the Millennium Development Goals."



ITU 032733/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Yoshio Utsumi announces the finalization of the Declaration of Principles and Action Plan at the Pre-WSIS Press conference on 9 December 2003.

## Bringing it all together

The third and final PrepCom that met in Geneva in September 2003 grappled with the contentious issues surrounding Internet governance, open source software, freedom of expression, the media, financing, and Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs). In order to complete negotiations on these critical issues, it was decided to resume the session in November 2003. Following more consultations and facilitation from the host government, the PrepCom reconvened yet again in December and, on the eve of WSIS, agreement was finally reached on the Declaration of Principles, "*Building the Information Society: A Global Challenge in the New Millennium*", and a concrete Plan of Action. Internet governance and financing ICT investments in underserved economies were two of the thorny issues debated until the last hours leading up to the Summit. Other sticking points ironed out at the eleventh hour were references to human rights, media freedom and intellectual property rights.

## Declaration of Principles and Action Plan

The highlight of the Pre-Summit Press Conference on 9 December was the announcement awaited by all: Discussions at the Palais des Nations had borne fruit and government negotiators had signed off on the Summit documents. We now had the Declaration of Principles and an Action Plan. The foundations had been laid for the Information Society. Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of ITU, announcing the good news said, "Today's agreement underscores a shared understanding of a truly democratic and inclusive Information Society. Debates



ITU 032739/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Marc Furrer, Swiss Secretary of State, emerges delighted after intense negotiations culminate in agreement on the WSIS documents.



ITU 033040/S. Berman

Bridging the digital divide at WSIS.



ITU 034190/J.-M. Ferré

Ms Cairo Shamin Atwiine, student activist from Uganda, spoke eloquently at the Media Centre during the launch of UNICEF's State of the World Children Report.

that led to this broad consensus have been extremely positive, since they put the issues squarely on the table and set the agenda for the next few years.”

#### The Summit Output

The Declaration of Principles expresses a common vision while the Action Plan concretely sets time-bound targets to turn this vision into reality.

1. The Declaration recognizes that ICTs are an essential foundation for an inclusive Information Society and embraces the idea of universal, accessible, equitable and affordable ICT infrastructure and services as a key goal of all stakeholders that will help build it.
2. Boosting trust and confidence in ICTs including information and network security, authentication, privacy and consumer protection have been underscored as a prerequisite for the development of the Information Society.
3. ICTs are also important tools for good governance. The Declaration stresses the need to create an enabling environment at the national and international level based on the rule of law with a supportive, transparent, pro-competitive, technologically-neutral and predictable policy and regulatory framework.
4. If universal access is the foundation of a true Information Society, capacity building is its motor. The declaration acknowledges that only by inspiring and educating populations unfamiliar with the Internet and its powerful applications will the fruit of universal access ripen.
5. They also recognize that resources must be channelled to marginalized and vulnerable groups, to ensure adoption and empower them.
6. Indeed, the Declaration reaffirms the universality and indivisibility of all human rights as fundamental freedoms in the Information Society, along with democracy and good governance.
7. On the question of Intellectual Property, the Declaration underlines the importance of both encouraging innovation and creativity and the need to share knowledge to spur such innovation and creativity.
8. Key principles also include the respect for cultural and linguistic diversity as well as tradition, religion. On the Internet in particular, that translates to multilingual, diverse and culturally appropriate content.
9. As for Internet management, involving all stakeholders and intergovernmental organizations to address both technical and public policy issues has been underscored. But, overall, the global Internet governance issue was too complex to resolve in detail. Agreement was therefore reached to set up an open and inclusive working group on Internet governance to investigate and make proposals for action prior to the second phase of the Summit in 2005.
10. The principles of freedom of the press, independence, pluralism and media diversity are also upheld.
11. And finally, the Declaration expresses an unconditional support and commitment to close the Digital Divide through international cooperation among all stakeholders.



## Governments

The political support to this global vision and consensus was evident when government leaders from 175 countries – including close to 50 Heads of state/government and Vice Presidents – took the podium at the World Summit on the Information Society that was held in Geneva from 10-12 December 2003. Alongside, representatives of the multi-stakeholder process including the United Nations, intergovernmental agencies, civil society and the private sector put forward new initiatives and proposals to build on the international consensus to structure a truly representative Information Society.



ITU 034167/A. Longchamp

H.E. Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President of the Republic of Tunisia, takes the floor at the opening session of WSIS.

## United Nations

Representing the global family as it put its stamp on a new age of international collaboration, Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, welcomed the opportunity to shape our collective destiny. “Technology has produced the information age,” he said. “Now it is up to all of us to build an Information Society.” In the same vein, Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union, stated, “By taking the right decisions, we must shape the direction of the Information Society and create a more just, prosperous and peaceful world.” In keeping with the broadbased mandate of the Information Society, the United Nations and a number of its agencies were represented at WSIS Geneva at the highest level: UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCHR, UNICTTF, UNITAR, UNFIP, ILO, ITC, UPU, WMO, WIPO, the regional commissions UNESCAP, UNECA, UNECE, UNECLAC and UNESCWA as well as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank.



ITU 034119/S. Berman

Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of UNDP, addresses the Press.

## Civil Society

Civil society played an active role in identifying the social and cultural consequences of current trends and in drawing attention to the need to introduce democratic accountability on the strategic options taken at all levels. In particular, the role of the media was highlighted as vital stakeholders in the process, both as creators of content and as watchdogs safeguarding the right to freedom of opinion and expression as spelt out in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The World Electronic Media Forum, a parallel Summit event, adopted a declaration in which broadcasting leaders from around the world pledged to do their part for development and social cohesion.



ITU 031115/J.-M. Ferré

Ms Natasha Primo represents Civil Society at PrepCom3.



ITU 031075/J.-M. Ferré

The Youth Caucus in discussions in Geneva during PrepCom3.

Youth and gender caucuses also provided inputs to the negotiations to give a more holistic shape and sensitivity to the emerging Information Society. Its diversity and hands-on approach to issues make civil society a key player in the renewed international partnership called for by the UN Secretary-General.

The Civil Society Declaration, *“Shaping Information Societies for Human Needs”*, was presented to the President of the Summit, H.E. Mr. Pascal Couchepin, at the last Plenary meeting of WSIS. Expressing disappointment that “our voices and the general interest we collectively expressed are not adequately reflected in the Summit documents,” the Declaration sets out a common vision for shaping a “people-centred, inclusive and equitable concept of information and communication societies” and invites the global community “to participate in this ongoing dialogue and to join forces in shaping our common future.” This positive engagement in giving shape to the Information Society will continue to Tunis and beyond.



ITU 032902/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Dr. Fawaz H. Zu'Bi, Minister of Telecommunications and Technologies of Jordan (left) with Ms Maria Livanos Cattau, Secretary-General of ICC, at the meeting of the Champions of the Information Society: Young Entrepreneurs, Innovators and Investors.

## Private Sector

The private sector, facilitated by the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI), under the chairmanship of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), played an active role by offering an economically viable model to achieve the development objectives on the world agenda. The contribution of the private sector is instrumental in creating the material conditions for universal access to information and value-added ICT services and by powering economic growth through new partnerships and technology transfers. Increased awareness of new technologies will motivate the creation of local content development and skilled employment opportunities, and it is hoped new high-speed cyber expressways will help achieve the development goals – one of them being to achieve connectivity through partnerships – *“In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies – especially information and communications technologies.”*



ITU 034144/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Michael Furdyk, co-founder of TakingITGlobal, at the WSIS event for young entrepreneurs.

Reporting for the CCBI, Mr. Richard McCormick said, “Be it through the delivery of health care, the provision of government services, the encouragement of participatory democracies or the provision of education and training, we have the opportunity with ICTs – as never before – to change so many lives for the better. And business stands ready to make those investments. To do so, we need to work with governments to create the conditions necessary for investment. Among



those conditions are intellectual property rights protection; stable and predictable legal systems; trade liberalization; technology neutrality; and a regulatory framework which promotes competition and fosters entrepreneurship.”

## WSIS 2003. Geneva.

The World Summit on the Information Society, held at the PALEXPO Centre in Geneva from 10-12 December 2003, attracted as many as 11,000 accredited participants. Working at a frenetic pace, the infrastructure for WSIS, based on months of detailed planning, transformed the cavernous halls of PALEXPO into a red-carpet venue befitting Presidents, Kings, Prime Ministers and a host of high-level delegates.

Security arrangements were laid with meticulous planning, coordinated with local authorities, police and military and UN Security. UN and ITU Protocol services were on their toes receiving Heads of state/government and other delegates and making all the arrangements for their requirements with decorum and precision.

Accreditation services had been keeping late hours for weeks prior to WSIS to facilitate the arrivals of participants in their thousands. The printing presses worked overtime, but everything was in place as the delegates arrived, even as the final documents were agreed on the eve of the Summit.

Digital Technologies, at centre stage during WSIS, had a ubiquitous hand in most aspects of infrastructure and logistics. Security issues, accreditation and badging, communications, and webcasting were the high-tech preserve of ITU experts who worked like beavers to have the systems up and functioning with little time to spare.

## Summit Events

The pace picked up on 9 December with the inauguration of the ICT4D Platform and the opening of several discussions such as the World Electronic Media Forum, the ITU High-level Dialogue, the InfoDev and UNESCO Symposia and the Executive Round Table hosted by the Swiss Government. An informal welcoming ceremony on the 9<sup>th</sup> evening announced to the world that the dawn of the Information Society was upon us.



ITU 032789/J.-M. Ferré

Over 40 Heads of state attended the Summit. H.E. Mr. Mohamed Hosny Mubarak, President of Egypt, is received on arrival at PALEXPO, Geneva.



ITU 034034/A. Longchamp

Ms Fatimetou Mint Saleck, Secretary of New Technology, Mauritania, addresses the Third Plenary session of WSIS.



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ITU 032959/A. Longchamp

H.E. Ms. Micheline Calmy-Rey, Swiss Minister for Foreign Affairs (left), and Mr. Walter Fust, Head of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, with a participant at the opening of the ICT4D Platform in Geneva, 9 December 2003.



ITU 032766/J.-M. Ferré

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan with Mr. Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the World Wide Web, and school children at the CERN pavilion from where he sent an email message to students around the world using the first Internet server.

In all more than 280 Summit Events were organized including panel discussions, workshops, exhibitions, forums, and conferences. There were also a host of live performances and cultural events, in Geneva and around the world. The ICT4D (Information and Communication Technologies for development) platform under the same roof as the Summit, but open to all, was a showcase of technologies designed to connect the world. During the five-day event 265 participants from 80 countries highlighted and debated the development dimension of information and communication technologies. The biggest communication village in the world counted 38,000 visits where many new partnerships were forged and action oriented initiatives launched.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan along with Tim Berners-Lee, creator of the World Wide Web, sent an email to children around the world from the First Server at the CERN stand. In his message to the students, Mr Kofi Annan wrote, "I hope you will keep communicating with each other to build bridges of understanding between people and countries. By using technology in this way, you will bring us all closer to a more just and peaceful world, in which access to the Internet will be a right enjoyed by everyone. May this World Summit help us to see the world as a domain we all share."

The Summit Events covered a broad range of themes including media, connectivity, human rights, knowledge and education, cultural diversity, gender, science, local government, disability, as well as investment and infrastructure, youth and entrepreneurship, indigenous peoples, volunteering, technology and open source and small and medium size enterprises. Ambassador Daniel Stauffacher of the Swiss Government summed it up aptly. "This diversity of themes," he said, "enriched the Geneva phase of the Summit."

## WSIS Ground Zero

The Plenary Hall lay at the heart of the Summit, covering 4000 square metres with seating for as many as 3000 delegates. Presiding over the opening ceremony, H.E. Mr. Pascal Couchepin, President of the Swiss Confederation, welcomed the distinguished gallery of world leaders and high-level delegates. Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations spoke on behalf of the world body and the global community, and Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of ITU, took the podium as the focal point of the Summit. The President of the Republic of Tunisia, H.E. Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, addressed the Summit as



host for the second phase of WSIS. Ms Kicki Nördstrom, President of the World Blind Union, took up the cause of Civil Society, and Mr. Mohammad Omran, Chairman of the Board of the Thuraya Satellite Telecommunications Company, spoke for the Business Sector.

The General Debate took the floor thereafter in five Plenary sessions as Heads of state/government, representatives of intergovernmental agencies, civil society leaders and CEOs from the business sector announced new initiatives and proposals to make the Information Society grow and become a reality. On the final day, prior to the closing session, reports from the multi-stakeholder events were presented to the Summit.

Giant screens in the Plenary Hall displayed the proceedings for the benefit of those seated far from the podium, and plasma screens outside relayed live images around PALEXPO. Fourteen kilometres of cabling hooked up television camera and broadcast facilities; 17 kilometres of computer cables networked 700 computers, 200 of them in the Internet café; 10,500 simultaneous translation headsets were linked to 68 interpretation booths; and the simultaneous webcast of 21 sessions made WSIS a virtual reality around the world. Télévision Suisse Romande, the designated host broadcaster, set up cameras at critical points for Live telecast of the events. Television trucks from international networks, bristling with antennae and satellite dishes, drove onto a south-facing ramp to uplink television images and dispatch them around the world. The European Broadcasting Union, responsible for providing uplinks to national broadcasters, established their own studios. Raised platforms enabled Television crews to set up cameras and connectors provided access to the audio feed from the podium as well as interpretation in the six UN languages.

## Building on WSIS

Round Table discussions took place in a specially designated hall next to the plenary, encouraging a free exchange of views away from the formal presentations customary in the general debate. The proceedings of the Round Tables were broadcast to an overflow room open to the media and broadcast through the Internet and television.

A number of Presidential booths in the exclusive area reserved for VVIPs attracted a flurry of bilateral meetings between visiting Heads of state and government and



ITU 034164/A. Longchamp

A crush of photographers and TV crew strive to capture the decisive moments at WSIS.



ITU 034166/A. Longchamp

Giant screens display the proceedings in the Plenary Hall.



ITU 034162/A. Longchamp

Round table discussions included Heads of state and government and eminent representatives of intergovernmental organizations, the business sector and civil society.



ITU 034163/A. Longchamp

Round Table on 'Creating Digital Opportunities' chaired by H.E. Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal (second from left), and moderated by Ms Maria Livanos Cattai, Secretary-General of ICC (left).



ITU 033054/S. Berman

Ms Tae Yoo of Cisco Systems with Mr. Jean-Yves Besnier of ITU (right).



ITU 034117/S. Berman

Mr. Hamadoun I. Touré, Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau, and Mr. Noah Samara, CEO, WorldSpace Corporation, formed a partnership on e-learning.

the constant traffic of photographers and TV crew to record the events for the national Press.

#### Round Table Discussions

Under the overarching theme of *'An Information Society for All: Opportunities and Challenges'*, a series of three Round Table discussions on 10 and 11 December 2003 were convened as an integral element of the World Summit on the Information Society. Represented at the highest level were governments, United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations, funds and programmes, the business sector and civil society. Two of the round tables covered a cluster of related topics whereas the third was more generic in nature.

Round Table 1, on *'Creating Digital Opportunities'* was chaired by H.E. Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal, with Ms Maria Livanos Cattai, Secretary-General of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) as moderator. It focused on the questions of access to ICTs, partnerships and funding. Speakers welcomed the interactive exchange of views and the ideas put forward for creating digital opportunities. They recognized the need for new forms of solidarity, partnerships and cooperation among all stakeholders, including governments, private sector, civil society and international organizations to build an inclusive Information Society. It was recognized that bridging the digital divide required strong commitments by all stakeholders.

Round Table 2 examined *'Opportunities and Challenges: Diversity in Cyberspace'*. Chaired by H.E. Ms Vaira Vike Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia and Moderated by Mr. Nick Gowing, anchor of BBC World News, the discussions centred on the challenge of reconciling the flow of information and the need to preserve cultural and linguistic diversity in a digital world; freedom of expression and media ownership; and law and ethics on the Internet.

Round Table 3 on *'ICT as a tool to achieve the Millennium Development Goals'* was Chaired and Moderated by Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The main focus of the discussion centred on the questions of capacity-building, the role of ICT in helping to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development and ways in which ICTs can enable innovative delivery of social services including in the areas of health and education. During the debate, which reflected strong commitments to the Millennium Development Goals, ICTs were firmly placed at the centre of development. It was broadly recognized that ICTs could contribute to accelerating the achievement of the international development targets by enhancing education, labour productivity and job opportunities, such as through call centres, and by creating local content. ICTs could also be effective tools to combat disease, promote universal respect of human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms.





Other meeting halls were set up for discussions by WSIS stakeholders such as Civil Society and the business sector. The ITU stand was the venue for the signing of as many as fifteen ICT partnerships that will go a long way in furthering the goals of the Information Society and in bridging the digital divide. The colourful Tunisia stand put out an open invitation for the next WSIS rendezvous in Tunis in November 2005.

### Partnerships

Partnership announcements included a USD 400,000 grant by the US Government for ICT development in low-income countries. ITU signed a Memorandum of Understanding with its private sector partners to open 20 more Internet Training Centres in developing countries. Hewlett-Packard will provide low-cost products that will help overcome the illiteracy barrier to ICT. Handwritten texts for example will be recognized for e-mail transmission. Microsoft, working with UNDP, will provide a billion dollar programme over 5 years to bring ICT skills to underserved communities.

Mr. Hamadoun I. Touré, Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), signed a series of MOUs that included the governments of Angola, Canada, Cameroun, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Rwanda and Switzerland and, from the business sector, AMEA, ALCATEL, Cisco Systems, INMARSAT, RASCOM and WorldSpace Corporation.

An innovative initiative announced to bridge the digital divide is the Bhutan E-Post project. For faster, cheaper and more reliable communication to remote, mountainous areas of Bhutan, the Government of India will deliver e-post services to the Bhutanese Postal Service via a USD 400,000 V-satellite network and solar power system. The partners include ITU, Bhutan Telecom and Post, WorldSpace Corp. and Encore India.

At the close of the Summit, the cities of Geneva and Lyon and the Government of Senegal announced contributions totalling about 1 million euros to fund information technology in developing countries. The contributions will represent the first three payments towards the Digital Solidarity Fund, the creation of which is to be considered by a UN working group for the Tunis phase.

The World Health Organization with ITU and Cisco Systems announced the creation of a Health Academy to provide virtual health education to the worldwide general public, beginning with pilot projects for schools in Jordan and Egypt. Mr. Lee Jong-wook, the WHO Director-General, said the academy aimed to provide people with "clear and culturally appropriate information in their own languages on HIV/Aids, malaria, tuberculosis, tobacco, illicit drugs, hygiene and many other health topics."



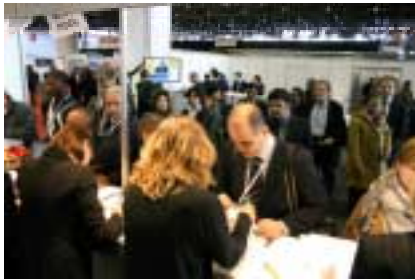
ITU 034121/S. Berman

Building partnerships for ITU Centres of Excellence, from left to right: Ms Michèle Granger and Mr. Louis Brunel of the International Institute of Telecommunications, Canada; Mr. Hamadoun I. Touré of ITU; Ms Mary Carman and Mr. Bill Graham from the Ministry of Industry, Canada; and Mr. Jean-Yves Besnier of ITU.



ITU 034123/S. Berman

Forging partnerships, from left to right: Mr. Jean-Marie Blanchard, Alcatel; Mr. Hamadoun I. Touré, ITU; Mr. Souhail Marine, Alcatel; and Mr. Jean-Yves Besnier, ITU.



ITU 033031/J.-M. Ferré

Journalists at the Media Centre seek information and sign up for Pool positions.



ITU 034182/S. Berman

Ms Francine Lambert and Mr. Roberto Rivola, spokespersons for WSIS and the Swiss government, conduct the daily Press briefing.

## The Buzz

At the Media Centre, a hub of activity for print and broadcast journalists from around the world, there was a constant buzz from dawn until midnight as nearly a thousand journalists representing 631 media entities thronged the Summit. Telephone lines hummed with dispatches from Helsinki to Johannesburg, from Bangalore to Palo Alto. Emails flew between world capitals. TV Images were uplinked to satellites and beamed across the time zones. Radio producers recorded audio feeds and dispatched reports over ISDN lines. Online producers connected via broadband access to the World Wide Web and produced content directly from the Centre. More than 500 computers were set up to facilitate media coverage. While the Summit made headlines around the world, the national press zeroed in on the visits of their leaders to this historic gathering. Business sections focused on substantive issues and there was considerable Press on issues related to bridging the digital divide, Internet governance, open source software and Intellectual Property Rights.

The Media Centre was reserved essentially for journalists, but visiting delegations were invited to meet the Press and hold Press Conferences. The WSIS Spokesperson, Ms Francine Lambert, along with the Spokesperson of the host government, Mr. Roberto Rivola, held daily Press briefings on the progress of the Summit. Indeed a concerted effort was made to keep the Press informed. Mr. James Rubin chaired the meeting following the Executive Round Table on 9 December followed by the Pre-Summit Press Conference. On the opening day, the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser to WSIS, Mr. Nitin Desai, briefed the Press on Mr. Kofi Annan's statement. The Closing session with the Press was conducted by H.E. Mr. Pascal Couchepin, President of the Swiss Confederation; Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, ITU Secretary-General; Mr. Moritz Leuenberger, Swiss Federal Councillor; and Mr. Nitin Desai

Press conferences were called by Heads of state, among them the Presidents of Ghana, Iran, Mali, Senegal and Switzerland, Ministers from India, Italy and Sweden, leading CEOs from the private sector and civil society leaders. In all more than 35 Press conferences were held by various stakeholders to ensure their inputs for the Information Society would be put on the public record.

