International Conference

UNESCO between Two Phases of the World Summit on the Information Society

Final Document

International Conference

UNESCO between Two Phases of the World Summit on the Information Society

(Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, May 17-19, 2005)
Final Document

Moscow, 2005

The Final Document of the international conference "UNESCO between Two Phases of the World Summit on the Information Society" organised on Russia's initiative and conducted under the auspices of UNESCO within the Second (Tunis) Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society includes recommendations, which are intended specifically for UNESCO and through it for other international organisations, national governments, private sector, civil society, and research and education community for further consideration and implementation both during and after the Summit. The document also presents the goals and objectives of the conference, its background, as well as information about its organisers, sponsors and participants.

General Framework

The Council for Culture and Arts under the President of the Russian Federation held a session in Moscow on November 25, 2003, to discuss Russia-UNESCO cooperation. A proposal was made to the gathering on behalf of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and the Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Programme to convene an international conference in Russia entitled *UNESCO between Two Phases of the World Summit on the Information Society*. This proposal was endorsed by Messrs. Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, and Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, the latter attending the session.

The conference was attended by 482 representatives from 50 countries that represented all the continents and interested parties – the state and private sector, civil society, international organisations, research and education community, cultural institutions, and mass communication media. The conference events took place in the Konstantinovsky Palace, the sea-side residence of the President of the Russian Federation, and in the A. S. Popov Central Museum of Communications.

The Conference was organised to determine the next steps and key decisions of UNESCO to build the global Information Society. It was one of the major events in UNESCO's preparation for the Second Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (Tunis, November 16-18, 2005). The conference in St. Petersburg covered all the dimensions of UNESCO's activities: culture, science, education, communications and information, with "cultural diversity in knowledge societies" in the foreground. In addition, the Conference discussed a number of key issues related to the Information Society development. A special section or a roundtable meeting were devoted to each of these issues.

The conference participants were welcomed by Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation; Alexander Sokolov, Minister of Culture and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation; Leonid Reiman, Minister of Information Technologies and Communications of the Russian Federation; Françoise Rivière, ADG/ODG, UNESCO; Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of the International Telecommunications Union; Valentina Matvienko, Governor of Saint Petersburg; Grigori Ordzhonikidze, Executive Secretary of the Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO; and Mohamed Bellagi, Ambassador of Tunisia in the Russian Federation.

The Conference comprised a total of 117 presentations by the leading representatives of intergovernmental and international nongovernmental organisations, governmental authorities and business, civil society, research and education community, pubic activists, leading experts, and journalists. The Conference became a timely and productive dialogue and a kind of a brainstorming session directed at the multifaceted discussion of the whole range of Information Society development problems.

The main organisers of the conference were Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications of the Russian Federation, Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography, Commission of the Russian Federation

for UNESCO, Russian Committee of the UNESCO "Information for All" Programme, Institute of the Information Society, and Centre of Informatisation in the Sphere of Culture.

This conference was enabled thanks to the financial support of the Government of the Russian Federation, who allocated special funds from the Government of the Russian Federation Reserve Fund, the support of the Federal Agency on Culture and Cinematography and UNESCO, and the sponsors – Global Knowledge Partnership, CROC company, and legal information consortium KODEKS. The conference information support was provided by RBC, Boss journal, RIA-News, as well as television-center Ostankino and Information Society journal.

Drafting Committee

The work of eleven thematic sections and one roundtable resulted in preparation of the recommendations that formed the basis of this Final Document. The recommendations were presented by the the rapporteurs – authorised representatives of each section or roundtable at the final plenary session – and followed by a general discussion. The international Drafting Committee (see Appendix) was formed in order to prepare the Final Document.

Recommendations

The Conference recommendations are grouped below under eleven headings, which are intended specifically for UNESCO and through it for other international organisations, national governments, private sector, civil society, and research and education community.

It was advised that the Conference recommendations presented in the Final Document be forwarded both to UNESCO and to the heads of the national delegations of the countries participating in the Summit' s preparatory process for submitting to the Tunis discussion.

1. Information/Knowledge Society Development Policies

We call upon UNESCO and other stakeholders:
- to place people at the centre of their Information/Knowledge Society initiatives and to shift the focus from the technological infrastructure and organisations/institutions to the needs of individuals and communities;
- to acknowledge the differences in the appearance of the Information Society, taking into account that the models based on Western post-industrial capitalist economies and societies cannot be repeated in many cases and are inappropriate to many locations;
- to recognise the equal importance of content, services, and infrastructure as foundation for Knowledge Society;
- to create a framework for a multi-stakeholder approach to policy-making and further actions related to Information Society and Knowledge Society development;

- to recognise that the provision of Quality Education for All is the cornerstone for building inclusive and sustainable Knowledge Societies;
- to highlight the significance of 'information culture' development in building the human capital for Knowledge Societies;
- to recognise and support the roles played by Memory Institutions – libraries, museums, archives, universities and other locally appropriate repositories of global and community knowledge; to ensure that Memory Institutions are fully engaged in the policy development process;
- to ensure that the civil society actively participates in policymaking process from design to implementation; and
- to contribute at the international, national and local levels to creating business environments that are favourable for Knowledge Societies' development.

