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To all PrepCom participants

Subject: **Letter from the President of the WSIS Preparatory Committee to PrepCom participants**

Geneva, 21 November 2003

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Less than three weeks away from the first phase meeting of the World Summit on the Information Society, I should like to share with all participants my positive appreciation of the process that is under way and invite them to boost their efforts even further in order to ensure the highest level of participation in this important event, which is something we all desire.

We can be very satisfied at the progress we have made in our work. Following numerous regional meetings and the PrepCom sessions, we have established the list of major themes that the Summit should discuss and, on this basis, we have prepared drafts for the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action. These two documents have not yet been finalized but a wide-ranging consensus has been established with regard to the greater part of the texts. Without wishing to play down the scale of the divergences which still exist, the list of points for which an acceptable wording has been found is considerable. I would therefore like to thank all the delegations and working groups who have devoted many hours of open-minded work to the drafting of these documents. I would like in particular to reiterate my thanks to H.E. Mr A. Numminen, Ambassador of Finland, Chairman of Subcommittee 2 of PrepCom-3, and his team. It is my pleasure also to thank all those who have assumed responsibilities in this undertaking, in particular H.E. Mr P. Macedo, Ambassador of Mexico, Chairman of Subcommittee 2 of PrepCom-1, H.E. Mr Y. Nogawa, Ambassador of Japan, Chairman of Subcommittee 2 of PrepCom-2, and Ms Lyndall Shope-Mafole of South Africa, Chairman of the Working Group of Subcommittee 2 of PrepCom-2 and of that of the Paris meeting, as well as the teams of the Summit host countries, Executive Secretariat and ITU. It is the exceptional dedication of all those involved which has enabled these outcomes to be achieved.

It is this quest for consensus which must be the driving force in the continuation and finalization of our work. As we have agreed, the issues at stake in the information society will have a crucial bearing on the future of humanity. A consensus has already been reached on the wording of some of the paragraphs and there will be no problem in adopting them. With regard to others, we must step up our efforts in order to express views that the international community will be able to share. Resolution 56/183 of the United Nations General Assembly emphasized the need to "marshal the global consensus and commitment required to promote the urgently needed access of all countries to information, knowledge and communication technologies for development so as to reap the full benefits of the information and communication technologies revolution, and to address the whole range of relevant issues related to the information society ...".

I would like to invite you to cover the final stages of our undertaking in this spirit, with the same will to succeed. PrepCom-3 is due to resume its work with a high-level meeting on 5 and 6 December 2003. The Government of Switzerland, the host country for the first phase, has been given the task of conducting consultations for the preparation of this final meeting. In order to facilitate its task, it is essential that our collaboration continues in a spirit of cordiality and openness. To do this, we must be resolute in identifying what holds the international community together in its objectives of cooperation and solidarity.

Still in the spirit of the General Assembly resolution, I would like to invite you to consider carefully the contributions from the other stakeholders – intergovernmental organizations, the private sector and civil society – so as to pursue, in the same atmosphere of dialogue and openness, the pioneering route that we have taken together.

I remain at the disposal of each and every delegation to facilitate this process in a cordial climate of agreement for the building of a genuine consensus.

May God continue to assist us in this noble undertaking in the service of humanity!

Adama Samassékou
President of PrepCom of WSIS