UNICEF thought it fit to launch the annual State of the Children's Report before this august gathering covered by the world Press. A Schoolnet event connected an international congregation of children in Geneva via teleconference link with



schools in Turkey and Uganda while taking the hot seat were the President of Romania, H.E. Mr. Ion Iliescu, Executive Director of UNICEF, Ms Carol Bellamy and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Shashi Tharoor.

More than sixty students from the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva (L'Institut Universitaire de Hautes Études Internationales), situated on the shores of the picturesque Lac Lemman and Alma Mater of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, volunteered to assist as Media Liaison Officers. It was an opportunity for them to experience at close quarters the real world of international politics. Displaying a great deal of sensitivity and patience, the young interns did a magnificent job in keeping the media informed and in chaperoning pooled journalists to designated spots in WVIP areas, and especially for the visual media to cover events in the high-security Plenary and Round Table halls.

#### On the WSIS Wavelength

##### WSIS Sets Geneva Agog

– *Remmy Nweke in All Africa*

The first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS-2003), holding at Palexpo, Geneva, Switzerland, has set the host city agog...

##### Global inequality 'will grow if information gap widens': GENEVA SUMMIT

– *Francis Williams in the Financial Times.*

Failure to grasp the opportunities provided by information and communication technologies (ICTs) could lead to greater global inequality, Mark Malloch Brown, head of the United Nations Development Programme, warned yesterday.

At the World Summit on the Information Society, he said ICTs offered powerful tools for fighting poverty and achieving development goals but the spread of the new technologies would not be automatic. "If we fail to act now, the 'information gap' risks widening into an uncrossable gulf that increases global inequality and leaves the poor further behind," he said.

The three-day summit in Geneva is looking at ways of bridging the 'digital divide' in use of ICTs between rich and poor nations and how to harness ICTs to further the UN Millennium Development Goals aimed at halving extreme poverty by 2015.

##### Shourie Offers India's Support to Global Information Society

– *Financial Express*

The Union minister for communication and information technology (IT) Arun Shourie has extended support on behalf of India to the Fund for Information Society being steered by the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS). Speaking at the World Summit 2003 in Geneva on Thursday, he said India would contribute in cash and kind – in terms of training people in the areas of telemedicine, e-governance, information security and language technologies to this fund.



ITU 032916/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Ion Iliescu, President of Romania, addresses students at the World Summit Event for Schools in Geneva.



ITU 032922/J.-M. Ferré

Students in Geneva interacting with schools in Uganda and Turkey along with a panel that included H.E. Mr. Ion Iliescu, President of Romania, Mr. Shashi Tharoor, UN Under-Secretary-General, and Ms Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF.



ITU 034154/A. Longchamp

Volunteer media liaison officers run the Media desk at the Press Centre.



ITU 034149/A. Longchamp

Journalists cover a WSIS Press Conference.

“You are instituting a working group to ascertain the feasibility and effectiveness of setting up a fund for advancing Information Society. Should such a fund be set up, India will contribute financially in accordance with the formula that collective deliberations yield. To be of even greater assistance, we will contribute in kind – by training and equipping people for this new society, by sharing the substantial experience that we have acquired in spheres such as e-governance, telemedicine, imparting literacy, information security, language technologies,” Mr. Shourie said.

He added, “Indian firms today equip people in over 55 countries for the Information Society. Our government is itself setting set up cyber cities and training centers in other countries.”

#### **SABC Director Warns of Death of Public Service Broadcasting**

– *Haru Mutasa in Highway Africa News Agency (Grahamstown)* ~

SABC Director of Corporate Affairs, Dr Ihron Rensburg, said Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) in Africa “is ripe for the picking and will be killed off” if a concrete case is not made for it on the continent.

Speaking at a PSB workshop at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva today, Rensburg said, “If we do not do something about this, we are simply going to take a hiding for nothing. As it is, PSB is not adequate, robust or vigorous enough to exist in this environment. We need to ask ourselves, are the traditional values of national identity enough? Are these not too burdensome in an environment of more robust competition?”

#### **Everyone Wants to Govern the Internet**

– *IPS News Service*

Dec 11, MONTEVIDEO (IPS) – When typing in a web address (like [www.ipsnews.net](http://www.ipsnews.net)) or sending e-mail, most people probably don’t give much thought to how Internet domain names are assigned... The history of the Internet “is based on a self-managing model” that is “very difficult to adapt to an inter-governmental body,” and that model “has been very successful, because we have been able to exercise influence over it,” the executive director of the Latin American and Caribbean IP Address Registry (LACNIC), Raúl Echeberría, commented to IPS. “The transition process of transferring many functions to ICANN is to be completed by 2006, and there is no turning back in the process of separation from Washington,” said Echeberría.

#### **EU backs US on delay of ICANN decisions**

– *John Blau for IDG News*

Don’t screw up a running system. This isn’t advice from a computer expert but a message delivered Thursday by a high-ranking European Union (EU) official at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) here in Geneva.

#### **WSIS Focuses on Illiteracy and Poverty**

– *Ramesh Jaura in IPS News*

Share the benefits of information technology with the poorest countries and shape its use to fight illiteracy and poverty: this is the gist of appeals to rich countries and business organizations at the first global summit on information.



**Communication: the missing link in sustainable development**

– James Goodman

The appropriate use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) could make a vast contribution to solving the problems of development and democracy. But to realise this potential, a global conversation is needed to match the global nature of economic, social and environmental challenges.

**Internet Summit Looks at Medical Roles**

– Anick Jesdanum of Associated Press in Herald Tribune

Delegates to a U.N. summit this week argued that spreading information technology more equitably can hasten cures for such developing world ills as poverty, AIDS, poor education and high child mortality.

**The Economist**

“It is a positive sign that countries are discussing how to run the Internet, since it requires global solutions to its problems. Clearly, the old utopian dream that the Internet would undermine the very notion of the nation state belongs in the dustbin of history. The reality is rather more mundane: the sorts of disagreements that characterize other global issues such as trade, the environment and human rights, are now migrating to the network, as the Internet becomes part of the fabric of everyday life.”

**The New York Times**

“At the meeting’s conclusion, some said one of its greatest achievements was that government leaders from a broad spectrum of countries had unanimously embraced the Internet as a key to their political progress, economic growth and social development.”

**Ghana Calls for Collective Subscription to Digital Fund**

– Highway News Africa

**No relief expected from spam**

– Mac Central

**Clash Over Access to Internet Technology Holds Back Developing Nations, Duke Expert Says**

**Bid to bridge digital divide could backfire say experts**

– Gulf Daily News

GENEVA: The United Nations push to transform the developing world into tech-ready nations could partly backfire, delegates to an IT summit aimed at bridging the ‘digital divide’ said yesterday. But there are unpredictable consequences that also need to be considered, experts said. “There are a number of non-trivial issues that come with overcoming the digital divide,” said Alan Greenberg, a Canadian IT consultant who works with the World Bank. “Security is one of them.”



ITU 034171/A. Longchamp

Mr. Nitin Desai, UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser to WSIS, at a Press conference.



ITU 034049/A. Longchamp

Media activists meet under the banner of the International Federation of Journalists at WSIS in Geneva.



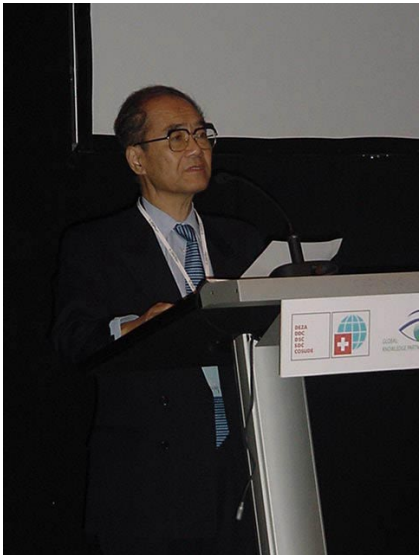
ITU 032731/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Marc Furrer, Swiss Secretary of State for WSIS, and Mr. Adama Samassékou, President of PrepCom, respond to journalists' questions.



ITU 034100/S. Berman

Colourful wares and costumes on display at the Tunisian stand.



UNESCO

Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO addresses the opening of the ICT4D Platform at WSIS Geneva

## The Way Ahead: The Road to Tunis and Beyond

The Geneva phase of WSIS is over, and long negotiations culminated in the framework for the road ahead. Tunis is the next milestone, and the cyber expressways to connect the world are being directed towards the formation of an equitable Information Society. According to Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of ITU, "Many issues have been challenging and consensus has not always been easy. But this is to be expected. We are charting a course for humanity's common future."

## E-Strategies

The onus is on governments to develop and implement comprehensive, forward-looking and sustainable national e-strategies; and these should be made an integral part of national development plans, including Poverty Reduction Strategies. For their part, the private sector and civil society, in dialogue with governments, have an important consultative role to play in devising these e-strategies.

As stated in the Plan of Action, national e-strategies should be in place by 2005 and must recognize young people as the future workforce – the leading creators and earliest adopters of ICTs – and empower them accordingly as learners, developers, contributors and entrepreneurs. Women too must be empowered to fully participate in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes. It will be imperative at the same time to address the needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups of society, including migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees, unemployed and underprivileged people, minorities and nomadic people, older persons and persons with disabilities.

Top Summit targets to be achieved by 2015 include connecting all villages, and bringing ICTs to all universities, colleges, secondary and primary schools, scientific and research centres, public libraries, cultural centres, museums, post offices and archives, as well as health centres and hospitals. Local and central government departments should also be connected and provided websites and e-mail addresses. By that same date, all primary and secondary school curricula should have been adapted to meet the challenges of the Information Society. All of the world's population should have access to television and radio services.



Technical conditions should be in place to facilitate the use of all world languages on the Internet, and more than half the world's population should have been brought within easy reach of ICTs.

<b>Action Plan</b> See Chapter 5 for details
<p>Specific targets for the Information Society will be established as appropriate, at the national level in the framework of national e-strategies and in accordance with national development policies, taking into account the different national circumstances. Such targets can serve as useful benchmarks for actions and for the evaluation of the progress made towards the attainment of the overall objectives of the Information Society.</p> <p>Based on internationally agreed development goals, including those in the Millennium Declaration, which are premised on international cooperation, indicative targets may serve as global references for improving connectivity and access in the use of ICTs in promoting the objectives of the Plan of Action, to be achieved by 2015. These targets may be taken into account in the establishment of the national targets, considering the different national circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To connect villages with ICTs and establish community access points;</li> <li>b) To connect universities, colleges, secondary schools and primary schools with ICTs;</li> <li>c) To connect scientific and research centres with ICTs;</li> <li>d) To connect public libraries, cultural centres, museums, post offices and archives with ICTs;</li> <li>e) To connect health centres and hospitals with ICTs;</li> <li>f) To connect all local and central government departments and establish websites and email addresses;</li> <li>g) To adapt all primary and secondary school curricula to meet the challenges of the Information Society, taking into account national circumstances;</li> <li>h) To ensure that all of the world's population have access to television and radio services;</li> <li>i) To encourage the development of content and to put in place technical conditions in order to facilitate the presence and use of all world languages on the Internet;</li> <li>j) To ensure that more than half the world's inhabitants have access to ICTs within their reach.</li> </ol>



ITU 032974/A. Longchamp

Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of ITU, at the opening of the ICT4D Platform on 9 December 2003.



ITU 032999/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Dr. Martha Pinto de Hart, Minister of Communications of Colombia, addressing WSIS.



ITU 033067/S. Berman

Cementing a partnership with Inmarsat Ltd., Mr. Hamadoun I. Touré (centre) of ITU with Mr. Ramin Khadem and Mr. Samer Halawi.



ITU 034038/A. Longchamp

H.E. Mr. Taro Aso, Minister of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications of Japan, addresses the Third Plenary session of WSIS.

## ITU core competences underlined

The Summit stressed the importance of ITU core competences in ICT – assistance in bridging the digital divide, international and regional cooperation, radio spectrum management, standards development and the dissemination of information.

Standardization is an essential building block of the Information Society, and emphasis should be placed on the development and adoption of international standards as these aim to create an environment where consumers can access services worldwide regardless of underlying technology.

ITU, in line with its treaty capacity, coordinates and allocates frequencies with the goal of facilitating ubiquitous and affordable access. The Summit has called for additional steps to be taken at ITU, as well as in regional organizations to ensure rational, efficient and economical use of, and equitable access to, the radio-frequency spectrum by all countries, based on relevant international agreements.

In particular, technical, regulatory and operational studies by ITU and other international organizations should be supported in order to:

- broaden access to orbital resources, global frequency harmonization and global systems standardization;
- promote the provision of global high-speed satellite services for remote and sparsely populated areas that are underserved
- explore other systems that can provide high-speed connectivity.

## UN Secretary-General to set up working group on Internet governance

Global Internet governance is still the subject of deliberations up to the Tunis phase of the Summit in 2005. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has been asked to set up a working group on Internet governance, in an open and inclusive process that ensures a mechanism for the full and active participation of governments, the private sector and civil society from both developing and





developed countries, involving relevant intergovernmental and international organizations and forums, to investigate and make proposals for action on the governance of the Internet by 2005.

The group will develop a working definition of Internet governance and identify the relevant public policy issues. It will also develop a common understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of governments, existing intergovernmental and international organizations and other forums as well as the private sector and civil society from both developing and developed countries. Finally, the group will prepare a report on its findings for submission to the Tunis Phase of the Summit for action. Meanwhile, ITU was responsible for organizing a workshop in Geneva from 26 to 27 February 2004 to provide a forum for exchanging views on definitions, viewpoints, visions and analytical studies on Internet governance.

Governments are invited to facilitate the establishment of national and regional Internet Exchange Centres. They are called upon to manage or supervise their respective country code top-level domain name (ccTLD), regional root servers and the use of internationalized domain names to overcome barriers to access. They are also required to promote awareness of the Internet.

In e-commerce, governments are urged to act as model users and early adopters. They should, in cooperation with other stakeholders, raise awareness of the importance of international interoperability standards for global e-commerce, as well as promote the development and use of open, interoperable, non-discriminatory and demand-driven standards.

## Digital Solidarity Agenda

The Summit has urged developed countries and international financial organizations to be responsive to the strategies and priorities of ICTs for development. To this end, they should mainstream ICTs in their work programmes and assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to prepare and implement their national e-strategies. Specifically, ICTs should be fully mainstreamed into strategies for Official Development Assistance (ODA) through more effective donor information-sharing and coordination, and through analysis and sharing of best practices and lessons learned from experience with ICT-for-development programmes.



ITU 032757/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal, at a Press conference on the Digital Solidarity Fund.



ITU 033028/S. Berman

Mr. Christian Ferrazino, Mayor of Geneva, Mr. Gérard Collomb, Mayor of Lyon, and Ms Mercedes Bresso, President of the Turin region, meet with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

All stakeholders are urged to commit to the “Digital Solidarity Agenda” set forth in the Plan of Action. While existing financial mechanisms should be fully exploited, a thorough review of their adequacy in meeting the challenges of ICT for development would have to be carried out and completed by the end of December 2004. The review will be conducted by a Task Force under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General and its findings submitted to the Tunis phase of the Summit. Based on these findings, improvements and innovations of financing mechanisms will be considered, as will the effectiveness, feasibility and creation of a voluntary Digital Solidarity Fund.

## Cities and local authorities take on the challenge of solidarity

Meanwhile, the cities of Geneva and Lyon have decided, together with the Government of Senegal, to contribute to the Digital Solidarity Fund. In a joint announcement made to the Summit, the Mayor of Geneva, Christian Ferrazino; President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal; and the Mayor of Lyon, Gérard Collomb each contributed: CHF 500,000, USD 500,000 and EUR 300,000 respectively, amounting to over EUR 1 million.

Local authorities in each country are expected to play a major role in the provision of ICT services for the benefit of their populations. Leading by example, the mayors and local authorities, who had met in Lyon on 4 and 5 December for the first Summit of Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society had also shown their support for the Digital Solidarity Fund initiative.

## Regional integration

Sustainable development can best be advanced when ICT-related efforts and programmes are fully integrated into national and regional development strategies. In this regard, the Summit welcomed the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and encouraged the international community to support the ICT-related measures of this initiative as well as those of similar initiatives in other regions.



## Media

Representatives of the World Broadcasting Unions from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, North America, Asia and the Pacific, and the Arab States adopted a declaration in which they pledged to do their part for development and social cohesion. They urged governments to play their part so that media organizations, which are both creators of content and essential watchdogs, fully exercise their freedom as spelt out in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Their declaration served as a basis for the work of the World Electronic Media Forum.

In the reporting session to the Summit, Jean Stock, President of the World Electronic Media Forum, said: “In the many territories of the emerging countries, the new media of the information society is first and foremost radio. Figures speak for themselves. There are 6.5 billion people on Earth; 700 million own a computer, 1.4 billion a mobile phone, 3.5 billion a television set and 4.5 billion own a radio. Radios are above all local media. Often they are the voice of a rural community.... Radio and television feed cultural identity and diversity. These are, therefore, the forums for democratic debate. They are spaces that must remain open to everyone. And to fulfil this mission, broadcasting needs the editorial independence that guarantees its credibility....”



ITU 034175/A. Longchamp

Journalist Christine Ockrent listens to Mr. Shashi Tharoor, UN Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, at the World Electronic Media Forum on 9 December 2003.

## Capacity building and access

Education and training are fundamental building blocks of the Information Society – “and business has a key role to play in the provision of both”, said Richard D. McCormick, Honorary Chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce. Mr. McCormick, who delivered the final business statement to the Summit on behalf of the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI), commented: “Business agrees that cables must be laid, satellites must be used, computers must be distributed – all technologies at our disposal must be employed and infrastructures built so that even the smallest school in the most remote village can log on to the World Wide Web. But access alone will not bring all the world’s people into this information revolution. By itself, access to the Internet will not create an Information Society. For what use is Internet access if you cannot read or write? What good is a computer if you don’t know how to operate it?”



*ITU 034083/A. Longchamp*

Ambassador Daniel Stauffacher, Delegate of the Swiss Federal Council, presents the Report from the Multi-stakeholder events at the Fifth Plenary Session of WSIS.

The Summit underlined literacy and universal primary education as key factors for building a fully inclusive Information Society, paying particular attention to the special needs of girls and women. Governments and other stakeholders should create programmes for capacity building (including distance learning) with an emphasis on producing a critical mass of qualified and skilled ICT professionals and experts. Efforts must be made to remove gender barriers to ICT education and training. For example, early intervention programmes in science and technology should target young girls with the aim of increasing the number of women in ICT careers. “Governments and other stakeholders must apply creative research and evaluation techniques to measure and monitor impacts – intended or unintended – on women generally and subgroups of women. At a minimum, governments and others should collect information disaggregated by sex, income, age, location and other relevant factors,” said Jillian Marcelle, Coordinator of the WSIS Gender Caucus.

The Summit stressed as essential, international and regional cooperation in capacity building, including country programmes developed by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. It also called for pilot projects to design new forms of ICT-based networking, linking education, training and research institutions between and among developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

## **Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs**

Confidence and security are regarded by the Summit as the main pillars of the Information Society. Cooperation must be promoted among the governments at the United Nations and with all stakeholders at other appropriate forums to enhance user confidence, build trust, and protect both data and network integrity.

Governments, in cooperation with the private sector, should prevent, detect and respond to cybercrime and misuse of ICTs by developing guidelines that take into account ongoing efforts in these areas. For example, they should consider legislation that allows for effective investigation and prosecution of misuse, promote effective mutual assistance efforts and strengthen institutional support at the international level for preventing, detecting and recovering from such incidents. In this regard, spam is already a significant and growing problem for



users, networks and the Internet as a whole, and appropriate action should be taken at national and international levels. Countries are urged to set up focal points for real-time incident handling and response. These focal points would ultimately share information and technologies on incident response.

## Ethical dimensions

All actors in the Information Society are urged to take appropriate actions and preventive measures against abusive uses of ICTs, such as illegal and other acts motivated by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, hatred, violence, all forms of child abuse, including paedophilia and child pornography, and trafficking in, and exploitation of, human beings. The Prime Minister of France, H.E. Mr. Jean-Pierre Raffarin said: "We must create this space of trust for our children. France is committed to the development of international cooperation on the protection of children and combating illicit content, particularly child pornography."



ITU 032784/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Jean-Pierre Raffarin, Prime Minister of France, after signing the 'Livre d'Or' or Golden Book, before the first plenary session of WSIS.

## Monitoring and measuring progress

"The world is still a long way from agreeing upon a common set of Information Society access indicators with extensive and detailed coverage. In cases where data does exist, they are sometimes unreliable, incomplete, out of date or not internationally comparable. They are also often difficult to locate and compile. The problem is particularly acute for developing nations, some of which lack the technical expertise or resources to collect, compile and disseminate ICT statistics," according to the ITU World Telecommunication Development Report 2003. The Summit has called for the development of a realistic international performance evaluation and benchmarking mechanism through comparable statistical indicators and research results to measure progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action. All countries and regions should develop tools that provide statistical information on the Information Society, with basic indicators and analysis of its key dimensions. Priority should be given to setting up coherent and internationally comparable indicator systems based on the different levels of development.

In order to achieve this, ITU released the first Global Digital Access Index, which combines eight variables, over five areas, to provide an overall country score. These areas include availability of infrastructure, affordability of access,



## world summit on the information society

Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005



ITU 033019/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Pascal Couchepin, President of the Swiss Confederation, addresses the final Press conference of WSIS on 12 December 2003.



ITU 034147/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, ITU Secretary-General, at the closing Press Conference of WSIS.

educational level, quality of ICT services, and Internet usage. The results of the index point to potential stumbling blocks in ICT adoption and can help countries identify their relative strengths and weaknesses.