We recommend that at the national level any Knowledge Society development policy should:
- take into account differences related to geographical location, social and demographic factors, historical and cultural considerations and
- refer to building human capacity and promote ways of increasing inclusion.

UNESCO and other international organisations should help governments:
- develop and adopt appropriate national policies and strategies conducive to building Knowledge Societies;
- review policy and legal structures to identify those that need to be modified and updated to reflect the challenges of the 21st century Knowledge Societies;
- recognise that investments in Information Technology, educational development, training and research are needed to enable countries to become Knowledge Societies; and
- to introduce necessary changes in the whole education and training system in order to prepare people for living and working in the Knowledge Societies;

Such transformation requires vision, leadership and resource commitment by the governments.

There is a critical need to promote expansion of the ICT infrastructure in developing countries, and it is recommended that UNESCO encourage international multi-stakeholder collaborative efforts in this respect.

2. Information/Knowledge Society Research

We recommend UNESCO, with the possible help of other UN specialised agencies, to create a number of inclusive, transparent, multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary international research/working groups with the following missions:
- to reflect more deeply upon the 'Information Society' and the 'Knowledge Society' (from the basic concepts to specific models with regard to national or local features) and upon potential social consequences of the Knowledge Society;

- to study the new phenomenon of the Information/Knowledge Society – Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs); to develop the basic principles of effective, equitable, transparent and inclusive MSPs; to prepare a set of guidelines to be endorsed by the United Nations Organisation concerning the ethical standards of MSPs as well as decision-making and decision-implementing mechanisms for MSPs;

- to study and to propose new international public law mechanisms and structures that would allow for the institutionalisation and recognition of MSPs accountable, among other places, to the United Nations Organisation;

- to conduct further research on the ICT's capability to improve people's quality of life to avoid exceedingly high expectations and to demystify ICTs that sometimes are interpreted as deus-ex-machina rather than as tools to be governed;

- to elaborate a new Information Society Index in order to account for the factors that have the most impact on LDCs (including adequate estimates of shared usage of ICT; incorporation of the Human Development Index and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); developing sufficient granularity to account for different kinds of access – Cultural, Educational, Community, Government, Business, etc.);

- to elaborate a set of target indices to be incorporated into the Information Society development strategies and programmes, as well as an appropriate monitoring and evaluation toolkit to provide for an effective feedback;

- to study economic and social communication and other mechanisms that can enhance inclusion in the Information Society;

- to conceptualise the structure of the subject areas "Human Capacity Building for Knowledge Societies" and "Personal Information Culture" and develop basic definitions for these areas; to support research on the structure and criteria of the 'personal information culture'; and to develop methodology for sociological examination of the personal information culture of different population groups;

- to develop a model regulatory framework for R&D in Knowledge Societies;

- to support a post-WSIS evaluation process through an independent international body to monitor policy development in compliance with the criteria established by the civil society and the research community and fund people-centered research;

- to study experience and practice of the Free Software and Open Source development paradigms as a possible model for various processes of Information/Knowledge Society development; and

- to explore and propose new Open Access strategies as the ICTs are evolving (by a permanent multi-stakeholder research bureau).

We recommend that appropriate actions be taken at the national level:

- to examine how people use information and ICT in real life to enable decision-makers to adjust their Information/Knowledge Society strategies accordingly and

- to support the researches related to creating multi-level systems for continued education and training for Knowledge Societies.

3. Human Capacity Building for Knowledge Societies

We recommend to UNESCO and other stakeholders:

- to recognise the significance of the notion of 'information culture' and consider it on several levels:

- personal level, including ICT-related literacy, information literacy skills, knowledge-sharing techniques, knowledge creation and knowledge management skills;

  - community level that stresses the role of communication in the process of gathering information and formulating knowledge;

  - organisation level, and

  - society level, covering the shared meanings that are constructed in the course of everyday life;

- to consider it more productive to use the term 'personal information culture' rather than 'information literacy' for the international practice of citizens' information training;

- to promote the concept of building personal information culture offered by Russia to all countries participating in the UNESCO Information for All Programme; to consider this concept as one of the Programme's priority directions for 2006-2007.