## Global engagement

While the World Summit on the Information Society closed on an optimistic note of consensus and commitment, Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union and WSIS, cautioned that the meeting was only the start of a long and complex process. “Telephones will not feed the poor, and computers will not replace textbooks. But ICTs can be used effectively as part of the toolbox for addressing global problems. The Summit’s successes now give us the necessary momentum to achieve this,” he said. “Building the inclusive Information Society requires a multi-stakeholder approach. The challenges raised – in areas like Internet governance, access, investment, security, the development of applications, intellectual property rights and privacy – require a new commitment to work together if we are to realize the benefits of the Information Society.” Looking ahead to Tunis and the evolution of the Information Society, Mr. Utsumi added, “Seeing the fruits of today’s powerful knowledge-based tools in the most impoverished economies will be the true test of an engaged, empowered and egalitarian Information Society.”

### The WSIS Grapevine

#### The End of the Beginning – First Phase of WSIS Concludes

Following the smooth adoption of the Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action at 1800 hours on the last day of the Summit, Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of ITU, summed up the end of the long road to Geneva – an end that marks the beginning of the road to Tunis.

“It seems strange that an event that has taken five years to prepare is nearly over. This is not the beginning of the end though, but rather the end of the beginning – the Summit is a process, not a product.”

– *Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of ITU.*

#### Achievements of the Summit – From a Multi-stakeholder Perspective

The Geneva phase of the Summit concluded with a final round-up of speeches from each of the main stakeholder participants in the WSIS process. The meeting, which preceded the final adoption of the Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action, was chaired by Mr. Pascal Couchepin, President of the Swiss Confederation.



### Snapshot Round-up of Concluding Remarks – Switzerland

“Our objective has been to offer a platform for the Summit. The events have been of great quality, and have opened up the wide range of themes for real discussion and action.”

- *Ambassador Daniel Stauffacher, Delegate of the Swiss Federal Council for WSIS.*

“The objective of the ICT for Development Platform (ICT4D), which continues one day beyond the end of the Summit ... has been to allow a true debate, and to place ICTs on the map of the Summit as a tool for development, rather than an end in themselves.”

- *Mr. Walter Fust, Director-General, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.*

### Cities and Local Authorities

“Cities and local authorities are in a prime position to extend ICTs to communities. Close collaboration is needed between cities in order to reduce the digital divide, particularly where the cities of the North and those of the South are concerned.”

- *Mr. Gérald Collomb, Mayor of Lyon, France.*

“The cities of Geneva and Lyon have decided, together with the Government of Senegal, to create a digital solidarity fund, with contributions already amounting to over 1 million Euros.”

- *Mr. Christian Ferrazino, Mayor of Geneva, Switzerland.*

### Media

“In emerging economies, radio is the most important ICT. For the World Wide Web, Wi-Fi today presents the most effective and rapid technology. Broadcasting needs editorial independence in the interests of its credibility.”

- *Mr. Jean Stock, President, World Electronic Media Forum (WEMF) Association.*

### ITU (Organizing Agency)

“The ITU Standardization Sector (ITU-T) hosted a two-day CTO meeting to define principles for standards underlying next-generation ICTs. The meeting endorsed ITU’s central role in defining global standards for ICTs. In addition, no less than 21 partnerships have been signed by ITU during the Summit itself, for future work on projects in over 50 countries.”

- *Mr. Roberto Blois, ITU Deputy Secretary-General, speaking at the ITU High-level dialogue and related events.*

### Private Enterprise

“The CCBI organized events during WSIS that highlighted the potential of ICTs to change lives for the better. For this to happen though, the creativity and innovation of business requires the right environment, which governments can make happen.”

- *Mr. Richard McCormick, Past Chairman, International Chamber of Commerce.*



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Mr. Moritz Leuenberger, Federal Councillor of the Swiss Confederation, meets the Press at the conclusion of WSIS.



ITU 034159/A. Longchamp

Mr. Nitin Desai, UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser to WSIS, at the closing Press Conference.



ITU 032700/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Klaus Schwab, President of the World Economic Forum, at the Executive Round Table Discussion on 9 December, 2003.



ITU 031112/J.-M. Ferré

Ms Béatrice Busaniche represents civil society at PrepCom3.

#### UNESCO

“We need to capitalize on technologies by fostering education, knowledge and capacity-building. It is evident that ICTs have tremendous potential to boost education and training. At the Summit, UNESCO and the Swiss authorities have launched an initiative to scale up community centres in Mali, Mozambique and Senegal.”

- *Mr. Abdul Waheed Khan, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO.*

#### Gender

“Including women’s perspectives will make the difference for a truly inclusive Information Society. We urge governments to respect the pledges they have made during the Summit and we will monitor implementation of the Plan of Action.”

- *Ms Jillian Marcelle, Coordinator, WSIS Gender Caucus.*

#### Scientific Community

“Access to scientific information via ICTs is a critical component of the Information Society. Software tools for dissemination of information must be freely available.”

- *Prof. Luciano Maiani, Director-General, European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN).*

#### Disabled Community

“Six hundred million individuals in the world are disabled. An inclusive Information Society is not a dream for them, but a goal that has to be attained.”

- *Dr. Bernhard Heinser, Managing Director, Swiss Library for the Visually Impaired.*

#### Schools

“Our discussions in collaboration with UNESCO have resulted in an agreement to establish a “Global Alliance of School Networks.”

- *Mr. Ulf Lundin, Director, European Schoolnet.*

#### Volunteers

“We have created a variety of resources for the Summit, including a website and the development of a volunteers action plan 2003-2005. The Summit process has been encouraging, but we need to further strengthen collaboration between the volunteer community, governments and other stakeholders.”

- *Ms Viola Krebs, Director, International Conference Volunteers.*

#### TELECOM World Youth

“The world we live in is not fair at this moment. Some of us benefit daily from the empowering force of ICTs while others, to whom simple communication could mean the difference between life and death, hope and downheartedness, a sparkling future and stagnation, do not have access to any form of ICTs.”





"This is not our destiny. Young people have united and urge you to join them in building the fundamentals for the Digital Bridge.

"Actions not words! How wonderful our lives will be, if only we all play our part."

– *Mr. Sjoerd Nikkelen and Ms Paula Musuva, reading from the Youth Declaration from TELECOM.*

#### **Indigenous People**

"Indigenous people are part of the peoples of nations, not a problem or an afterthought, and as such need to be taken into account and included in the Information Society."

– *Mr. Henrick Ole Magga, Chair, Global Forum of Indigenous People in the Information Society.*

#### **WSIS Youth**

"Young people constitute the majority of the world's population. The paradox is that they are often the most excluded and disadvantaged. Youth Day has demonstrated how young people can be, and are, catalysts for the Information Society. We are pleased that our work has resulted in the strongest language ever in a United Nations document relating directly to youth."

– *Mr. Alex Fielding, WSIS Youth Liaison, TakingITGlobal.*

#### **Trade**

"Governments need to create trust in the mechanisms of e-trade. Small traders in particular, need to know how to use ICTs for e-commerce."

– *Mr. Denis Belisle, Executive Director, International Trade Centre.*

#### **Scientific Information**

"Speakers during the 'Free Software, Free Society' event, including high-level scientific and engineering experts, recognized the importance of WSIS. We need to work towards a sustainable knowledge society, with free access to scientific information."

– *Mr. Francis Muguet, Chairman of the Civil Society Scientific Information Working Group.*

#### **UNICT Task Force**

"At one of the executive round tables, 37 leaders from all sectors were in consensus on the need for a multi-stakeholder approach to the major issues relating to the Information Society."

– *United Nations ICT Task Force.*

#### **WSIS-Online**

"Governments cannot implement the actions agreed in Geneva alone. A platform is therefore foreseen for ongoing exchange during the coming months via WSIS-Online."

– *Mr. Bertrand de la Chapelle, Co-convenor, Open WSIS Initiatives.*



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Ms Mililani Trask, Pacific representative of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, speaking at WSIS.



ITU 032720/J.-M. Ferré

Chief Technical Officers meet prior to WSIS on 8 December 2003.



**world summit  
on the information society**

# **Opening Ceremony**

**Geneva, 10 December 2003**



*ITU 034168/A. Longchamp*

Delegates listen to statements from global leaders as they endorse the World Summit on the Information Society.



## Statement by H.E. Mr. Pascal Couchepin President of the Swiss Confederation

On behalf of the Swiss Government, it gives me great pleasure to greet you on the occasion of the World Summit on the Information Society. Switzerland is proud to be hosting this Summit, which, for the first time at the international level, will be addressing the challenges posed by the information society.

Today we are celebrating both the inauguration of the Summit and also Human Rights Day, highlighting one of the United Nations' major concerns. The right to freedom of opinion and expression, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is one of the main preconditions for the advent of the Information Society. Information technologies represent an opportunity for promoting human rights.

The development of new technologies has revolutionized the way in which we access information. This revolution, a part of daily life in the western world, has to be extended to the rest of the planet. Indeed, over half of the world's human beings are without access to the telephone, while Internet usage remains an even more restricted preserve. The impact of technological progress is not homogeneous, with some participating in the movement and others choosing to remain on the sidelines, while another part of the population is simply without access.

One of the objectives of the Millennium Declaration is to reduce the digital divide. The objective of this Summit is to find concrete means of reducing this divide between those who are inside and those who are left out, between rich and poor.

Today, it is to governments and civil society that I am speaking. We must encourage the information revolution in a way that is both sustainable and equitable. We must shoulder our responsibilities.

We must not miss the opportunity we now have in Geneva. The digital divide does not belong in the new millennium we are seeking to build. The international community must join together to ensure that information is a public good. Free and unrestricted access to information lies at the very heart of development. I am convinced that information fuels both the market and, more broadly, democracy. Transparent information helps to build trust in the democratic institutions.



*ITU 032949/J.-M. Ferré*

**Pascal Couchepin**  
President of the  
Swiss Confederation



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Switzerland is committed on various fronts to ensuring that the Summit gives rise to a shared vision of the Information Society. Our negotiators have worked hard to ensure that the Summit adopts a Declaration and a Plan of Action that will serve to reduce the digital divide between rich and poor countries.

The results to date are encouraging. Of course, not all proposals have been adopted, compromises have to be made, and some questions will remain open at the end of the exercise. Geneva marks the beginning of a process. The discussions will continue until 2005 in Tunis.

For the first time within the framework of a summit, the United Nations has opened up the dialogue to non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

Just two months ago, in this same place, I inaugurated TELECOM 2003 in the company of professionals in the field. However, it is not just the economic and technical aspects of information that are important; it is also time to make a political commitment. That is what we are doing today.

We believe in this new political dialogue. In the Millennium Declaration, we expressed our desire “to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world’s people.” With this goal in mind, we have adopted a series of specific objectives with time frames for their achievement.

However, it is not enough merely to state one’s objectives; they must now be given tangible form. If the rich countries fail to keep their promises they will ultimately drive the poor countries to despair.

For Switzerland, the Geneva Summit is also an opportunity for encounter and exchange. Within this building you will discover projects, events and displays of many kinds. In concert with the United Nations, ITU, Tunisia and the civil society representatives, Switzerland has sought to broaden and deepen the discussion of ideas.

On Friday, we shall be adopting a policy declaration and plan of action. Together they will express our wish to realize an Information Society that is as open as possible.



## Statement by Mr. Kofi Annan Secretary-General of the United Nations

I would like to thank the Government of Switzerland for the valuable support they have provided to this Summit. I am thinking, of course, of the legendary warmth and efficiency with which we have been greeted in Switzerland, but also of the resolute commitment that they have shown in working to make the Summit a success.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr Utsumi, and the staff of the International Telecommunication Union for the ready goodwill with which they approached the summit process, and for their efficiency in working with the United Nations system as a whole.

We are going through a historic transformation in the way we live, learn, work, communicate and do business. We must do so not passively, but as makers of our own destiny. Technology has produced the information age. Now it is up to all of us to build an Information Society.

This Summit is unique. Where most global conferences focus on global threats, this one will consider how best to use a new global asset.

We are all familiar with the extraordinary power of information and communications technologies. From trade to telemedicine, from education to environmental protection, we have in our hands, on our desktops and in the skies above, the ability to improve standards of living for millions upon millions of people.

We have tools that can propel us toward the Millennium Development Goals; instruments with which to advance the cause of freedom and democracy; vehicles with which to propagate knowledge and mutual understanding. We have all of this potential. The challenge before this Summit is what to do with it.

The so-called digital divide is actually several gaps in one. There is a technological divide – great gaps in infrastructure. There is a content divide. A lot of web-based information is simply not relevant to the real needs of people. And nearly 70 percent of the world's web sites are in English, at times crowding out local voices and views. There is a gender divide, with women and girls enjoying less access to information technology than men and boys. This can be true of



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**Kofi Annan**  
Secretary-General  
United Nations



rich and poor countries alike: some developing countries are among those offering the most digital opportunities for women, while some developed countries have done considerably less well. There is a commercial divide. E-commerce is linking some countries and companies ever more closely together. But others run the risk of further marginalization. Some experts describe the digital divide as one of the biggest non-tariff barriers to world trade.

And there are obvious social, economic and other disparities and obstacles that affect a country's ability to take advantage of digital opportunities. We cannot assume that such gaps will disappear on their own, over time, as the diffusion of technology naturally spreads its wealth. An open, inclusive Information Society that benefits all people will not emerge without sustained commitment and investment. We look to you, the leaders assembled here, to produce those acts of political will.

We also look to the business community, which I am glad to say is represented here in impressive numbers. The future of the IT industry lies not so much in the developed world, where markets are saturated, as in reaching the billions of people in the developing world who remain untouched by the information revolution. E-health, e-school and other applications can offer the new dynamic of growth for which the industry has been looking.

We look to civil society groups, in particular for their rich knowledge of hopes and concerns at the local level, among communities that are eager to join in the global exchange of ideas and information, but may also feel their identities are threatened by a pre-packaged global culture.

And we look to media organizations, which are both creators of content and essential watchdogs. At yesterday's World Electronic Media Forum, broadcasting leaders from all the world's regions adopted a declaration in which they pledged to do their part for development and social cohesion. It is vital that they retain their freedom to do so, as spelt out in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Indeed, the right to freedom of opinion and expression is fundamental to development, democracy and peace, and must remain a touchstone for our work ahead.

Information and communication technologies are not a panacea or magic formula. But they can improve the lives of everyone on this planet.





Yet even as we talk about the power of technology, let us remember who is in charge. While technology shapes the future, it is people who shape technology, and decide what it can and should be used for. So let us embrace these new technologies. But let us recognize that we are embarked on an endeavour that transcends technology. Building an open, empowering Information Society is a social, economic and, ultimately, a political challenge.

There is no comparison between the technologies of the atomic age and those of the information age. Nonetheless, something written half a century ago by the American nuclear scientist J. Robert Oppenheimer seems strangely prescient and applicable today. And I quote: "The open society, the unrestricted access to knowledge, the unplanned and uninhibited association of men for its furtherance – these are what may make a vast, complex, ever growing, ever changing, ever more specialized and expert technological world, nevertheless a world of human community."

We must remember that.





## Statement by H.E. Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali President of the Republic of Tunisia

I am very pleased to participate today in the meeting of the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society hosted by the friendly Swiss Confederation, here in Geneva, and to express to the Swiss President and people my sincere thanks for their warm welcome and generous hospitality. I also extend my thanks to the United Nations Secretary-General for the efforts he constantly exerts to ensure the success of this Summit in its two phases, the first in Geneva and the second in Tunis, and to stimulate international cooperation in this new vital sector for the human civilization.

My thanks are also due to the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union, to the chairman of the Summit Preparatory Committee, and to the members of the Executive Secretariat, for the efforts they have all made to prepare for this important event that is marked by the remarkable contribution of the representatives of civil society and the private sector.

You are certainly aware that the holding of this Summit and the international community's interest in its central theme confirm the fact that the establishment of the Information Society has become a strategic imperative for the promotion of humanity's conditions.

Tunisia's initiative made in 1998 in Minneapolis, USA, and calling for the organization of a world summit under the United Nations auspices, was premised upon its belief that this sector is vital for the achievement of a balanced and just human development, and for the materialization of humanity's aspirations for freedom, justice and dignity. For indeed, before being just a technological divide, the digital divide is essentially a development disparity and a gap impeding the dialogue of civilizations.

The preparatory meetings for the first phase of the Summit made it possible to bring to the fore the major concerns and poles of interest in this vital sector for the building of humanity's future. The United Nations' supervision of this sector has been effective, and the contributions of all parties, however different and diverse they are, have been quite important, for they reveal new challenges and stakes. They also demonstrate the growing awareness to the fact that the



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**Zine El Abidine Ben Ali**  
President of the  
Republic of Tunisia



information society, the society of the future, will radically change the face of the world, that disparity is taking new forms unprecedented in the history of humanity, and that the treatment of the current issues must be based on an appropriate approach and on eternal universal principles.

The newness of this theme, coupled with the rapid pace of technological changes and the continuous development of their applications in economic, social, cultural, educational, environmental and other fields, render any consensus on the principles and action methods difficult, but still possible by deepening our approaches and research in light of our common universal values enunciated in various international charters and agreements.

The holding of this Summit, the first of its kind, over two phases in Geneva then in Tunis, will offer all of us an opportunity to intensify consultations on the posed issues and to reach decisions that will certainly be historic, given the crucial importance of the question for humanity as a whole.

For Tunisia, the establishment of the society of information and communication constitutes a basic national choice which we have endeavoured to consecrate as part of a comprehensive approach, through continuous structural reforms as well as through the consolidation of our country's communication and computer technologies infrastructure which constitutes a major foundation for the knowledge economy and an essential factor for the stimulation of the pace of development.

We have been keen, essentially, on promoting human resources, by establishing a coherent strategy to generalize the teaching of computer science in the various levels of education, and by creating high institutes for technological studies. We have also intensified the training of communication and computer specialists in order to develop their capacity to assimilate new technologies and to make optimum use of them in the service of development. Besides, we have established technological poles as well as spaces for innovative projects in all the regions of the country.

We have also focused our efforts on disseminating the digital culture on the widest scale through regular media programs, establishing computer centres for children all over the country, connecting basic, secondary and higher education institutions to the Internet, generalizing computer and Internet clubs in cultural



spaces, establishing a network of public Internet centres, and providing average-income families with facilities and incentives, on a large scale, for the purchase of "family computers".

Convinced as we are of the importance of competitiveness in stimulating the pace of development, we have relied, in addition to the state's efforts, on the effective contribution of the private sector in mastering information and communication technologies. For that purpose, we have established a policy to enhance internal and external private investment and to stimulate new economic sectors like e-commerce.

Tunisia, which has the great honour of hosting the second phase of the Summit in 2005, will work to ensure a successful preparatory process for it and to provide optimum conditions for its holding, so that this Summit can meet the aspirations of all countries, and open up prospects of effective and efficient participation for all the components of civil society, for intellectuals, and for the private sector.

The Information Society to which we aspire is one that offers all countries equal opportunities to benefit from the advantages of technologies, one that encompasses all countries and allows all persons and peoples, with no discrimination or exclusion, to have access to networks and to sources of knowledge and information.

Materializing this vision requires the consolidation of the bonds of solidarity and mutual assistance among all the world's peoples, so as to narrow the digital divide and curb its dangers.

We also hope that these technologies will help improve the conditions of less developed countries, as part of an effective solidarity approach, so that these countries can meet their needs and realize their aspirations.

We believe that the developments generated by technological changes, at the level of thought and behaviour of individuals and groups, and the new prospects they offer for contact and openness on the other, will foster the role of the information sector in developing the Information Society to advanced levels, so as to further anchor human rights in their comprehensive vision that consecrates the freedom of expression and ensures the respect of state sovereignty and the right of peoples to self-determination.



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This first phase of our Summit will constitute an important starting point to closely look into the ways and means to stimulate international and regional cooperation in order to reduce inequalities between countries and peoples in the acquisition of knowledge and in the mastery of modern digital technologies.

On our part, we believe that the various forms of triangular cooperation, which have proved their effectiveness in various development fields, could constitute an adequate framework for the achievement of complementarity between developed countries and the group of developing countries that have managed to build their own capacities in the field of information and communication technologies.

Since the start of the preparations for the holding of the World Summit on the Information Society, we have been keen on establishing channels of communication and complementarity between all the concerned parties, in order to enlarge the circle of consultation and coordination.

I am convinced that the effective contribution of all these parties to the preparatory process for the second phase of the Summit in Tunis will allow our aspirations to materialize for the establishment of a balanced and solid information society on our planet.

It is my pleasure to invite, from this rostrum, all parties, including governments, international and regional organizations, the components of civil society and the private sector, to participate in the Tunis Summit on November 16-18, 2005. We hope the Tunis Summit will constitute a historic landmark reinforcing this common edifice for the good of all humanity, and ensuring for all our countries the conditions of progress and development, particularly in the fields of information and communication technologies, within the context of peace, security and stability.

To conclude, I reiterate my thanks to the friendly Swiss Confederation and to the United Nations Organization that supervises this important international event, wishing all success to our proceedings.



## Statement by Mr. Yoshio Utsumi Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union

ITU has been a pioneer in many ways, including in being the very first intergovernmental organization to be set up back in 1865. Since then, ITU has withstood the test of time, weathered colonial empires, two world wars and the cold war. Throughout the decades, ITU's mandate has been constantly evolving from the facilitation of cross-border communication in yesteryears to the very important mandate of today: Spearheading and fostering policies and technology that extend the benefits of communication to all citizens.

When I took over as Secretary-General of ITU in 1999, I had one desire, one ambition – to oversee the growth and expansion of telecom services in every corner of the world. And I was also tired of hearing the lament that New York has more telephone lines than the whole of Africa.

It gives me great satisfaction to tell you today that we have had unprecedented growth and expansion, as never before, despite the economical downturn. In 1999, there were around 1.5 billion telephone lines, today there are nearly 2.5 billion. In the last four years we have added 1 billion lines to the 1.5 billion we had connected in all the years before. This is a remarkable achievement, especially as more than 75% were installed in the developing world.

ITU is making untiring efforts to bring the benefits of ICT to every strata of the global community.

Today, ITU is proud to be the lead agency organizing WSIS on behalf of the UN system. The resolution adopted by the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in 1998 proposing the idea of this Summit, recognized that the Information Society touches on the work of many UN agencies. For that reason, I proposed to establish a High-Level Summit Organization Committee composed of interested UN agencies, to oversee the Summit process. I have had the privilege to chair that Committee.



*ITU 032796/J.-M. Ferré*

**Yoshio Utsumi**  
Secretary-General  
International Telecommunication Union



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As Secretary-General of ITU, I have followed every step of the Summit process. It has been a long journey. It took more than a year to reach an agreement with the host countries for the framework of the Summit. The establishment of the Executive Secretariat without any financial resources was a most difficult task.

To make the summit meaningful and substantive, I decided it would have to be a Summit with a difference, a Summit that is inclusive, reflects the changes in the modern world and the pervasive and fundamental nature of the transformation brought about by the Information Society.

Hence, it has many innovations: it is a two-phase summit; it includes private sector and civil society's participation in the whole process through written and oral contributions; it benefits from a multidisciplinary executive secretariat, with civil society and business bureaus respectively. All are quite new in the process of UN Summits. I thank all the stakeholders for their excellent inputs and contributions to the process.

Regional WSIS meetings took place in many parts of the world and tens of thousands of delegates have met to debate the issues. I thank the governments of Mali, Romania, Japan, Russian, Dominican Republic, Lebanon, Egypt and Lithuania for hosting those meetings.

Our sister international organizations have also been active in the preparations. Although there is not sufficient time to mention all of them, I would particularly like to thank UNESCO, ILO, UNOG and ITU for providing their facilities during the PrepCom process, WMO, UPU UNESCO, UNITAR and UNDP as well as ITU for financial and human resources.

I would be failing in my duty if I do not appreciate and thank both host countries for their excellent and generous support. As we gather here today, I particularly wish to thank the government of Switzerland and the Canton of Geneva. Their contribution throughout the preparatory process has been enormous.

A great deal is at stake in this Summit. For the first time, you, the leaders of the world, will be addressing the challenge of the Information Society.

The transformation to the Information Society will be every bit as profound as the movement from agrarian to industrial societies. In the past, such changes have led to winners and losers. Some countries have prospered, while others have fallen behind. It could happen once again and, if we do not take any action now, existing gaps may be widened.





We must not make the same mistakes. By taking the right decisions, we must shape the direction of the Information Society and create a more just, prosperous and peaceful world. The cornerstone of any project today, be it AIDs eradication or poverty alleviation, is reliable effective communications. Connectivity has the power to bind the global community into a cohesive fraternity, which shares the common ideals of peace and tolerance, growth and development. A concerted global effort must be made to ensure that there is no gap between the rich and the poor when it comes to flow of and access to information.

This quote from the World Youth Forum Declaration made by youth during the ITU Telecom event this October, expresses the hopes of tomorrow's generation: "The world we live in is not fair at this moment. Some of us benefit daily from the empowering force of ICTs while others – to whom simple communication could mean the difference between life and death, hope and downheartedness, a sparkling future and stagnation – do not have access to any form of ICTs."

There comes a moment in history when one must walk the talk. Always the answer is easy to give but hard to live. But the need of the hour is for preaching to give way to practice. Hence, I call upon the political leaders to exert their will, the captains of industry to show their business acumen, NGOs and civil society to provide the zeal, in order to forge a unity of purpose, a unison in the vision of universal access.

In the annals of history let us be remembered for ushering in the information revolution with a legacy of pioneering a truly global Information Society. Lets us bestow on the next generation the gift of information and communication technology for everyone in the global community.





## Statement by Ms Kicki Nordström President of the World Blind Union On behalf of Civil Society

It is a great honour for me to be able to represent the civil society of 5 billion people, including the disability community, in a United Nations event like this Summit.

The role and contribution from civil society on subjects such as the Information Society require that new rules be considered, which ensure the right of civil society to participate actively in the process from now and further on.

When everything comes around we are all part of civil society. When you, as official delegates return to your homes, you too then will be part of civil society. We therefore hope that civil society can and will continue to play an important role during the second Phase of the Information Society and beyond. However, an open attitude and willingness among governments is required.

Tomorrow Civil Society will officially present its own declaration. That means that Civil Society globally has joined hands in a common understanding, which will take us from here to the next phase of the summit.

The International Civil Society Bureau deserves to be mentioned here, since it has not only engaged a coherent dialogue with the governments, but also enabled a structured and coordinated participation of all civil society family members.

This Summit is important for closing the gap between rich and poor, between nations and between individuals. In this respect I would like to remind us all about the 8 Millennium goals, which we all are set to fulfil at all levels at all times.

It is the responsibility of decision-makers whether at international, national or local levels, to ensure that priorities are set, which can meet the needs of the most disadvantaged groups and people. Only then we will have a society for all!

More than ever before, the Information Society must be adopted in accordance with the values expressed in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal



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**Kicki Nordström**  
President of the World Blind Union  
Civil Society



Declaration of human rights. Before going on to the particular situation and the expectations of persons with disabilities, I would like to mention the need of inclusion of other civil society members at large. The inclusion of women and girls, elderly and young people, indigenous people, migrant workers and refugees MUST be considered in the future Information Society.

I will ask you to look around at this Summit, with such an enormous amount of exhibitions and endless amount of information. None of these are in format that is accessible for me as a blind person. For my colleagues and me, who are unable to read ink prints, are excluded from information here. The goal of the summit on information for all has closed its door for some!

The World Forum on Disability in the Information Society organized by people with disabilities, will stress that their message must have a real and true influence on the process from now and further on. People with disabilities are specifically and directly affected by the way in which the Information Society designs and cares about all its users. If we shall talk of a true inclusion, its outcome is dependent on how the content, methods of communication and ICTs are standardized, designed, developed and made available. Our needs and requirements are often unknown, misunderstood and even misrepresented by the society. Matters of accessibility for persons with disabilities have always been left in the hands of all mighty Gods, charity-holders and super-human beings. However, we have come to Geneva with genuine hope that the real inclusive Information Society should do better than what we have faced, up to now.

Finally, thanks to the Republic and Canton of Geneva, for its financial support, which has allowed for the first time in history for Civil Society to undertake its work in liaison with all the families of civil society worldwide.



## Statement by Mr. Mohammad Omran Chairman of Thuraya Satellite Telecommunications Company On behalf of the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors

I represent the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors. We are a group of company executives and business organizations under the chairmanship of the International Chamber of Commerce. Our committee speaks for world business at WSIS. Today, I want to set out for you how business would like the summit to tackle its objectives.

All of us here agree about those objectives. We aspire to a worldwide Information Society that will drive economic growth and social progress, reduce poverty, spread knowledge and education, and encourage freedom of expression. Our Information Society will give meaning and hope to millions whose lives today have neither.

This coming together of so many world leaders, heads of industry, international organizations and civil society is earnest of our determination to succeed. We have set ourselves plenty of ambitious targets for placing the whole world online. If they all can be met, the world will become a better place. The challenge will be to make it happen – and that is how history will judge WSIS.

Let us be clear: business will not be at the margins, but at the very heart of the process. It is business capital that will finance the Information Society. It is business enterprise that has been largely responsible for making information and communications technology an essential part of the fabric of life in the 21st century.

Equally fundamental is the need for partnership. Only if business and governments work together with all the other partners involved will we succeed. Partnership offers the surest road to the knowledge and empowerment that information and communications technologies deliver.



ITU 034170/J.-M.Ferré

**Mohammad Omran**  
Chairman of Thuraya Satellite  
Telecommunications Company  
Coordinating Committee of  
Business Interlocutors



The Information Society we would all like to see will depend on investment on a massive scale in infrastructure, products, services, content and essential applications. Governments must therefore make sure that they encourage a climate conducive to investment, a legal, political and regulatory framework in which economic growth and development can flourish.

Investors must have confidence that their money will be put to good use and that commitments will be honoured. Companies will shy away from committing shareholders' money if they view the investment climate as hostile, perhaps because it discriminates against foreign capital or puts obstacles in the way of repatriation of profits.

Liberalization of trade, strong protection of intellectual property rights, the encouragement of research and development, provision of incentives to small and medium-sized businesses, and integrity in business and commercial practices are all part of the equation.

Let me place special emphasis on two of those requirements – strong protection of intellectual property rights and competition. Intellectual property rights encourage freedom of expression, and ensure that competition is fair. They promote innovation and creation. The Information Society relies on bold innovation and a willingness to push the frontiers of technology into unexplored territory. If new ideas and methods are not safe, the Information Society will greatly suffer. There has to be freedom for companies to compete on an equal basis. Users of technology must be free to choose the technology that best meets their specific needs, based on performance, quality, reliability, security and life-cycle cost.

WSIS faces a specific issue whose resolution could be decisive for the direction the summit takes – that of Internet management. Will the summit set a course for increased reliance on the private sector or towards greater government intervention?

This is an issue of prime concern and the business position is unequivocal. Business believes that the Summit must not challenge the continued private sector leadership of the technical coordination of the Internet. We should work to evolve the existing mechanisms to ensure continued comprehensive technical coordination of the Internet. Without this, there is a real risk that the Internet itself will degrade and fail to reach its full potential as a global communications and business medium.



Finally, one thing governments must do if the Information Society is to realize its potential is to make sure that their education systems measure up to its demands. To use a computer or access information using new technologies, you must first know how to read.

As WSIS gets under way, may I on behalf of all the hundreds of business representatives who have come to Geneva wish you every success. The potential of this summit to set an ambitious and feasible agenda for the Information Society for decades ahead is enormous. Whether it does so will depend on whether WSIS can keep its feet on the ground as it reaches for the stars.







## Statement by Mr. Adama Samassékou President of the WSIS Preparatory Committee

We now find ourselves halfway through the long journey that should take us from the Information Society into the knowledge and shared know-how society. In order to make this journey, we have come together from all the regions of the world, including Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, and eastern and western Europe. And when I say we, I refer to governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society.

All of us have come here with our dreams. Throughout our long march towards the Summit, in full awareness of the complexity of the situation, we would look to the left and to the right and see the precipices, gulfs and divides; we would see the nightmare of the world in which we now live, a world increasingly in the grip of an unprecedented level of violence that finds its way into our very homes, a world increasingly split between rich and poor, between the educated and those unable to read or write, between those who have access to information and those to whom such access is denied, between those who have knowledge and those who do not, between those who govern and those who are governed... And it became clear to us that this situation will only become worse unless urgent measures are taken, given the conclusions drawn at Johannesburg, where the highest authorities of the world's most powerful countries concurred that in the ten years that had elapsed since major commitments had been made in Rio, the poor countries had continued to grow poorer while the rich countries had become still more wealthy...

Thus it is that we have sought to combine our dreams, learning to work together and understand one another better while respecting our respective identities, in the interests of constructing a shared vision – a vision which, as the fruit of this lengthy period of gestation, we now put forward for your high consideration:

- A Declaration of Principles which, by defining the outline and principles of this new society in the making, will serve to ensure that everyone, through their respective language and culture, has a place in this new world of virtual communication;
- A concrete Plan of Action that illustrates the political will to implement this vision and put into effect the changes so long awaited by our peoples.



ITU 032946/J.-M. Ferré

**Adama Samassékou**  
President of the WSIS Preparatory Committee



When one dreams alone it is but a dream, but where the same dream is shared by many it is already on the way to becoming reality!

Throughout this long march, with the national inputs at the sessions of the Preparatory Committee and with the regional conferences and the well-founded initiatives of the cities and of all the international organizations, particularly UNESCO, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie and the Arab League, we were able to go beyond the dryness of the procedural discussions thanks to the hydration of our debates by the many contributions focusing on our true purpose. And we did so while adhering to principles founded on the fundamental values of inclusion, partnership and solidarity, in which regard, it gives me pleasure to hail the emergence of an almost institutional partnership between civil society, through its International Bureau, the private sector, through the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors, and governments, through the Bureau of the Summit Preparatory Committee.

This is the right moment for me to express my gratitude to all those who have contributed to the result that we have now achieved through our joint efforts: to the President of the Swiss Confederation and all of the team from the host country for this first phase; to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his colleagues; to the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union and all his staff; to the Director of the Executive Secretariat of the Summit and all his team; to the team from Tunisia, the country that will be hosting the second phase; and, of course, to all the participants in the preparatory process.

What we have together succeeded in bringing about is a new spirit of cooperation and of openness towards others!

Today, here in Geneva, we are marking the beginning of a process as we consider how to place the digital revolution at the service of human development based on solidarity.

Tomorrow, in Tunis, if God so wishes, we shall consolidate the approaches derived from this first phase while working to broaden our vision.

Indeed, the ambition of the World Summit on the Information Society, which clearly involves a societal project of global proportions, represents an immense challenge. And beyond all of the technological and social considerations, a vision is emerging that is even more all-encompassing.



If it is true that the Information Society enables information and knowledge to circulate freely around the planet, and that all the members of humankind are now in a position to share their knowledge and know-how, and if it is true that the creation and dissemination of educational, scientific, cultural, news and entertainment content have become a possibility for all peoples everywhere, then we can now look forward to a new solidarity among human beings, social groups and nations worldwide – a solidarity based on the sharing of knowledge; a genuine solidarity founded on a better awareness of others and on mutual respect.

It is here that the concept of “digital solidarity” that we are advocating together with President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal comes into its own. It is here, too, that the tremendous scope of this new type of summit becomes evident, in terms not only of the desire for integration on the part of all the key players in the Information Society, of the participatory approach, of the launching of new partnerships at the international level and of the vision of global solidarity among peoples and nations, but also, and above all, in terms of the political aspiration to strengthen multilateralism in a new form.

And all of this starting from the clear necessity for a shared international approach to the major problems facing our planet, for which global solutions need to be found which respect both cultural and linguistic diversity and the characteristics inherent to each of the different nations and regions of the world.

The World Summit on the Information Society thus opens the way to a new era in which United Nations summits could be convened on a regular basis to debate, in a participatory manner, current problems facing our global society that can now no longer be resolved solely within the framework of national or regional policies.

It is indeed my profound conviction that this Summit, dealing as it does with global policy for human society as a whole, could be the prelude to a new generation of summits. In this ever more globalized world it is desirable – and probably essential – that we make the qualitative leap that will take us from United Nations conferences on development issues to summits of Heads of State and Government, convened every two or three years, enabling the world’s key decision-makers, i.e. the highest officials of all the United Nations Member States, as equal stakeholders in the future of our planet, to come together to discuss the major issues pertaining to the future society in the making, on the



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basis of reports drawn up by the major players in the information, communication and shared knowledge society, and progressively to build this new planetary society founded on the values of solidarity and sharing.

It is now, more than ever, vital that we should combine our efforts in order to end the process of dehumanization of our planet. The World Summit on the Information Society affords us an opportunity to do that.

Let us therefore continue to work together as we pursue our journey towards Tunis and beyond, in order that this first summit of the third millennium, that could also be known as the World Summit on Solidarity, should help to transform the Information Society – offspring of the digital revolution – into a genuine society of human communication, knowledge and shared know-how, this being an essential condition for a new global dialogue for peace and for a new type of international communication, founded on a greater readiness to listen, exchange and share, and on more active solidarity between the nations and the citizens of our planet.

May God assist us in the realization of this great and glorious human undertaking!

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on the information society**

# **Documents**

**Declaration of Principles**  
**Building the Information Society: A Global Challenge  
in the New Millennium**

**&**

**Plan of Action**



*ITU 033049/S. Berman*

A scramble to capture telling images as delegates find their places at the opening ceremony of WSIS.



# Declaration of Principles

## Building the Information Society: a global challenge in the new Millennium

### A. Our Common Vision of the Information Society

1. **We, the representatives of the peoples of the world, assembled in Geneva from 10-12 December 2003 for the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society**, declare our common desire and commitment to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life, premised on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respecting fully and upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

2. **Our challenge** is to harness the potential of information and communication technology to promote the development goals of the Millennium Declaration, namely the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; achievement of universal primary education; promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women; reduction of child mortality; improvement of maternal health; to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and development of global partnerships for development for the attainment of a more peaceful, just and prosperous world. We also reiterate our commitment to the achievement of sustainable development and agreed development goals, as contained in the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation and the Monterrey Consensus, and other outcomes of relevant United Nations Summits.



3. **We reaffirm** the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, as enshrined in the Vienna Declaration. We also reaffirm that democracy, sustainable development, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as good governance at all levels are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. We further resolve to strengthen respect for the rule of law in international as in national affairs.

4. **We reaffirm**, as an essential foundation of the Information Society, and as outlined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. Communication is a fundamental social process, a basic human need and the foundation of all social organization. It is central to the Information Society. Everyone, everywhere should have the opportunity to participate and no one should be excluded from the benefits the Information Society offers.

5. **We further reaffirm** our commitment to the provisions of Article 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of their personality is possible, and that, in the exercise of their rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society. These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. In this way, we shall promote an Information Society where human dignity is respected.

6. In keeping with the spirit of this declaration, **we rededicate ourselves** to upholding the principle of the sovereign equality of all States.

7. **We recognize** that science has a central role in the development of the Information Society. Many of the building blocks of the Information Society are the result of scientific and technical advances made possible by the sharing of research results.

8. **We recognize** that education, knowledge, information and communication are at the core of human progress, endeavour and well-being. Further, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have an immense





impact on virtually all aspects of our lives. The rapid progress of these technologies opens completely new opportunities to attain higher levels of development. The capacity of these technologies to reduce many traditional obstacles, especially those of time and distance, for the first time in history makes it possible to use the potential of these technologies for the benefit of millions of people in all corners of the world.

9. **We are aware** that ICTs should be regarded as tools and not as an end in themselves. Under favourable conditions, these technologies can be a powerful instrument, increasing productivity, generating economic growth, job creation and employability and improving the quality of life of all. They can also promote dialogue among people, nations and civilizations.

10. **We are also fully aware** that the benefits of the information technology revolution are today unevenly distributed between the developed and developing countries and within societies. We are fully committed to turning this digital divide into a digital opportunity for all, particularly for those who risk being left behind and being further marginalized.

11. **We are committed** to realizing our common vision of the Information Society for ourselves and for future generations. We recognize that young people are the future workforce and leading creators and earliest adopters of ICTs. They must therefore be empowered as learners, developers, contributors, entrepreneurs and decision-makers. We must focus especially on young people who have not yet been able to benefit fully from the opportunities provided by ICTs. We are also committed to ensuring that the development of ICT applications and operation of services respects the rights of children as well as their protection and well-being.

12. **We affirm** that development of ICTs provides enormous opportunities for women, who should be an integral part of, and key actors, in the Information Society. We are committed to ensuring that the Information Society enables women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis on equality in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes. To this end, we should mainstream a gender equality perspective and use ICTs as a tool to that end.

13. In building the Information Society, **we shall pay particular attention** to the special needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups of society, including migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees, unemployed and underprivileged people, minorities and nomadic people. We shall also recognize the special needs of older persons and persons with disabilities.



14. **We are resolute** to empower the poor, particularly those living in remote, rural and marginalized urban areas, to access information and to use ICTs as a tool to support their efforts to lift themselves out of poverty.

15. In the evolution of the Information Society, particular attention must be given to the special situation of indigenous peoples, as well as to the preservation of their heritage and their cultural legacy.

16. **We continue to pay** special attention to the particular needs of people of developing countries, countries with economies in transition, Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States, Landlocked Developing Countries, Highly Indebted Poor Countries, countries and territories under occupation, countries recovering from conflict and countries and regions with special needs as well as to conditions that pose severe threats to development, such as natural disasters.

17. **We recognize** that building an inclusive Information Society requires new forms of solidarity, partnership and cooperation among governments and other stakeholders, i.e. the private sector, civil society and international organizations. Realizing that the ambitious goal of this Declaration – bridging the digital divide and ensuring harmonious, fair and equitable development for all – will require strong commitment by all stakeholders, we call for digital solidarity, both at national and international levels.

18. Nothing in this Declaration shall be construed as impairing, contradicting, restricting or derogating from the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, any other international instrument or national laws adopted in furtherance of these instruments.

## **B. An Information Society for All: Key Principles**

19. **We are resolute** in our quest to ensure that everyone can benefit from the opportunities that ICTs can offer. We agree that to meet these challenges, all stakeholders should work together to: improve access to information and communication infrastructure and technologies as well as to information and knowledge; build capacity; increase confidence and security in the use of ICTs; create an enabling environment at all levels; develop and widen ICT applications;



foster and respect cultural diversity; recognize the role of the media; address the ethical dimensions of the Information Society; and encourage international and regional cooperation. We agree that these are the key principles for building an inclusive Information Society.

**1) The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development**

20. Governments, as well as private sector, civil society and the United Nations and other international organizations have an important role and responsibility in the development of the Information Society and, as appropriate, in decision-making processes. Building a people-centred Information Society is a joint effort which requires cooperation and partnership among all stakeholders.

**2) Information and communication infrastructure: An essential foundation for an inclusive Information Society**

21. Connectivity is a central enabling agent in building the Information Society. Universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to ICT infrastructure and services, constitutes one of the challenges of the Information Society and should be an objective of all stakeholders involved in building it. Connectivity also involves access to energy and postal services, which should be assured in conformity with the domestic legislation of each country.

22. A well-developed information and communication network infrastructure and applications, adapted to regional, national and local conditions, easily-accessible and affordable, and making greater use of broadband and other innovative technologies where possible, can accelerate the social and economic progress of countries, and the well-being of all individuals, communities and peoples.

23. Policies that create a favourable climate for stability, predictability and fair competition at all levels should be developed and implemented in a manner that not only attracts more private investment for ICT infrastructure development but also enables universal service obligations to be met in areas where traditional market conditions fail to work. In disadvantaged areas, the establishment of ICT public access points in places such as post offices, schools, libraries and archives, can provide effective means for ensuring universal access to the infrastructure and services of the Information Society.



### **3) Access to information and knowledge**

24. The ability for all to access and contribute information, ideas and knowledge is essential in an inclusive Information Society.

25. The sharing and strengthening of global knowledge for development can be enhanced by removing barriers to equitable access to information for economic, social, political, health, cultural, educational, and scientific activities and by facilitating access to public domain information, including by universal design and the use of assistive technologies.

26. A rich public domain is an essential element for the growth of the Information Society, creating multiple benefits such as an educated public, new jobs, innovation, business opportunities, and the advancement of sciences. Information in the public domain should be easily accessible to support the Information Society, and protected from misappropriation. Public institutions such as libraries and archives, museums, cultural collections and other community-based access points should be strengthened so as to promote the preservation of documentary records and free and equitable access to information.

27. Access to information and knowledge can be promoted by increasing awareness among all stakeholders of the possibilities offered by different software models, including proprietary, open-source and free software, in order to increase competition, access by users, diversity of choice, and to enable all users to develop solutions which best meet their requirements. Affordable access to software should be considered as an important component of a truly inclusive Information Society.

28. We strive to promote universal access with equal opportunities for all to scientific knowledge and the creation and dissemination of scientific and technical information, including open access initiatives for scientific publishing.

### **4) Capacity building**

29. Each person should have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge in order to understand, participate actively in, and benefit fully from, the Information Society and the knowledge economy. Literacy and universal primary education are key factors for building a fully inclusive information society, paying particular attention to the special needs of girls and



women. Given the wide range of ICT and information specialists required at all levels, building institutional capacity deserves special attention.

30. The use of ICTs in all stages of education, training and human resource development should be promoted, taking into account the special needs of persons with disabilities and disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

31. Continuous and adult education, re-training, life-long learning, distance-learning and other special services, such as telemedicine, can make an essential contribution to employability and help people benefit from the new opportunities offered by ICTs for traditional jobs, self-employment and new professions. Awareness and literacy in ICTs are an essential foundation in this regard.

32. Content creators, publishers, and producers, as well as teachers, trainers, archivists, librarians and learners, should play an active role in promoting the Information Society, particularly in the Least Developed Countries.

33. To achieve a sustainable development of the Information Society, national capability in ICT research and development should be enhanced. Furthermore, partnerships, in particular between and among developed and developing countries, including countries with economies in transition, in research and development, technology transfer, manufacturing and utilization of ICT products and services are crucial for promoting capacity building and global participation in the Information Society. The manufacture of ICTs presents a significant opportunity for creation of wealth.

34. The attainment of our shared aspirations, in particular for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to become fully-fledged members of the Information Society, and their positive integration into the knowledge economy, depends largely on increased capacity building in the areas of education, technology know-how and access to information, which are major factors in determining development and competitiveness.

## **5) Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs**

35. Strengthening the trust framework, including information security and network security, authentication, privacy and consumer protection, is a prerequisite for the development of the Information Society and for building confidence among users of ICTs. A global culture of cyber-security needs to be promoted, developed and implemented in cooperation with all stakeholders and



international expert bodies. These efforts should be supported by increased international cooperation. Within this global culture of cyber-security, it is important to enhance security and to ensure the protection of data and privacy, while enhancing access and trade. In addition, it must take into account the level of social and economic development of each country and respect the development-oriented aspects of the Information Society.

36. While recognizing the principles of universal and non-discriminatory access to ICTs for all nations, we support the activities of the United Nations to prevent the potential use of ICTs for purposes that are inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international stability and security, and may adversely affect the integrity of the infrastructure within States, to the detriment of their security. It is necessary to prevent the use of information resources and technologies for criminal and terrorist purposes, while respecting human rights.

37. Spam is a significant and growing problem for users, networks and the Internet as a whole. Spam and cyber-security should be dealt with at appropriate national and international levels.

## **6) Enabling environment**

38. An enabling environment at national and international levels is essential for the Information Society. ICTs should be used as an important tool for good governance.

39. The rule of law, accompanied by a supportive, transparent, pro-competitive, technologically neutral and predictable policy and regulatory framework reflecting national realities, is essential for building a people-centred Information Society. Governments should intervene, as appropriate, to correct market failures, to maintain fair competition, to attract investment, to enhance the development of the ICT infrastructure and applications, to maximize economic and social benefits, and to serve national priorities.

40. A dynamic and enabling international environment, supportive of foreign direct investment, transfer of technology, and international cooperation, particularly in the areas of finance, debt and trade, as well as full and effective participation of developing countries in global decision-making, are vital complements to national development efforts related to ICTs. Improving global affordable connectivity would contribute significantly to the effectiveness of these development efforts.



41. ICTs are an important enabler of growth through efficiency gains and increased productivity, in particular by small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). In this regard, the development of the Information Society is important for broadly-based economic growth in both developed and developing economies. ICT-supported productivity gains and applied innovations across economic sectors should be fostered. Equitable distribution of the benefits contributes to poverty eradication and social development. Policies that foster productive investment and enable firms, notably SMEs, to make the changes needed to seize the benefits from ICTs, are likely to be the most beneficial.

42. Intellectual Property protection is important to encourage innovation and creativity in the Information Society; similarly, the wide dissemination, diffusion, and sharing of knowledge is important to encourage innovation and creativity. Facilitating meaningful participation by all in intellectual property issues and knowledge sharing through full awareness and capacity building is a fundamental part of an inclusive Information Society.

43. Sustainable development can best be advanced in the Information Society when ICT-related efforts and programmes are fully integrated in national and regional development strategies. We welcome the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and encourage the international community to support the ICT-related measures of this initiative as well as those belonging to similar efforts in other regions. Distribution of the benefits of ICT-driven growth contributes to poverty eradication and sustainable development.

44. Standardization is one of the essential building blocks of the Information Society. There should be particular emphasis on the development and adoption of international standards. The development and use of open, interoperable, non-discriminatory and demand-driven standards that take into account needs of users and consumers is a basic element for the development and greater diffusion of ICTs and more affordable access to them, particularly in developing countries. International standards aim to create an environment where consumers can access services worldwide regardless of underlying technology.

45. The radio frequency spectrum should be managed in the public interest and in accordance with principle of legality, with full observance of national laws and regulation as well as relevant international agreements.



46. In building the Information Society, States are strongly urged to take steps with a view to the avoidance of, and refrain from, any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impedes the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries, and that hinders the well-being of their population.

47. Recognizing that ICTs are progressively changing our working practices, the creation of a secure, safe and healthy working environment, appropriate to the utilisation of ICTs, respecting all relevant international norms, is fundamental.

48. The Internet has evolved into a global facility available to the public and its governance should constitute a core issue of the Information Society agenda. The international management of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations. It should ensure an equitable distribution of resources, facilitate access for all and ensure a stable and secure functioning of the Internet, taking into account multilingualism.

49. The management of the Internet encompasses both technical and public policy issues and should involve all stakeholders and relevant intergovernmental and international organizations. In this respect it is recognized that:

- Policy authority for Internet-related public policy issues is the sovereign right of States. They have rights and responsibilities for international Internet-related public policy issues;
- The private sector has had and should continue to have an important role in the development of the Internet, both in the technical and economic fields;
- Civil society has also played an important role on Internet matters, especially at community level, and should continue to play such a role;
- Intergovernmental organizations have had and should continue to have a facilitating role in the coordination of Internet-related public policy issues;
- International organizations have also had and should continue to have an important role in the development of Internet-related technical standards and relevant policies.





50. International Internet governance issues should be addressed in a coordinated manner. We ask the Secretary-General of the United Nations to set up a working group on Internet governance, in an open and inclusive process that ensures a mechanism for the full and active participation of governments, the private sector and civil society from both developing and developed countries, involving relevant intergovernmental and international organizations and forums, to investigate and make proposals for action, as appropriate, on the governance of Internet by 2005.

#### **7) ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life**

51. The usage and deployment of ICTs should seek to create benefits in all aspects of our daily life. ICT applications are potentially important in government operations and services, health care and health information, education and training, employment, job creation, business, agriculture, transport, protection of environment and management of natural resources, disaster prevention, and culture, and to promote eradication of poverty and other agreed development goals. ICTs should also contribute to sustainable production and consumption patterns and reduce traditional barriers, providing an opportunity for all to access local and global markets in a more equitable manner. Applications should be user-friendly, accessible to all, affordable, adapted to local needs in languages and cultures, and support sustainable development. To this effect, local authorities should play a major role in the provision of ICT services for the benefit of their populations.

#### **8) Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content**

52. Cultural diversity is the common heritage of humankind. The Information Society should be founded on and stimulate respect for cultural identity, cultural and linguistic diversity, traditions and religions, and foster dialogue among cultures and civilizations. The promotion, affirmation and preservation of diverse cultural identities and languages as reflected in relevant agreed United Nations documents including UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, will further enrich the Information Society.

53. The creation, dissemination and preservation of content in diverse languages and formats must be accorded high priority in building an inclusive Information Society, paying particular attention to the diversity of supply of creative work and due recognition of the rights of authors and artists. It is



essential to promote the production of and accessibility to all content – educational, scientific, cultural or recreational – in diverse languages and formats. The development of local content suited to domestic or regional needs will encourage social and economic development and will stimulate participation of all stakeholders, including people living in rural, remote and marginal areas.

54. The preservation of cultural heritage is a crucial component of identity and self-understanding of individuals that links a community to its past. The Information Society should harness and preserve cultural heritage for the future by all appropriate methods, including digitisation.

## **9) Media**

55. We reaffirm our commitment to the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information, as well as those of the independence, pluralism and diversity of media, which are essential to the Information Society. Freedom to seek, receive, impart and use information for the creation, accumulation and dissemination of knowledge are important to the Information Society. We call for the responsible use and treatment of information by the media in accordance with the highest ethical and professional standards. Traditional media in all their forms have an important role in the Information Society and ICTs should play a supportive role in this regard. Diversity of media ownership should be encouraged, in conformity with national law, and taking into account relevant international conventions. We reaffirm the necessity of reducing international imbalances affecting the media, particularly as regards infrastructure, technical resources and the development of human skills.

## **10) Ethical dimensions of the Information Society**

56. The Information Society should respect peace and uphold the fundamental values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, shared responsibility, and respect for nature.

57. We acknowledge the importance of ethics for the Information Society, which should foster justice, and the dignity and worth of the human person. The widest possible protection should be accorded to the family and to enable it to play its crucial role in society.



58. The use of ICTs and content creation should respect human rights and fundamental freedoms of others, including personal privacy, and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion in conformity with relevant international instruments.

59. All actors in the Information Society should take appropriate actions and preventive measures, as determined by law, against abusive uses of ICTs, such as illegal and other acts motivated by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, hatred, violence, all forms of child abuse, including paedophilia and child pornography, and trafficking in, and exploitation of, human beings.

#### **11) International and regional cooperation**

60. We aim at making full use of the opportunities offered by ICTs in our efforts to reach the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and to uphold the key principles set forth in this Declaration. The Information Society is intrinsically global in nature and national efforts need to be supported by effective international and regional cooperation among governments, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders, including the international financial institutions.

61. In order to build an inclusive global Information Society, we will seek and effectively implement concrete international approaches and mechanisms, including financial and technical assistance. Therefore, while appreciating ongoing ICT cooperation through various mechanisms, we invite all stakeholders to commit to the “Digital Solidarity Agenda” set forth in the Plan of Action. We are convinced that the worldwide agreed objective is to contribute to bridge the digital divide, promote access to ICTs, create digital opportunities, and benefit from the potential offered by ICTs for development. We recognize the will expressed by some to create an international voluntary “Digital Solidarity Fund”, and by others to undertake studies concerning existing mechanisms and the efficiency and feasibility of such a Fund.

62. Regional integration contributes to the development of the global Information Society and makes strong cooperation within and among regions indispensable. Regional dialogue should contribute to national capacity building and to the alignment of national strategies with the goals of this Declaration of Principles in a compatible way, while respecting national and regional



particularities. In this context, we welcome and encourage the international community to support the ICT-related measures of such initiatives.

63. We resolve to assist developing countries, LDCs and countries with economies in transition through the mobilization from all sources of financing, the provision of financial and technical assistance and by creating an environment conducive to technology transfer, consistent with the purposes of this Declaration and the Plan of Action.

64. The core competences of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in the fields of ICTs – assistance in bridging the digital divide, international and regional cooperation, radio spectrum management, standards development and the dissemination of information – are of crucial importance for building the Information Society.

## **C. Towards an Information Society for All Based on Shared Knowledge**

65. We commit ourselves to strengthening cooperation to seek common responses to the challenges and to the implementation of the Plan of Action, which will realize the vision of an inclusive Information Society based on the Key Principles incorporated in this Declaration.

66. We further commit ourselves to evaluate and follow-up progress in bridging the digital divide, taking into account different levels of development, so as to reach internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and to assess the effectiveness of investment and international cooperation efforts in building the Information Society.

67. We are firmly convinced that we are collectively entering a new era of enormous potential, that of the Information Society and expanded human communication. In this emerging society, information and knowledge can be produced, exchanged, shared and communicated through all the networks of the world. All individuals can soon, if we take the necessary actions, together build a new Information Society based on shared knowledge and founded on global solidarity and a better mutual understanding between peoples and nations. We trust that these measures will open the way to the future development of a true knowledge society.



# Plan of Action

## A. Introduction

**1.** The common vision and guiding principles of the Declaration are translated in this Plan of Action into concrete action lines to advance the achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals, including those in the Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation, by promoting the use of ICT-based products, networks, services and applications, and to help countries overcome the digital divide. The Information Society envisaged in the Declaration of Principles will be realized in cooperation and solidarity by governments and all other stakeholders.

**2.** The Information Society is an evolving concept that has reached different levels across the world, reflecting the different stages of development. Technological and other change is rapidly transforming the environment in which the Information Society is developed. The Plan of Action is thus an evolving platform to promote the Information Society at the national, regional and international levels. The unique two-phase structure of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) provides an opportunity to take this evolution into account.

**3.** All stakeholders have an important role to play in the Information Society, especially through partnerships:

a) Governments have a leading role in developing and implementing comprehensive, forward looking and sustainable national e-strategies. The private sector and civil society, in dialogue with governments, have an important consultative role to play in devising national e-strategies.



- b) The commitment of the private sector is important in developing and diffusing information and communication technologies (ICTs), for infrastructure, content and applications. The private sector is not only a market player but also plays a role in a wider sustainable development context.
- c) The commitment and involvement of civil society is equally important in creating an equitable Information Society, and in implementing ICT-related initiatives for development.
- d) International and regional institutions, including international financial institutions, have a key role in integrating the use of ICTs in the development process and making available necessary resources for building the Information Society and for the evaluation of the progress made.

## **B. Objectives, goals and targets**

**4.** The objectives of the Plan of Action are to build an inclusive Information Society; to put the potential of knowledge and ICTs at the service of development; to promote the use of information and knowledge for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration; and to address new challenges of the Information Society, at the national, regional and international levels. Opportunity shall be taken in phase two of the WSIS to evaluate and assess progress made towards bridging the digital divide.

**5.** Specific targets for the Information Society will be established as appropriate, at the national level in the framework of national e-strategies and in accordance with national development policies, taking into account the different national circumstances. Such targets can serve as useful benchmarks for actions and for the evaluation of the progress made towards the attainment of the overall objectives of the Information Society.

**6.** Based on internationally agreed development goals, including those in the Millennium Declaration, which are premised on international cooperation, indicative targets may serve as global references for improving connectivity and access in the use of ICTs in promoting the objectives of the Plan of Action, to be achieved by 2015. These targets may be taken into account in the establishment of the national targets, considering the different national circumstances:

- k) to connect villages with ICTs and establish community access points;



- l) to connect universities, colleges, secondary schools and primary schools with ICTs;
- m) to connect scientific and research centres with ICTs;
- n) to connect public libraries, cultural centres, museums, post offices and archives with ICTs;
- o) to connect health centres and hospitals with ICTs;
- p) to connect all local and central government departments and establish websites and email addresses;
- q) to adapt all primary and secondary school curricula to meet the challenges of the Information Society, taking into account national circumstances;
- r) to ensure that all of the world's population have access to television and radio services;
- s) to encourage the development of content and to put in place technical conditions in order to facilitate the presence and use of all world languages on the Internet;
- t) to ensure that more than half the world's inhabitants have access to ICTs within their reach.

**7.** In giving effect to these objectives, goals and targets, special attention will be paid to the needs of developing countries, and in particular to countries, peoples and groups cited in paragraphs 11-16 of the Declaration of Principles.

## **C. Action Lines**

### **C1. The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development**

**8.** The effective participation of governments and all stakeholders is vital in developing the Information Society requiring cooperation and partnerships among all of them.

- a) Development of national e-strategies, including the necessary human capacity building, should be encouraged by all countries by 2005, taking into account different national circumstances.



- b) Initiate at the national level a structured dialogue involving all relevant stakeholders, including through public/private partnerships, in devising e-strategies for the Information Society and for the exchange of best practices.
- c) In developing and implementing national e-strategies, stakeholders should take into consideration local, regional and national needs and concerns. To maximize the benefits of initiatives undertaken, these should include the concept of sustainability. The private sector should be engaged in concrete projects to develop the Information Society at local, regional and national levels.
- d) Each country is encouraged to establish at least one functioning Public/Private Partnership (PPP) or Multi-Sector Partnership (MSP), by 2005 as a showcase for future action.
- e) Identify mechanisms, at the national, regional and international levels, for the initiation and promotion of partnerships among stakeholders of the Information Society.
- f) Explore the viability of establishing multi-stakeholder portals for indigenous peoples at the national level.
- g) By 2005, relevant international organizations and financial institutions should develop their own strategies for the use of ICTs for sustainable development, including sustainable production and consumption patterns and as an effective instrument to help achieve the goals expressed in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.
- h) International organizations should publish, in their areas of competence, including on their website, reliable information submitted by relevant stakeholders on successful experiences of mainstreaming ICTs.
- i) Encourage a series of related measures, including, among other things: incubator schemes, venture capital investments (national and international), government investment funds (including micro-finance for Small, Medium-sized and Micro Enterprises (SMMs)), investment promotion strategies, software export support activities (trade counseling), support of research and development networks and software parks.

## **C2. Information and communication infrastructure: an essential foundation for the Information Society**

- 9.** Infrastructure is central in achieving the goal of digital inclusion, enabling universal, sustainable, ubiquitous and affordable access to ICTs by all,





taking into account relevant solutions already in place in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to provide sustainable connectivity and access to remote and marginalized areas at national and regional levels.

a) Governments should take action, in the framework of national development policies, in order to support an enabling and competitive environment for the necessary investment in ICT infrastructure and for the development of new services.

b) In the context of national e-strategies, devise appropriate universal access policies and strategies, and their means of implementation, in line with the indicative targets, and develop ICT connectivity indicators.

c) In the context of national e-strategies, provide and improve ICT connectivity for all schools, universities, health institutions, libraries, post offices, community centres, museums and other institutions accessible to the public, in line with the indicative targets.

d) Develop and strengthen national, regional and international broadband network infrastructure, including delivery by satellite and other systems, to help in providing the capacity to match the needs of countries and their citizens and for the delivery of new ICT-based services. Support technical, regulatory and operational studies by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and, as appropriate, other relevant international organizations in order to:

- i) broaden access to orbital resources, global frequency harmonization and global systems standardization;
- ii) encourage public/private partnership;
- iii) promote the provision of global high-speed satellite services for underserved areas such as remote and sparsely populated areas;
- iv) explore other systems that can provide high-speed connectivity.

e) In the context of national e-strategies, address the special requirements of older people, persons with disabilities, children, especially marginalized children and other disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including by appropriate educational administrative and legislative measures to ensure their full inclusion in the Information Society.

f) Encourage the design and production of ICT equipment and services so that everyone, has easy and affordable access to them including older people, persons with disabilities, children, especially marginalized children, and other



disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, and promote the development of technologies, applications, and content suited to their needs, guided by the Universal Design Principle and further enhanced by the use of assistive technologies.

g) In order to alleviate the challenges of illiteracy, develop affordable technologies and non-text based computer interfaces to facilitate people's access to ICT,

h) Undertake international research and development efforts aimed at making available adequate and affordable ICT equipment for end users.

i) Encourage the use of unused wireless capacity, including satellite, in developed countries and in particular in developing countries, to provide access in remote areas, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and to improve low-cost connectivity in developing countries. Special concern should be given to the Least Developed Countries in their efforts in establishing telecommunication infrastructure.

j) Optimize connectivity among major information networks by encouraging the creation and development of regional ICT backbones and Internet exchange points, to reduce interconnection costs and broaden network access.

k) Develop strategies for increasing affordable global connectivity, thereby facilitating improved access. Commercially negotiated Internet transit and interconnection costs should be oriented towards objective, transparent and non-discriminatory parameters, taking into account ongoing work on this subject.

l) Encourage and promote joint use of traditional media and new technologies.

### **C3. Access to information and knowledge**

**10.** ICTs allow people, anywhere in the world, to access information and knowledge almost instantaneously. Individuals, organizations and communities should benefit from access to knowledge and information.

a) Develop policy guidelines for the development and promotion of public domain information as an important international instrument promoting public access to information.

b) Governments are encouraged to provide adequate access through various communication resources, notably the Internet, to public official information. Establishing legislation on access to information and the preservation of public data, notably in the area of the new technologies, is encouraged.



- c) Promote research and development to facilitate accessibility of ICTs for all, including disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable groups.
- d) Governments, and other stakeholders, should establish sustainable multi-purpose community public access points, providing affordable or free-of-charge access for their citizens to the various communication resources, notably the Internet. These access points should, to the extent possible, have sufficient capacity to provide assistance to users, in libraries, educational institutions, public administrations, post offices or other public places, with special emphasis on rural and underserved areas, while respecting intellectual property rights (IPRs) and encouraging the use of information and sharing of knowledge.
- e) Encourage research and promote awareness among all stakeholders of the possibilities offered by different software models, and the means of their creation, including proprietary, open-source and free software, in order to increase competition, freedom of choice and affordability, and to enable all stakeholders to evaluate which solution best meets their requirements.
- f) Governments should actively promote the use of ICTs as a fundamental working tool by their citizens and local authorities. In this respect, the international community and other stakeholders should support capacity building for local authorities in the widespread use of ICTs as a means of improving local governance.
- g) Encourage research on the Information Society, including on innovative forms of networking, adaptation of ICT infrastructure, tools and applications that facilitate accessibility of ICTs for all, and disadvantaged groups in particular.
- h) Support the creation and development of a digital public library and archive services, adapted to the Information Society, including reviewing national library strategies and legislation, developing a global understanding of the need for “hybrid libraries”, and fostering worldwide cooperation between libraries.
- i) Encourage initiatives to facilitate access, including free and affordable access to open access journals and books, and open archives for scientific information.
- j) Support research and development of the design of useful instruments for all stakeholders to foster increased awareness, assessment, and evaluation of different software models and licences, so as to ensure an optimal choice of appropriate software that will best contribute to achieving development goals within local conditions.



#### **C4. Capacity building**

**11.** Everyone should have the necessary skills to benefit fully from the Information Society. Therefore capacity building and ICT literacy are essential. ICTs can contribute to achieving universal education worldwide, through delivery of education and training of teachers, and offering improved conditions for lifelong learning, encompassing people that are outside the formal education process, and improving professional skills.

a) Develop domestic policies to ensure that ICTs are fully integrated in education and training at all levels, including in curriculum development, teacher training, institutional administration and management, and in support of the concept of lifelong learning.

b) Develop and promote programmes to eradicate illiteracy using ICTs at national, regional and international levels.

c) Promote e-literacy skills for all, for example by designing and offering courses for public administration, taking advantage of existing facilities such as libraries, multipurpose community centres, public access points and by establishing local ICT training centres with the cooperation of all stakeholders. Special attention should be paid to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

d) In the context of national educational policies, and taking into account the need to eradicate adult illiteracy, ensure that young people are equipped with knowledge and skills to use ICTs, including the capacity to analyse and treat information in creative and innovative ways, share their expertise and participate fully in the Information Society.

e) Governments, in cooperation with other stakeholders, should create programmes for capacity building with an emphasis on creating a critical mass of qualified and skilled ICT professionals and experts.

f) Develop pilot projects to demonstrate the impact of ICT-based alternative educational delivery systems, notably for achieving Education for All targets, including basic literacy targets.

g) Work on removing the gender barriers to ICT education and training and promoting equal training opportunities in ICT-related fields for women and girls. Early intervention programmes in science and technology should target young



girls with the aim of increasing the number of women in ICT careers. Promote the exchange of best practices on the integration of gender perspectives in ICT education.

h) Empower local communities, especially those in rural and underserved areas, in ICT use and promote the production of useful and socially meaningful content for the benefit of all.

i) Launch education and training programmes, where possible using information networks of traditional nomadic and indigenous peoples, which provide opportunities to fully participate in the Information Society.

j) Design and implement regional and international cooperation activities to enhance the capacity, notably, of leaders and operational staff in developing countries and LDCs, to apply ICTs effectively in the whole range of educational activities. This should include delivery of education outside the educational structure, such as the workplace and at home.

k) Design specific training programmes in the use of ICTs in order to meet the educational needs of information professionals, such as archivists, librarians, museum professionals, scientists, teachers, journalists, postal workers and other relevant professional groups. Training of information professionals should focus not only on new methods and techniques for the development and provision of information and communication services, but also on relevant management skills to ensure the best use of technologies. Training of teachers should focus on the technical aspects of ICTs, on development of content, and on the potential possibilities and challenges of ICTs.

l) Develop distance learning, training and other forms of education and training as part of capacity building programmes. Give special attention to developing countries and especially LDCs in different levels of human resources development.

m) Promote international and regional cooperation in the field of capacity building, including country programmes developed by the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies

n) Launch pilot projects to design new forms of ICT-based networking, linking education, training and research institutions between and among developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

o) Volunteering, if conducted in harmony with national policies and local cultures, can be a valuable asset for raising human capacity to make productive use of ICT tools and build a more inclusive Information Society. Activate



volunteer programmes to provide capacity building on ICT for development, particularly in developing countries.

p) Design programmes to train users to develop self-learning and self-development capacities.

## **C5. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs**

**12.** Confidence and security are among the main pillars of the Information Society.

a) Promote cooperation among the governments at the United Nations and with all stakeholders at other appropriate fora to enhance user confidence, build trust, and protect both data and network integrity; consider existing and potential threats to ICTs; and address other information security and network security issues.

b) Governments, in cooperation with the private sector, should prevent, detect and respond to cyber-crime and misuse of ICTs by: developing guidelines that take into account ongoing efforts in these areas; considering legislation that allows for effective investigation and prosecution of misuse; promoting effective mutual assistance efforts; strengthening institutional support at the international level for preventing, detecting and recovering from such incidents; and encouraging education and raising awareness.

c) Governments, and other stakeholders, should actively promote user education and awareness about online privacy and the means of protecting privacy.

d) Take appropriate action on spam at national and international levels.

e) Encourage the domestic assessment of national law with a view to overcoming any obstacles to the effective use of electronic documents and transactions including electronic means of authentication.

f) Further strengthen the trust and security framework with complementary and mutually reinforcing initiatives in the fields of security in the use of ICTs, with initiatives or guidelines with respect to rights to privacy, data and consumer protection.

g) Share good practices in the field of information security and network security and encourage their use by all parties concerned.



- h) Invite interested countries to set up focal points for real-time incident handling and response, and develop a cooperative network between these focal points for sharing information and technologies on incident response.
- i) Encourage further development of secure and reliable applications to facilitate online transactions.
- j) Encourage interested countries to contribute actively to the ongoing United Nations activities to build confidence and security in the use of ICTs.

## C6. Enabling environment

**13.** To maximize the social, economic and environmental benefits of the Information Society, governments need to create a trustworthy, transparent and non-discriminatory legal, regulatory and policy environment. Actions include:

- a) Governments should foster a supportive, transparent, pro-competitive and predictable policy, legal and regulatory framework, which provides the appropriate incentives to investment and community development in the Information Society.
- b) We ask the Secretary General of the United Nations to set up a working group on Internet governance, in an open and inclusive process that ensures a mechanism for the full and active participation of governments, the private sector and civil society from both developing and developed countries, involving relevant intergovernmental and international organizations and forums, to investigate and make proposals for action, as appropriate, on the governance of Internet by 2005. The group should, *inter alia*:
  - i) develop a working definition of Internet governance;
  - ii) identify the public policy issues that are relevant to Internet governance;
  - iii) develop a common understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of governments, existing intergovernmental and international organisations and other forums as well as the private sector and civil society from both developing and developed countries;
  - iv) prepare a report on the results of this activity to be presented for consideration and appropriate action for the second phase of WSIS in Tunis in 2005.



- c) Governments are invited to:
  - i) facilitate the establishment of national and regional Internet Exchange Centres;
  - ii) manage or supervise, as appropriate, their respective country code top-level domain name (ccTLD);
  - iii) promote awareness of the Internet.
- d) In cooperation with the relevant stakeholders, promote regional root servers and the use of internationalized domain names in order to overcome barriers to access.
- e) Governments should continue to update their domestic consumer protection laws to respond to the new requirements of the Information Society.
- f) Promote effective participation by developing countries and countries with economies in transition in international ICT forums and create opportunities for exchange of experience.
- g) Governments need to formulate national strategies, which include e-government strategies, to make public administration more transparent, efficient and democratic.
- h) Develop a framework for the secure storage and archival of documents and other electronic records of information.
- i) Governments and stakeholders should actively promote user education and awareness about online privacy and the means of protecting privacy.
- j) Invite stakeholders to ensure that practices designed to facilitate electronic commerce also permit consumers to have a choice as to whether or not to use electronic communication.
- k) Encourage the ongoing work in the area of effective dispute settlement systems, notably alternative dispute resolution (ADR), which can promote settlement of disputes.
- l) Governments, in collaboration with stakeholders, are encouraged to formulate conducive ICT policies that foster entrepreneurship, innovation and investment, and with particular reference to the promotion of participation by women.
- m) Recognising the economic potential of ICTs for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), they should be assisted in increasing their competitiveness





by streamlining administrative procedures, facilitating their access to capital and enhancing their capacity to participate in ICT-related projects.

n) Governments should act as model users and early adopters of e-commerce in accordance with their level of socio-economic development.

o) Governments, in cooperation with other stakeholders, should raise awareness of the importance of international interoperability standards for global e-commerce.

p) Governments, in cooperation with other stakeholders, should promote the development and use of open, interoperable, non-discriminatory and demand-driven standards.

q) ITU, pursuant to its treaty capacity, coordinates and allocates frequencies with the goal of facilitating ubiquitous and affordable access.

r) Additional steps should be taken in ITU and other regional organisations to ensure rational, efficient and economical use of, and equitable access to, the radio-frequency spectrum by all countries, based on relevant international agreements.

## **C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life**

**14.** ICT applications can support sustainable development, in the fields of public administration, business, education and training, health, employment, environment, agriculture and science within the framework of national e-strategies. This would include actions within the following sectors:

### **15. E-government**

a) Implement e-government strategies focusing on applications aimed at innovating and promoting transparency in public administrations and democratic processes, improving efficiency and strengthening relations with citizens.

b) Develop national e-government initiatives and services, at all levels, adapted to the needs of citizens and business, to achieve a more efficient allocation of resources and public goods.

c) Support international cooperation initiatives in the field of e-government, in order to enhance transparency, accountability and efficiency at all levels of government.



**16. E-business**

- a) Governments, international organizations and the private sector, are encouraged to promote the benefits of international trade and the use of e-business, and promote the use of e-business models in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.
- b) Through the adoption of an enabling environment, and based on widely available Internet access, governments should seek to stimulate private sector investment, foster new applications, content development and public/private partnerships.
- c) Government policies should favour assistance to, and growth of SMMEs, in the ICT industry, as well as their entry into e-business, to stimulate economic growth and job creation as an element of a strategy for poverty reduction through wealth creation.

**17. E-learning (see section C4)**

**18. E-health**

- a) Promote collaborative efforts of governments, planners, health professionals, and other agencies along with the participation of international organizations for creating a reliable, timely, high quality and affordable health care and health information systems and for promoting continuous medical training, education, and research through the use of ICTs, while respecting and protecting citizens' right to privacy.
- b) Facilitate access to the world's medical knowledge and locally-relevant content resources for strengthening public health research and prevention programmes and promoting women's and men's health, such as content on sexual and reproductive health and sexually transmitted infections, and for diseases that attract full attention of the world including HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.
- c) Alert, monitor and control the spread of communicable diseases, through the improvement of common information systems.
- d) Promote the development of international standards for the exchange of health data, taking due account of privacy concerns.



e) Encourage the adoption of ICTs to improve and extend health care and health information systems to remote and underserved areas and vulnerable populations, recognising women's roles as health providers in their families and communities.

f) Strengthen and expand ICT-based initiatives for providing medical and humanitarian assistance in disasters and emergencies.

## **19. E-employment**

a) Encourage the development of best practices for e-workers and e-employers built, at the national level, on principles of fairness and gender equality, respecting all relevant international norms.

b) Promote new ways of organizing work and business with the aim of raising productivity, growth and well-being through investment in ICTs and human resources.

c) Promote teleworking to allow citizens, particularly in the developing countries, LDCs, and small economies, to live in their societies and work anywhere, and to increase employment opportunities for women, and for those with disabilities. In promoting teleworking, special attention should be given to strategies promoting job creation and the retention of the skilled working force.

d) Promote early intervention programmes in science and technology that should target young girls to increase the number of women in ICT carriers.

## **20. E-environment**

a) Governments, in cooperation with other stakeholders are encouraged to use and promote ICTs as an instrument for environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources.

b) Government, civil society and the private sector are encouraged to initiate actions and implement projects and programmes for sustainable production and consumption and the environmentally safe disposal and recycling of discarded hardware and components used in ICTs.

c) Establish monitoring systems, using ICTs, to forecast and monitor the impact of natural and man-made disasters, particularly in developing countries, LDCs and small economies.



## **21. E-agriculture**

- a) Ensure the systematic dissemination of information using ICTs on agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, forestry and food, in order to provide ready access to comprehensive, up-to-date and detailed knowledge and information, particularly in rural areas.
- b) Public-private partnerships should seek to maximize the use of ICTs as an instrument to improve production (quantity and quality).

## **22. E-science**

- a) Promote affordable and reliable high-speed Internet connection for all universities and research institutions to support their critical role in information and knowledge production, education and training, and to support the establishment of partnerships, cooperation and networking between these institutions.
- b) Promote electronic publishing, differential pricing and open access initiatives to make scientific information affordable and accessible in all countries on an equitable basis.
- c) Promote the use of peer-to-peer technology to share scientific knowledge and pre-prints and reprints written by scientific authors who have waived their right to payment.
- d) Promote the long-term systematic and efficient collection, dissemination and preservation of essential scientific digital data, for example, population and meteorological data in all countries.
- e) Promote principles and metadata standards to facilitate cooperation and effective use of collected scientific information and data as appropriate to conduct scientific research.

## **C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content**

- 23.** Cultural and linguistic diversity, while stimulating respect for cultural identity, traditions and religions, is essential to the development of an Information Society based on the dialogue among cultures and regional and international cooperation. It is an important factor for sustainable development.



- a) Create policies that support the respect, preservation, promotion and enhancement of cultural and linguistic diversity and cultural heritage within the Information Society, as reflected in relevant agreed United Nations documents, including UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. This includes encouraging governments to design cultural policies to promote the production of cultural, educational and scientific content and the development of local cultural industries suited to the linguistic and cultural context of the users.
- b) Develop national policies and laws to ensure that libraries, archives, museums and other cultural institutions can play their full role of content – including traditional knowledge – providers in the Information Society, more particularly by providing continued access to recorded information.
- c) Support efforts to develop and use ICTs for the preservation of natural and, cultural heritage, keeping it accessible as a living part of today's culture. This includes developing systems for ensuring continued access to archived digital information and multimedia content in digital repositories, and support archives, cultural collections and libraries as the memory of humankind.
- d) Develop and implement policies that preserve, affirm, respect and promote diversity of cultural expression and indigenous knowledge and traditions through the creation of varied information content and the use of different methods, including the digitization of the educational, scientific and cultural heritage.
- e) Support local content development, translation and adaptation, digital archives, and diverse forms of digital and traditional media by local authorities. These activities can also strengthen local and indigenous communities.
- f) Provide content that is relevant to the cultures and languages of individuals in the Information Society, through access to traditional and digital media services.
- g) Through public/private partnerships, foster the creation of varied local and national content, including that available in the language of users, and give recognition and support to ICT-based work in all artistic fields.
- h) Strengthen programmes focused on gender-sensitive curricula in formal and non-formal education for all and enhancing communication and media literacy for women with a view to building the capacity of girls and women to understand and to develop ICT content.
- i) Nurture the local capacity for the creation and distribution of software in local languages, as well as content that is relevant to different segments of population, including non-literate, persons with disabilities, disadvantaged and



vulnerable groups especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

j) Give support to media based in local communities and support projects combining the use of traditional media and new technologies for their role in facilitating the use of local languages, for documenting and preserving local heritage, including landscape and biological diversity, and as a means to reach rural and isolated and nomadic communities.

k) Enhance the capacity of indigenous peoples to develop content in their own languages.

l) Cooperate with indigenous peoples and traditional communities to enable them to more effectively use and benefit from the use of their traditional knowledge in the Information Society.

m) Exchange knowledge, experiences and best practices on policies and tools designed to promote cultural and linguistic diversity at regional and sub-regional levels. This can be achieved by establishing regional, and sub-regional working groups on specific issues of this Plan of Action to foster integration efforts.

n) Assess at the regional level the contribution of ICT to cultural exchange and interaction, and based on the outcome of this assessment, design relevant programmes.

o) Governments, through public/private partnerships, should promote technologies and R&D programmes in such areas as translation, iconographies, voice-assisted services and the development of necessary hardware and a variety of software models, including proprietary, open source software and free software, such as standard character sets, language codes, electronic dictionaries, terminology and thesauri, multilingual search engines, machine translation tools, internationalized domain names, content referencing as well as general and application software.

## **C9. Media**

**24.** The media – in their various forms and with a diversity of ownership – as an actor, have an essential role in the development of the Information Society and are recognized as an important contributor to freedom of expression and plurality of information.

a) Encourage the media – print and broadcast as well as new media – to continue to play an important role in the Information Society.



- b) Encourage the development of domestic legislation that guarantees the independence and plurality of the media.
- c) Take appropriate measures – consistent with freedom of expression – to combat illegal and harmful content in media content.
- d) Encourage media professionals in developed countries to establish partnerships and networks with the media in developing ones, especially in the field of training.
- e) Promote balanced and diverse portrayals of women and men by the media.
- f) Reduce international imbalances affecting the media, particularly as regards infrastructure, technical resources and the development of human skills, taking full advantage of ICT tools in this regard.
- g) Encourage traditional media to bridge the knowledge divide and to facilitate the flow of cultural content, particularly in rural areas.

## **C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society**

**25.** The Information Society should be subject to universally held values and promote the common good and to prevent abusive uses of ICTs.

- a) Take steps to promote respect for peace and to uphold the fundamental values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, shared responsibility, and respect for nature.
- b) All stakeholders should increase their awareness of the ethical dimension of their use of ICTs.
- c) All actors in the Information Society should promote the common good, protect privacy and personal data and take appropriate actions and preventive measures, as determined by law, against abusive uses of ICTs such as illegal and other acts motivated by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, hatred, violence, all forms of child abuse, including paedophilia and child pornography, and trafficking in, and exploitation of, human beings.
- d) Invite relevant stakeholders, especially the academia, to continue research on ethical dimensions of ICTs.



## C11. International and regional cooperation

**26.** International cooperation among all stakeholders is vital in implementation of this plan of action and needs to be strengthened with a view to promoting universal access and bridging the digital divide, *inter alia*, by provision of means of implementation.

- a) Governments of developing countries should raise the relative priority of ICT projects in requests for international cooperation and assistance on infrastructure development projects from developed countries and international financial organizations.
- b) Within the context of the UN's Global Compact and building upon the United Nations Millennium Declaration, build on and accelerate public-private partnerships, focusing on the use of ICT in development.
- c) Invite international and regional organizations to mainstream ICTs in their work programmes and to assist all levels of developing countries, to be involved in the preparation and implementation of national action plans to support the fulfilment of the goals indicated in the declaration of principles and in this Plan of Action, taking into account the importance of regional initiatives.

## D. Digital Solidarity Agenda

**27.** The Digital Solidarity Agenda aims at putting in place the conditions for mobilizing human, financial and technological resources for inclusion of all men and women in the emerging Information Society. Close national, regional and international cooperation among all stakeholders in the implementation of this Agenda is vital. To overcome the digital divide, we need to use more efficiently existing approaches and mechanisms and fully explore new ones, in order to provide financing for the development of infrastructure, equipment, capacity building and content, which are essential for participation in the Information Society.

### D1. Priorities and strategies

- a) National e-strategies should be made an integral part of national development plans, including Poverty Reduction Strategies.





b) ICTs should be fully mainstreamed into strategies for Official Development Assistance (ODA) through more effective donor information-sharing and coordination, and through analysis and sharing of best practices and lessons learned from experience with ICT-for-development programmes.

## **D2. Mobilizing resources**

a) All countries and international organizations should act to create conditions conducive to increasing the availability and effective mobilization of resources for financing development as elaborated in the Monterrey Consensus.

b) Developed countries should make concrete efforts to fulfil their international commitments to financing development including the Monterrey Consensus, in which developed countries that have not done so are urged to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as ODA to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries.

c) For those developing countries facing unsustainable debt burdens, we welcome initiatives that have been undertaken to reduce outstanding indebtedness and invite further national and international measures in that regard, including, as appropriate, debt cancellation and other arrangements. Particular attention should be given to enhancing the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. These initiatives would release more resources that may be used for financing ICT for development projects.

d) Recognizing the potential of ICT for development we furthermore advocate:

i) developing countries to increase their efforts to attract major private national and foreign investments for ICTs through the creation of a transparent, stable and predictable enabling investment environment;

ii) developed countries and international financial organisations to be responsive to the strategies and priorities of ICTs for development, mainstream ICTs in their work programmes, and assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to prepare and implement their national e-strategies. Based on the priorities of national development plans and implementation of the above commitments, developed countries should increase their efforts to provide more financial resources to developing countries in harnessing ICTs for development;



- iii) the private sector to contribute to the implementation of this Digital Solidarity Agenda.
- e) In our efforts to bridge the digital divide, we should promote, within our development cooperation, technical and financial assistance directed towards national and regional capacity building, technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, cooperation in R&D programmes and exchange of know-how.
- f) While all existing financial mechanisms should be fully exploited, a thorough review of their adequacy in meeting the challenges of ICT for development should be completed by the end of December 2004. This review shall be conducted by a Task Force under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and submitted for consideration to the second phase of this summit. Based on the conclusion of the review, improvements and innovations of financing mechanisms will be considered including the effectiveness, the feasibility and the creation of a voluntary Digital Solidarity Fund, as mentioned in the Declaration of Principles.
- g) Countries should consider establishing national mechanisms to achieve universal access in both underserved rural and urban areas, in order to bridge the digital divide.

## **E. Follow-up and evaluation**

**28.** A realistic international performance evaluation and benchmarking (both qualitative and quantitative), through comparable statistical indicators and research results, should be developed to follow up the implementation of the objectives, goals and targets in the Plan of Action, taking into account different national circumstances.

- a) In cooperation with each country concerned, develop and launch a composite ICT Development (Digital Opportunity) Index. It could be published annually, or every two years, in an ICT Development Report. The index could show the statistics while the report would present analytical work on policies and their implementation, depending on national circumstances, including gender analysis.



- b) Appropriate indicators and benchmarking, including community connectivity indicators, should clarify the magnitude of the digital divide, in both its domestic and international dimensions, and keep it under regular assessment, and tracking global progress in the use of ICTs to achieve internationally agreed development goals, including those of the Millennium Declaration.
- c) International and regional organizations should assess and report regularly on universal accessibility of nations to ICTs, with the aim of creating equitable opportunities for the growth of ICT sectors of developing countries.
- d) Gender-specific indicators on ICT use and needs should be developed, and measurable performance indicators should be identified to assess the impact of funded ICT projects on the lives of women and girls.
- e) Develop and launch a website on best practices and success stories, based on a compilation of contributions from all stakeholders, in a concise, accessible and compelling format, following the internationally-recognized web accessibility standards. The website could be periodically updated and turned into a permanent experience-sharing exercise.
- f) All countries and regions should develop tools so as to provide statistical information on the Information Society, with basic indicators and analysis of its key dimensions. Priority should be given to setting up coherent and internationally comparable indicator systems, taking into account different levels of development.

## F. Towards WSIS phase 2 (Tunis)

**29.** Recalling General Assembly Resolution 56/183 and taking into account the outcome of the Geneva phase of the WSIS, a preparatory meeting will be held in the first half of 2004 to review those issues of the Information Society which should form the focus of the Tunis phase of the WSIS and to agree on the structure of the preparatory process for the second phase. In line with the decision of this Summit concerning its Tunis phase, the second phase of the WSIS should consider, *inter alia*:

- a) Elaboration of final appropriate documents based on the outcome of the Geneva phase of the WSIS with a view to consolidating the process of building a global Information Society, and reducing the Digital Divide and transforming it into digital opportunities.



## world summit on the information society

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b) Follow-up and implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action at national, regional and international levels, including the United Nations system, as part of an integrated and coordinated approach, calling upon the participation of all relevant stakeholders. This should take place, *inter alia*, through partnerships among stakeholders.

**world summit  
on the information society**

## **Picture Gallery**





ITU 034029/A. Longchamp

H.E. Mr. Robert Kocharyan,  
President of the Republic of Armenia.



ITU 034027/A. Longchamp

H.E. Mr. John A. Kufour,  
President of the Republic of Ghana.



ITU 032952/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Jean-Pierre Raffarin,  
Prime Minister of the French Republic.



ITU 032950/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Hosny Mubarak,  
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.



ITU 032945/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano,  
President of the Republic of Mozambique.



ITU 032940/A. Longchamp

H.E. Mr. Zafarullah Khan Jamali,  
Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.



ITU 032932/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Mohammad Khatami,  
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.



ITU 032816/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Bertie Ahern,  
Prime Minister of Ireland.



ITU 032815/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Pedro Pires,  
President of Cape Verde.



ITU 032814/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Ms Vaira Vike-Freiberga,  
President of Latvia.



ITU 032811/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Marc Forné,  
President of Andorra.



ITU 032805/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Alexander Lukashenko,  
President of Belarus.



ITU 032804/JJ.-M. Ferré

The President of Comoros,  
H.E. Colonel Azali Assoumani.



ITU 032761/JJ.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Arnold Rüütel,  
President of Estonia.



ITU 032797/JJ.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev,  
President of Azerbaijan.



ITU 032793/JJ.-M. Ferré

H.E. Ms Tarja Halonen,  
President of Finland.



ITU 032787/JJ.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Askar Akaev,  
President of Kyrgyzstan.



ITU 032782/JJ.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Amadou Toumani Touré,  
President of the Republic of Mali.



ITU 032779/JJ.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Paul Kagame,  
President of Rwanda.



ITU 032777/JJ.-M. Ferré

H.M. King Letsie III of the Kingdom of Lesotho.



ITU 032776/JJ.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Festus Mogae, President of Botswana.



ITU 032774/JJ.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Stjepan Mesic,  
President of Croatia.



ITU 032773/JJ.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Omar Bongo Odimba,  
President of Gabon.





ITU 032771/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Marc Ravalomanana,  
President of Madagascar.



ITU 032769/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Emile Lahoud,  
President of the Lebanese  
Republic.



ITU 032788/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Begum Khaleda Zia,  
Prime Minister of Bangladesh.



ITU 032763/J.-M. Ferré

Zimbabwe's President  
Robert Mugabe.



ITU 034024/A. Longchamp

H.E. Mr. Abdoulaye Wade,  
President of the Republic of Senegal.



ITU 034020/A. Longchamp

H.E. Mr. Ion Iliescu,  
President of Romania.



ITU 032701/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Pascal Couchepin,  
President of the Swiss Confederation.



ITU 032795/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali,  
President of Tunisia.



ITU 032957/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada,  
President of the National Assembly  
of People's Power of the Republic of Cuba.



Permanent Mission of Uganda

H.E. Mr. Apolo Nsibambi,  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda.



UN/DPI Photo

H.E. Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, President of  
the Federal Republic of Nigeria.



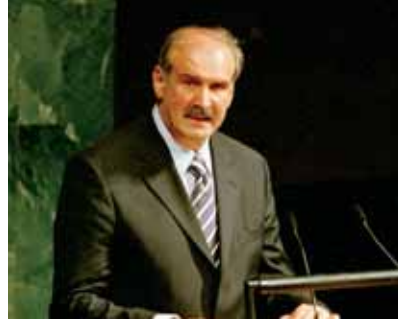
UN/DPI Photo

HRH Prince Ulukalala Lavaka Ata,  
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga.



UN/DPI Photo

H.E. Mr. Boris Trajkovski,  
President of The former Yugoslav Republic  
of Macedonia.



UN/DPI Photo

H.E. Mr. Otmar Hasler,  
Head of Government of the Principality  
of Liechtenstein.



ITU 034109/S. Berman

H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev,  
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan,  
visits the Azerbaijan stand.



ITU 034031/A. Longchamp

H.E. Mr. Kayser Bazan,  
Vice-President of the  
Republic of Panama.



ITU 034030/A. Longchamp

H.E. Dr. Jose Rizo Castellon,  
Vice-President of the Republic of Nicaragua.



ITU 032802/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Ms. Isatou Njie-Sady,  
Vice-President of the Republic of  
The Gambia.



ITU 032809/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Mr. Young Dae Kim,  
Vice-President of the  
Republic of Korea.



ITU 032935/A. Longchamp

Mr. Kofi Annan,  
Secretary-General of the  
United Nations.



ITU 032969/A. Longchamp

Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of ITU (left),  
with Mr. Walter Fust, Head of the Swiss Agency for  
Development and Cooperation.



ITU 032742/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Adama Samassékou,  
President of WSIS PrepCom.



ITU 032741/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Marc Furrer, Swiss Secretary  
of State for WSIS.



ITU 032975/J.-M. Ferré

H.E. Ms Micheline Calmy-Rey,  
Swiss Minister for Foreign Affairs at ICT4D.



ITU 034017/A. Longchamp

H.E. Mr. Moritz Lueunberger,  
Federal Councillor of the  
Swiss Confederation.



ITU 034082/A. Longchamp

Ambassador Daniel Stauffacher.



ITU 032985/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Kofi Annan,  
Secretary-General of the United  
Nations, speaking to children.



ITU 034191/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Shashi Tharoor,  
UN Under-Secretary-General for Communications  
and Information.



ITU 032901/J.-M. Ferré

Ms Maria Livanos Cattai,  
Secretary-General of ICC.



ITU 032906/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. T. Abu-Ghazaleh,  
Chairman of Talal Abu-Ghazaleh &  
Co International.



ITU 032907/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. V. Mathivanan,  
CEC CrimsonLogic.



ITU 032909/J.-M. Ferré

Mr. Noah Samara,  
Chairman and CEO, WorldSpace Corporation.



ITU 033012/J.-M. Ferré

Mr Kamel Ayadi,  
President of the World Federation of  
Engineering Organizations.



ITU 032737/J.-M. Ferré

Dr. Tim Kelly, ITU.



ITU 034137/A. Longchamp

Journalists prepare dispatches at their  
workstations in the Media Centre.



ITU 034153/A. Longchamp

Conference spokesperson Ms Francine Lambert with ITU Secretary-General Mr. Yoshio Utsumi.



ITU 034145/A. Longchamp

AFP Journalist Ms Deborah Haynes at a Press Conference.



ITU 034174/S. Berman

The Tunisia stand at WSIS.



ITU 034172/S. Berman



ITU 032984/S. Berman

People from around the world visited the ICT4D Platform at WSIS.



ITU 032915/J.-M. Ferré



ITU 034177/A. Longchamp

Ms Allegra Richards chairs the World Summit event for schools, with Ms Mirella Levin (left) and Ms Chin Ling Pang (right) from the International School Geneva.



ITU 032923/J.-M. Ferré



ITU 033025/S. Berman



ITU 034152/A. Longchamp

Volunteer Media Liaison Officers answering journalists' queries at the Media Centre.

**world summit  
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## **List of Speakers**





## Wednesday, 10 December 2003

### General Debate

#### Plenary Session 1, 15:00h-21:00h GMT+1

- **1. Finland**  
Her Excellency Ms. Tarja Halonen  
President of the Republic of Finland
- **2. Azerbaijan**  
His Excellency Mr. Ilham Aliyev  
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- **3. Mozambique**  
His Excellency Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano  
President of the Republic of Mozambique
- **4. Pakistan**  
His Excellency Mr. Zafarullah Khan Jamali  
Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
- **5. France**  
His Excellency Mr. Jean-Pierre Raffarin  
Prime Minister of the French Republic
- **6. Egypt**  
His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Hosny Mubarak  
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
- **7. Cape Verde**  
His Excellency Mr. Pedro Verona Rodrigues Pires  
President of the Republic of Cape Verde
- **8. Rwanda**  
His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame  
President of the Republic of Rwanda



- **9. Iran (Islamic Republic of)**  
His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Khatami  
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- **10. Mali**  
His Excellency Mr. Amadou Toumani Touré  
President of the Republic of Mali
- **11. Lesotho**  
His Majesty King Letsie III  
King of the Kingdom of Lesotho
- **12. Latvia**  
Her Excellency Ms. Vaira Vike-Freiberga  
President of the Republic of Latvia
- **13. Gabon**  
His Excellency Mr. El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba  
President of the Gabonese Republic
- **14. Kyrgyzstan**  
His Excellency Mr. Askar Akaev  
President of the Kyrgyz Republic
- **15. Botswana**  
His Excellency Mr. Festus Gontebanye Mogae  
President of the Republic of Botswana
- **16. Zimbabwe**  
His Excellency Dr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe  
President of the Republic of Zimbabwe
- **17. Liechtenstein**  
His Excellency Mr. Otmar Hasler  
Head of Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein
- **18. Lebanon**  
His Excellency Mr. Emile Lahoud  
President of the Lebanese Republic





- **19. Nigeria**  
His Excellency Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo  
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
- **20. Croatia**  
His Excellency Mr. Stjepan Mesic  
President of the Republic of Croatia
- **21. Kenya**  
His Excellency Mr. Moody Awori  
Vice-President and Minister for Home Affairs of the Republic of Kenya
- **22. Czech Republic**  
His Excellency Mr. Petr Mares  
Deputy Prime Minister of Office of the Government of the Czech Republic
- **23. Kuwait**  
His Excellency Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah  
Minister of Communications, Minister of Planning and State Minister of  
Administrative Development Affairs of the State of Kuwait
- **24. Russian Federation**  
His Excellency Mr. Leonid Reiman  
Minister for Communications and Informatization of the Russian Federation
- **25. Mauritius**  
His Excellency Mr. Deechand Jeeha  
Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunications of the Republic  
of Mauritius
- **26. Saudi Arabia**  
His Royal Highness Prince Saud Al-Faisal  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- **27. Slovakia**  
His Excellency Mr. Pavol Prokopovic  
Minister of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications of the Slovak Republic
- **28. China**  
His Excellency Mr. Xudong Wang  
Minister of Information Industry of the People's Republic of China



- **29. Italy**  
His Excellency Dr. Lucio Stanca  
Minister of Innovation and Technology of the Italian Republic
- **30. European Community**  
His Excellency Mr. Erkki Liikanen  
Commissioner of the European Community
- **31. Norway**  
Her Excellency Ms. Torild Skogsholm  
Minister of Transport and Communications of the Kingdom of Norway
- **32. Iceland**  
His Excellency Mr. Tómas Ingi Ólrich  
Minister of Education, Science and Culture of the Republic of Iceland
- **33. Greece**  
His Excellency Mr. George Papandreou  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece
- **34. Dominican Republic**  
His Excellency Mr. Orlando Jorge Mera  
Minister, President of the Dominican Institute of Telecommunications of the Dominican Republic
- **35. Syrian Arab Republic**  
His Excellency Mr. Bachir Al-Mounajed  
Minister of Communications and Technology of the Syrian Arab Republic
- **36. Ukraine**  
His Excellency Mr. Oleh Yatsenko  
Minister for Communications and Informatisation of Ukraine
- **37. Viet Nam**  
His Excellency Dr. Do Trung Ta  
Minister of Post and Telematics of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
- **38. Qatar**  
His Excellency Sheikh Abdulla Bin Mohammed Bin Saoud Al-Thani  
Minister, Chief of the Diwan Amiri and Chairman of Qatar  
Telecommunication Company of the State of Qatar



- **39. Bosnia and Herzegovina**  
His Excellency Mr. Branko Dokic  
Minister of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **40. Spain**  
His Excellency Mr. Juan Costa Climent  
Minister of Science and Technology of the Kingdom of Spain
- **41. Morocco**  
His Excellency Mr. Nabil Ben Abdallah  
Minister of Communications, Spokesman of Government of the Kingdom of Morocco
- **42. Brazil**  
Ambassador Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães Neto  
Acting Minister of External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil
- **43. Ecuador**  
Ambassador Hernán Escudero  
Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Ecuador
- **44. United Nations ICT Task Force**  
Mr. José Maria Figueres-Olsen  
Chairman
- **45. African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)**  
Ms. Lynne Muthoni Wanyeki  
Executive Director
- **46. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)**  
Ms. Brigita Schmögnerová  
Executive Secretary
- **47. Molecular Diversity Preservation International**  
Mr. Shu-Khun Lin  
Founder
- **48. Vodafone**  
Mr. Vittorio Colao  
CEO SEMEA Region, member of the Board of Directors



- **49. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)**  
Mr. K.Y. Amoako  
Executive Secretary
- **50. Paradigm Initiative Nigeria**  
Ms. Titilayo Akinsanmi  
Co-founder
- **51. Microsoft Corporation**  
Mr. Jean-Philippe Courtois  
CEO EMEA – Senior Vice President
- **52. World Bank**  
Mr. Eduardo Doryan  
Special Representative
- **53. Africa Online**  
Mr. Ayisi Makatiani  
Founder
- **54. United Nations Volunteers (UNV)**  
Mr. Ad de Raad  
Executive Coordinator a.i.



**Thursday, 11 December 2003**

## **General Debate**

### **Plenary Session 2, 09:00h-13:00h GMT+1**

- **1. Romania**  
His Excellency Mr. Ion Iliescu  
President of Romania
- **2. Senegal**  
His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Wade  
President of the Republic of Senegal
- **3. Ghana**  
His Excellency Mr. John A. Kufuor  
President of the Republic of Ghana
- **4. Comoros**  
His Excellency Colonel Azali Assoumani  
President of the Union of Comoros
- **5. Armenia**  
His Excellency Mr. Robert Kocharyan  
President of the Republic of Armenia
- **6. Belarus**  
His Excellency Mr. Alyaksandr Lukashenka  
President of the Republic of Belarus
- **7. Andorra**  
His Excellency Mr. Marc Forné  
Head of Government of the Principality of Andorra
- **8. Estonia**  
His Excellency Mr. Arnold Rüütel  
President of the Republic of Estonia



- **9. Bangladesh**  
Her Excellency Begum Khaleda Zia  
Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
- **10. Democratic People's Republic of Korea**  
His Excellency Mr. Kim Yong Dae  
Vice President of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly of the  
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- **11. Cuba**  
His Excellency Mr. Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada  
President of the National Assembly of People's Power of the Republic  
of Cuba
- **12. Gambia**  
Her Excellency Ms. Isatou Njie-Saidy  
Vice-President of the Republic of the Gambia
- **13. Netherlands**  
His Excellency Mr. Laurens Jan Brinkhorst  
Minister of Economic Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- **14. Ethiopia**  
His Excellency Mr. Philippos W. Mariam  
Minister of Infrastructure of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- **15. Denmark**  
Her Excellency Ms. Ulla Tørnæs  
Minister of Education of the Kingdom of Denmark
- **16. Hungary**  
His Excellency Mr. Kálmán Kovács  
Minister of Informatics and Communications of the Republic of Hungary
- **17. Ireland**  
His Excellency Mr. Bertie Ahern, T. D.  
Prime Minister of Ireland



- **18. Germany**  
His Excellency Mr. Rezzo Schlauch  
Secretary of State, Federal Ministry for Economics and Labour of the Federal  
Republic of Germany
- **19. Oman**  
His Excellency Mr. Maqbool Ali Sultan  
Minister of Commerce and Industry of the Sultanate of Oman
- **20. Malawi**  
His Excellency Mr. Bernard Chisale, M. P.  
Minister of Information of the Republic of Malawi
- **21. Sweden**  
Her Excellency Ms. Carin Jämtin  
Minister for Development Cooperation of the Kingdom of Sweden
- **22. El Salvador**  
His Excellency Mr. Eduardo Cáliz  
Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of El Salvador
- **23. Bahrain**  
Mr. Saeed Mohamed Al-Faihani  
Head of the Delegation of the Kingdom of Bahrain
- **24. Australia**  
Mr. John Rimmer  
Head of the Delegation of Australia
- **25. Myanmar**  
U Mya Than  
Head of the Delegation of the Union of Myanmar
- **26. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
(UNESCO)**  
Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura  
Director-General
- **27. Union Network International**  
Mr. Philip Jennings  
General Secretary



- **28. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**  
Mr. Mark Malloch Brown  
Administrator
- **29. Fransabank Group**  
Mr. Adnan Kassar  
Chairman and CEO
- **30. World Federation of United Cities (FMCU)**  
Ms. Mercedes Bresso  
President
- **31. Siemens Information and Communication Networks**  
Mr. Thomas Ganswindt  
Group President
- **32. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**  
Mr. Roberto Blois  
Deputy Secretary-General
- **33. Internet Corporation For Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)**  
Mr. Paul Twomey  
CEO
- **34. United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)**  
Mr. Marcel A. Boisard  
Executive Director

## General Debate

### Plenary Session 3, 14:00h-21:00h GMT+1

- **1. Uganda**  
His Excellency Mr. Apolo Nsibambi  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda
- **2. Tonga**  
His Royal Highness Prince Ulukalala Lavaka Ata  
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga





- **3. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**  
His Excellency Mr. Boris Trajkovski  
President of The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- **4. Nicaragua**  
His Excellency Dr. José Rizo Castellón  
Vice-President of the Republic of Nicaragua
- **5. Panama**  
His Excellency Mr. Kayser Bazán  
Vice-President of the Republic of Panama
- **6. Serbia and Montenegro**  
His Excellency Dr. Dragoljub Micunovic  
President of the Assembly of Serbia and Montenegro
- **7. Uzbekistan**  
His Excellency Mr. Aripov Abdulla  
Deputy Prime Minister, General Director of Communication and Information  
Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan
- **8. Mauritania**  
Her Excellency Ms. Fatimetou Mint M. Saleck  
Secretary of New Technology of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania
- **9. Japan**  
His Excellency Mr. Taro Aso  
Minister of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and  
Telecommunications of Japan
- **10. Poland**  
His Excellency Mr. Michal Kleiber  
Minister of Scientific Research and Information of the Republic of Poland
- **11. United States of America**  
His Excellency Dr. John Marburger  
Science Adviser to the President of the United States of America
- **12. Turkey**  
His Excellency Mr. Binali Yildirim  
Minister of Transport and Communications of Turkey



- **13. Honduras**  
His Excellency Dr. Roberto Emilio Argueta Reina  
Telecommunication Commissioner of the Republic of Honduras
- **14. South Africa**  
Her Excellency Ms. Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri  
Minister for Communications of the Republic of South Africa
- **15. Slovenia**  
His Excellency Dr. Pavel Gantar  
Minister of Information Society of the Republic of Slovenia
- **16. Belgium**  
Her Excellency Ms. Joséphine Rebecca Moerman  
Minister for Economy, Energy, Foreign Trade and Science policy of the  
Kingdom of Belgium
- **17. Guatemala**  
Her Excellency Ms. Flora de Ramos  
Minister of Communications, Infrastructure and Housing of the Republic  
of Guatemala
- **18. Chile**  
His Excellency Mr. Alvaro Díaz  
Minister of Economy of the Republic of Chile
- **19. Luxembourg**  
His Excellency Mr. François Biltgen  
Minister of Labor and Employment of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
- **20. Nepal**  
His Excellency Mr. Kamal Thapa  
Minister for Information and Communication, Local Development and  
Health of the Kingdom of Nepal
- **21. Holy See**  
His Excellency Archbishop John Foley  
President of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications of the  
Holy See



- **22. Argentina**  
His Excellency Mr. Daniel Filmus  
Minister of Education, Science and Technology of the Argentine Republic
- **23. Jordan**  
His Excellency Dr. Fawaz Zu'bi  
Minister of Communication and Information Technology, and Administrative  
Development of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
- **24. Zambia**  
His Excellency Mr. Namuyamba, MP  
Minister of Communication and Transport of the Republic of Zambia
- **25. Lao People's Democratic Republic**  
His Excellency Dr. Bountiem Phissamay  
Minister to the Prime Minister's Office and President of Science, Technology  
and the Environment of the Lao People's Democratic Republic
- **26. United Arab Emirates**  
His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Humaid Al Tayer  
Minister of Communications of the United Arab Emirates
- **27. Austria**  
His Excellency Mr. Franz Morak  
Secretary of State of the Republic of Austria
- **28. Switzerland**  
His Excellency Mr. Moritz Leuenberger  
Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal Department of Environment,  
Transport, Energy and Communications of the Swiss Confederation
- **29. Swaziland**  
His Royal Highness Prince David Dlamini  
Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Kingdom of Swaziland
- **30. India**  
His Excellency Mr. Arun Shourie  
Minister for Communications and Information Technology of the Republic  
of India



- **31. Algeria**  
His Excellency Mr. Amar Tou  
Minister of Posts and Information and Communication Technologies of the  
People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
- **32. Portugal**  
His Excellency Mr. José Luís Arnault  
Minister to the Prime Minister of the Portuguese Republic
- **33. Afghanistan**  
His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai  
Minister of Communications of Afghanistan
- **34. Sierra Leone**  
His Excellency Mr. Septimus Kaikai  
Minister of Information and Broadcasting of the Republic of Sierra Leone
- **35. Samoa**  
His Excellency Mr. Palusalua Faapo II  
Minister of Communications and Information Technology of the Independent  
State of Samoa
- **36. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya**  
His Excellency Mr. Ben Lashhar Ali  
Minister of Information and Communication of the Socialist People's Libyan  
Arab Jamahiriya
- **37. Lithuania**  
His Excellency Mr. Virgilijus Vladislovas Bulovas  
Minister of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania
- **38. Democratic Republic of the Congo**  
His Excellency Mr. Vital Kamerhe  
Minister of Press and Information of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- **39. Philippines**  
His Excellency Mr. Virgilio L. Peña  
Under-Secretary for Information and Communications Technology of the  
Republic of the Philippines



- **40. Uruguay**  
His Excellency Dr. Daniel Bervejillo  
Vice-Minister of Education and Culture of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay
- **41. Kazakhstan**  
His Excellency Mr. Alexei Volkov  
Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- **42. Niue**  
His Excellency Mr. John Tiakia  
Associate Minister for Post and Telecommunications of Niue
- **43. Bhutan**  
Mr. Tashi Phuntsog  
Head of the Delegation of the Kingdom of Bhutan
- **44. Sri Lanka**  
Mr. Tilak Ranaviraja  
Head of the Delegation of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
- **45. Cyprus**  
Mr. Panicos Poulos  
Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Cyprus
- **46. Palestine**  
Mr. Azzam Alahmad  
Observer of Palestine
- **47. International Labour Organization (ILO)**  
Mr. Juan Somavía  
Director-General
- **48. World Association of Newspapers**  
Mr. Timothy Balding  
Director General
- **49. STMicroelectronics**  
Mr. Pasquale Pistrino  
President and CEO



- **50. Universal Postal Union (UPU)**  
Mr. Thomas Leavey  
Director-General
- **51. International Council for Science (ICSU)**  
Ms. Jane Lubichenco  
President
- **52. NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation)**  
Mr. Katsuji Ebisawa  
President
- **53. United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)**  
Mr. Kim Hak-Su  
Executive Secretary
- **54. International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE)**  
Ms. Liz Burns  
President
- **55. Cognitive Technologies Companies**  
Ms. Olga Uskova  
President
- **56. United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)**  
Ms. Mervat Tallawy  
Executive Secretary
- **57. Agencia Latinoamericana de Información (ALAI)**  
Ms. Sally Burch  
President
- **58. Sols Technologies**  
Mr. Jorge Cassino  
CEO, Director General
- **59. Inter-American Development Bank**  
Mr. Paulo Paiva  
Vice-President



- **60. United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**  
Mr. Bertrand Ramcharan  
Acting High Commissioner for Human Rights
- **61. Organization of the Islamic Conference**  
Dr. Abdelouahed Belkeziz  
Secretary-General



## Friday, 12 December 2003

### General Debate

#### Plenary Session 4, 09:00h-13:00h GMT+1

- **1. Mongolia**  
His Excellency Mr. Sanjbegz Tumur-Ochir  
Speaker of the Parliament of Mongolia
- **2. Brunei Darussalam**  
His Excellency Pehin Dato Haji Zakaria Haji Sulaiman  
Minister of Communication of Brunei Darussalam
- **3. Thailand**  
His Excellency Mr. Surapong Suebwonglee  
Minister of Information and Communications Technology of the Kingdom  
of Thailand
- **4. Jamaica**  
His Excellency Mr. Phillip Paulwell  
Minister of Science, Commerce and Technology of Jamaica
- **5. Mexico**  
His Excellency Mr. Pedro Cerisola y Weber  
Minister of Communications and Transportation of the United Mexican  
States
- **6. Malaysia**  
His Excellency Datuk Amar Leo Moggie  
Minister of Energy, Communications and Multimedia of Malaysia
- **7. Singapore**  
His Excellency Dr. Lee Boon Yang  
Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts of the Republic  
of Singapore





- **8. Madagascar**  
His Excellency Mr. Haja Nirina Razafinjato  
Minister of Telecommunications, Posts and Communication of the Republic  
of Madagascar
- **9. Angola**  
His Excellency Mr. Licínio Tavares Tibeiro  
Minister of Posts and Telecommunications of the Republic of Angola
- **10. Colombia**  
Her Excellency Dr. Martha Pinto de Hart  
Minister of Communications of the Republic of Colombia
- **11. Indonesia**  
His Excellency Mr. Syamsul Mu'arif  
Minister for Communication and Information of the Republic of Indonesia
- **12. Barbados**  
Her Excellency Ms. Lynette Eastmond  
Minister of Commerce, Consumer Affairs and Business Development  
of Barbados
- **13. Iraq**  
His Excellency Mr. Haider Al Abadi  
Minister of Communication of the Republic of Iraq
- **14. Republic of Korea**  
His Excellency Dr. Chin Daeje  
Minister of Information and Communication of the Republic of Korea
- **15. Burkina Faso**  
His Excellency Mr. Seydou Bouda  
Minister of Economy and Development of Burkina Faso
- **16. Monaco**  
His Excellency Mr. Jean Pastorelli  
Plenipotentiary Minister, Permanent Representative of the Principality  
of Monaco



- **17. Peru**  
His Excellency Mr. Eduardo Iriarte Jimenez  
Minister of Transport and Communication of the Republic of Peru
- **18. Bulgaria**  
His Excellency Mr. Igor Damianov  
Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria
- **19. New Zealand**  
His Excellency Mr. David Cunliffe  
Associate Minister of Communications and Information Technology  
of New Zealand
- **20. Cambodia**  
His Excellency Mr. Lar Narath  
Under-Secretary of Posts and Telecommunications of the Kingdom  
of Cambodia
- **21. Trinidad and Tobago**  
Mr. Bernard Weston  
Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
- **22. Malta**  
Mr. Michael Frendo, M. P.  
Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Malta
- **23. Canada**  
Mr. Sergio Marchi  
Head of the Delegation of Canada
- **24. Fiji**  
Mr. Abel Caine  
Head of the Delegation of the Republic of the Fiji Islands
- **25. United Kingdom**  
Mr. Nicholas Thorne  
Head of the Delegation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern  
Ireland



- **26. Venezuela**  
Ms. Blancanieve Portocarrero  
Head of the Delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
- **27. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**  
Ms. Imelda Henkin  
Deputy Executive Director
- **28. World Federation of Engineering Organizations**  
Mr. Kamel Ayadi  
President
- **29. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh & Co. International**  
Mr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh  
Chairman and CEO
- **30. United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC)**  
Ms. Alicia Bárcena  
Deputy Executive Secretary
- **31. United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**  
Ms. Mililani Trask  
Pacific representative
- **32. CrimsonLogic**  
Mr. Velusamy Mathivanan  
Chairman and CEO
- **33. Rede de Informações para o Terceiro Setor**  
Mr. Carlos Afonso  
President
- **34. Axalto**  
Mr. Olivier Piou  
CEO
- **35. CRIS Campaign**  
Mr. Sean O'Siochru  
Spokesperson



- **36. World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**

Mr. Philippe Petit  
Deputy Director General

- **37. World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**

Mr. Michel Jarraud  
Deputy Secretary-General

## General Debate

### Plenary Session 5, 14:00h-15:30h GMT+1

- **1. Congo**

His Excellency Mr. Jean Dello  
Minister of Posts and Telecommunications of the Republic of Congo

- **2. United Republic of Tanzania**

His Excellency Mr. Mark J. Mwandosya  
Minister for Communications and Transport of the United Republic  
of Tanzania

- **3. Sudan**

His Excellency Prof. El Zibeir Bashir Taha  
Minister of Sciences and Technology of the Republic of the Sudan

- **4. Burundi**

His Excellency Mr. Séverin Ndikumugongo  
Minister of Transport of the Republic of Burundi

- **5. Yemen**

His Excellency Mr. Abdulmalek Al-Moalemi  
Minister of Telecommunications and Information Technology of the Republic  
of Yemen

- **6. Timor-Leste**

His Excellency Mr. Ovidio de Jesus Amaral  
Minister of Transport, Minister of Transport, Communication and Public  
Work of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste



- **7. Georgia**  
Mr. Alexander Chikvaidze  
Head of the Delegation of Georgia
- **8. Bolivia**  
Mr. Alvaro Moscoso Blanco  
Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Bolivia
- **9. Belize**  
Mr. Nunzio Alfredo D'Angieri  
Head of the Delegation of Belize
- **10. Israel**  
Mr. Yaakov Levy  
Head of the Delegation of the State of Israel
- **11. Costa Rica**  
Mr. Manuel A. Gonzalez Sanz  
Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Costa Rica
- **12. Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries**  
Mr. João Augusto de Médicis  
Executive Secretary
- **13. Sovereign Military Order of Malta**  
Mr. Jean-Pierre Mazery  
President of the Council for Communication
- **14. The United States Virgin Islands**  
Mr. Carlyle Corbin  
Observer of the United States Virgin Islands
- **15. United Nations Fund for International Partnerships**  
Mr. Amir A. Dossal  
Executive Director



## Report from Multi-stakeholder Events Plenary Session 5, 15:30h-17:00h GMT+1

- **1. Switzerland**  
Ambassador Daniel Stauffacher  
Delegate of the Swiss Federal Council for the World Summit on the Information Society
- **2. ICT4D Platform**  
Mr. Walter Fust  
Director-General, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- **3. ICT4D Forum**  
Ms. Rinalia Abdul Rahim  
Executive Director, Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP)
- **4. Cities and Local Authorities in the IS**  
Mr. Gérald Collomb, Mayor of Lyon and  
Mr. Christian Ferrazino, Mayor of Geneva
- **5. World Electronic Media Forum (WEMF)**  
Mr. Jean Stock  
President, WEMF Association
- **6. ITU High Level Dialogue and related events**  
Mr. Roberto Blois  
Deputy Secretary-General, International Telecommunication Union
- **7. CCBI Events**  
Mr. Richard McCormick  
Past Chairman, International Chamber of Commerce
- **8. UNESCO High Level Symposium and Roundtables**  
Mr. Abdul Waheed Khan  
Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO
- **9. WSIS Gender Caucus Events Programme**  
Dr. Gillian Marcelle  
Coordinator, WSIS Gender Caucus



- **10. The Role of Science in the Information Society**  
Professor Luciano Maiani  
Director-General, European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN)
- **11. Global Forum on Disability in the IS**  
Dr. Bernhard Heinser  
Managing Director, Swiss Library for the Visually Impaired
- **12. Global School Networks Alliance**  
Mr. Ulf Lundin  
Director, European Schoolnet
- **13. Conference on Volunteering and Capacity Building in the IS**  
Ms. Viola Krebs  
Director, International Conference Volunteers
- **14. Youth Declaration from Telecom**  
Mr. Sjoerd Nikkelen and Ms. Paula Musuva  
Representatives of ITU TELECOM WORLD 2003 Youth Forum
- **15. Global Forum of Indigenous People in the Information Society**  
Mr. Henrick Ole Magga  
Chair, Global Forum of Indigenous People in the Information Society
- **16. Youth Day**  
Mr. Alex Fielding  
WSIS Youth Liaison, TakingITGlobal
- **17. International Trade Centre Workshops – The Changing Marketplace:  
Putting "e" to work**  
Mr. Denis Belisle  
Executive Director, International Trade Centre
- **18. Scientific Information and PCT Working Groups – Roundtables and  
Panels**  
Dr. Francis Muguet  
Chairman of the Civil Society Scientific Information Working Group
- **19. Executive Roundtables: Taking Responsibility in the Information Age**  
Mr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh  
Chairman and CEO, Talal Abu-Ghazaleh & Co. International



- **20. WSIS-ONLINE Workshop**  
Mr. Bertrand de La Chapelle  
Co-convenor, Open WSIS Initiatives

## Closing

### Plenary Session 5, 17:30h-18:30h GMT+1

- **1. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**  
Mr. Yoshio Utsumi  
Secretary of the Summit
- **2. Tunisia**  
His Excellency Mr. Habib Ben Yahia  
Minister of Foreign Affairs
- **3. Switzerland**  
His Excellency Mr. Pascal Couchepin  
President of the Swiss Confederation





# Participants at the Round Table discussions

## Round Table 1

Abdoulaye Wade, President of Senegal (Chairman); Maria Livanos Cattai, Secretary-General of the International Chamber of Commerce (Moderator); King Letsie III of Lesotho; President Paul Kagame of Rwanda; President Festus Gontebanye Mogae of Botswana; Lee Boon Yang, Minister of Information, Communications and the Arts, Singapore; Claudie Haigneré, Minister of Research and New Technology, France; Martha Helena Pinto de De Hart, Minister of Communications, Colombia; Surapong Suebwonglee, Minister of Information and Communications Technology, Thailand; Tómas Ingi Olrich, Minister of Education, Science and Culture, Iceland; Pavel Gantar, Minister for Information Society, Slovenia; Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General, ITU; K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary, UNECA; Nemat Shafik, Vice-President for Infrastructure, World Bank; Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General, UNESCO; Giuliano Berretta, Chairman & CEO, Eutelsat, France; Abdeslam Ahizoune, CEO, Maroc Telecom, Morocco; Peter Leuprecht, Professor, Faculty of Law, McGill University, Canada; Casio Taniguchi, Mayor of Curitiba, World Federation of United Cities (FMCU), Brazil; Richard Stallman, President of the Free Software Foundation, USA; and Kumi Naidoo, CEO and Secretary-General, CIVICUS – International Conference Volunteers (ICV), South Africa.



## Round Table 2

President Vaira Vike Freiberga of Latvia (Chairperson); Nick Gowing, anchor of BBC World News (Moderator); Apollo Nsibambi, Prime Minister of Uganda; José Rizo Castellón, Vice-President of Nicaragua; Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister of Information and Technology, Pakistan; Daniel Filmus, Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Argentina; David Cunliffe, Minister of State, Associate Minister of Communications and Information Technology, New Zealand; Ahmed El Nazif, Minister of Communication and Information Technology, Egypt; Amar Tou, Minister for Post and Information Society, Algeria; Romain Murenzi, Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Scientific Research, Rwanda; V. Bulovas, Minister of the Interior, Lithuania; Kamal Thapa, Minister for Information and Communications, Nepal; Alvaro Diaz Perez, Minister, Governmental Coordinator of Information Technology and Communication, Chile; Nabil Benabdallah, Minister of Communication and Government Spokesman, Morocco; Deelchand Jeeha, Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunications, Mauritius; Gaston Zossou, Minister of Communication and of Promotion of New Technologies, Benin; Franz Morak, Secretary of State, Austria; Fatimetou Mint Mohamed Saleck, Secretary of State for New Technologies, Mauritania; Baharadine Haroune, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Chad; Nedelcho Nedelchev, Vice-Minister of Transport and Communications, Bulgaria; Kimio Uno, Professor, United Nations University; Mervat Tallawy, Executive Secretary, UNESCWA; Alessandra Paradisi, Chairperson, Steering Committee on the Mass Media, Council of Europe; Noah Samara, Chairman & CEO, WorldSpace Corp., USA; Akan Ismaili, Founder & CEO, IPKO Institute, Kosovo; Bassam Tuéni, Chairman & CEO, Tele Nahar, Lebanon; Eladio Lárez, President, International Association of Broadcasting; Lawrence Lessig, Chairman, Creative Commons, USA; Daniel Pimienta, President, Fundación Redes y Desarrollo, (FUNREDES), Dominican Republic; Steve Buckley, World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), UK; Susanna George, Executive Director, ISIS International, Philippines; Saida Agrebi, President, Association Tunisienne de Meres, Tunisia; and Aidan White, Secretary-General, International Federation of Journalists, United Kingdom.



## Round Table 3

Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of UNDP (Chairman and moderator); Begum Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister of Bangladesh; Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President of Mozambique; Arnold Ruutel, President of Estonia; Askar Akaev, President of Kyrgyzstan; Kayser Bazan, Vice-President of Panama; Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe; Datuk Amar Leo Moggie, Minister of Energy, Communications and Multimedia, Malaysia; John Njoroge Michuki, Minister for Transport and Communications, Kenya; Mary Hanafin T.D., Minister for the Information Society, Ireland; Maqbool Ali Sultan, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Oman; Sheikh Abdulla bin Mohammed bin Saoud Al-Thani, Chief of the Emiri Diwan, Chairman of Qatar Telecommunication Corporation (Minister), Qatar; Dan Nica, Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Romania; Carin Jämtin, Minister for Development Cooperation, Sweden; José Arnaut, Deputy Prime Minister, Portugal; Ignacio González Planas, Minister of Information and Communication, Cuba; Torild Skogsholm, Minister of Transport and Communication, Norway; Akillimo Susaia, Minister of Transportation, Communication and Infrastructure, Federated States of Micronesia; Birzhan Kaneshiev, Minister for Informatization and Telecommunications, Kazakhstan; Rachid Talbi Al-Alami, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Telecommunications, Morocco; Jose Antonio Ocampo, Under Secretary-General UNDESA; Brigita Schmognerova, Executive Secretary, UNECE; Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary, UNESCAP; Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General, UNCTAD; Marcel Boissard, Executive Director, UNITAR; Muhammad Radzi Mansor, Chairman, Telekom Malaysia Berhad, Malaysia; Tadashi Onodera, President, KDDI Corp., Japan; Tae Yoo, Vice-President of Corporate Philanthropy, Cisco, USA; Waudu Siganga, CEO, Signet Technologies, Chairman of the Computer Society of Kenya; Adel Danish, Chairman & CEO, Masreya Information Systems, Egypt; Emilienne Lionelle, NGO SAMNICK, Leader, Engineers Without Borders, Cameroon; Leonel Fernandez Reyna, President, Global Foundation for Democracy and Development (FUNGLODE), Dominican Republic; Law Chi-Kwong, Legislative Council member, The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, China; Wolfgang Kleinwächter, Professor Aarhus University, Denmark; Alain Rousset, President, Aquitaine Region, World Federation of United Cities (FMCU), France.





# Staff

The following staff members contributed to the success of the Geneva Phase of WSIS

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## world summit on the information society

Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005

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Chantal Clin	Graciela Faure	Arnaud Guillot
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Yves Courier	Jeanine Felisaz	Daniel Halpern
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Martine Decourt	Valérie Fournier	Kevin Hughes
Jacqueline Delahaye	Pierre Fournier	Fabienne Huguet
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Christiane Desmaris	Maria Furcy	Jin-kyu Jeong
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Anne Marie Deturche- Nazer	Pierre Gagné	Leslie Jones
Christine Devouassoux	Christina Galathovics	Jacqueline Jones-Ferrer
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Denise Ducrot	Charles Geiger	Cessy Karina
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Patrice Dumoulin	Aude Geneux	Tilahun Kebede
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Maria del Mar Dupont- Garcia	Françoise Gilquin	Tim Kelly
Georges Dupont	François Giltaire	Mardjaneh Khabiri
Alexandra Durand	Marie-Christine Girard	Cherifa Khalfaoui
Hélène Eckert	Guy Girardet	Ridha Khiari
William Effah	Michel Giroux	Yayah Kitaw
Timothy Eldridge	Yoanni Gomez	Victoria Knight
Kaiss El May	Susana Gomez Rodriguez	Akiko Kojima
Linda Elliott	Richard Gonzalez	Hasan Koker
Carmen Esparza	Joanna Goodrick	André Kovacs
Margarida Evora-Sagna	Dirk Jan Goossen	Tatiana Kurakova
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Marianne Lathuille	Carmen Montenegro	Marie-Claire Priser
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Catherine Laurent	Andrea Mozer-Corral	Judith Quist
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