We recommend that appropriate actions be taken at the national level:

- to foster the reading culture and book culture as a foundation of the nation's information culture;

- to encourage development of people's capacities through awareness and preparedness campaigns; and

- to promote the participation of senior citizens in the Knowledge Societies in the conditions of the population ageing in many countries.

4. Education in Knowledge Societies

We recommend to UNESCO as the UN system agency with a specific mandate in the field of education:

- to require the provision of quality education through the application of ICTs, open and distance education, and e-learning;

- to recognise e-learning as the way to expand participation in education at all levels and in all forms (formal and informal) by offering different modes of combined work and learning to support life-long learning;

- to assume, in line with its mandate in the Education for All movement, an active coordinating role in addressing issues of the role of education and training in the development of inclusive and sustainable Knowledge Societies before and after Tunis;
- design appropriate standard-setting policies and instruments conducive to the development of the education systems for Knowledge Societies, including e-learning, open and distance education, knowledge management standards, certification and quality assurance.
- to encourage governments to recognise use of e-learning for teacher development as a key element and strategy in national plans to move toward the Knowledge Society; and
- to organise, as part of the post-Tunis WSIS Action Plan, a major international event focusing on the role of e-learning in Building Quality Education for All for Knowledge Society and invite interested stakeholders to share information, expertise, best practices and to help foster cross-national and public/private sector collaborative partnerships.

We urge UNESCO to encourage educational institutions worldwide to develop, adapt, evaluate, use and disseminate quality open educational resources and repositories at all levels of education by:

- encouraging governments to provide the required conditions for developing open learning spaces to support borderless exchange of learning content, tools, and activities and
- promoting the establishment of virtual universities through cross-national higher education collaboration to develop academic programmes that may better address regional educational needs.

Taking into account that existing laws, regulations and policies, which were established for the old paradigm of teaching and learning, represent a significant barrier to the implementation of modern ICT-based teaching and learning, UNESCO should help promote development of international standards for e-learning and encourage governments:

- to incorporate teacher training skills based on the 21st century pedagogies and technologies into the national teacher education plans;
- to develop their own national standards based on the international standards to facilitate the exchange of data and learning resources; and
- to establish quality assurance agencies at the national and regional levels to set guidelines and quality standards for e-learning and distance learning in order to ensure compliance.

5. Science and Innovations in Knowledge Societies

We call upon the national governments:

- to guarantee the integration of their scientific, educational, innovation, and industrial policies as parts of a national Knowledge Economy strategy;

- to ensure an increase in the share of the basic research funding in the overall R&D funding;
- to better coordinate the science policies at the regional, national, and international levels;
- to implement a set of measures facilitating an integration between science and education;
- to implement a set of measures stimulating the funding of scientific research by the private sector;
- to resolve the problem of effective use of the intellectual property created with the public funds, specifically, to establish the mechanisms of the intellectual property rights transfer;
- to enhance contacts with scientific diasporas to engage migrant scientists in resolving the issues of national science; and

We recommend UNESCO and other UN specialised agencies, as well as other public and private funding institutions in the world:

- to concentrate their financial resources on supporting or implementing self-sustainable Educational, Scientific and Cultural Information systems without costly recurrent licensing fees, with the help of Open Access repositories as well as Free Software, Open Source, and proprietary Freeware tools;
- to support creation of second disclosure Open Access information resources whereby authors are describing the results of their research that have already been published elsewhere;
- to provide financial support to first and second disclosure Open Access resources to eliminate the need to charge publication fees;
- to support the creation of an association of Open Access Publishers to reinforce their effectiveness in collaboratively raising financial resources and in gaining collective renown;
- to create or support seed funding programs to create new Open Access information resources everywhere in the world and to promote the conversion of existing resources to the Open Access model;
- to require as a grant or endorsement condition publication in the Open Access model of any full report of research being even partially funded, or morally endorsed by them;
- to support and endorse the initiatives of Funding Institutions to implement their own mandatory Open Access Archives;
- to create or support the implementation of a free Digital Object Identifier system to retrieve and directly and freely identify digital documents; and
- to build Open Access repositories in a way that would allow easy site mirroring as well as complete copying on portable media, such as CDs or DVDs, to allow access to knowledge in regions with little or non-existent Internet connections.

- to provide funding and in-kind assistance to a Free Software project that implements the peer-to-peer functionality as recommended by the WSIS Plan of Action to allow efficient exchange of scientific information.

6. Cultural Diversity in Knowledge Societies

We recommend UNESCO:
- to encourage the emergence of a strong cultural paradigm in cyberspace through:
  - making efforts at the national levels to identify cultures and languages at risk and to use technology to revive and repatriate community memories and legacy of cultural knowledge;
  - creating culturally-oriented top-level domains (names) and applying the corresponding domains to other major cultural heritage repositories, such as archives and libraries;
  - revisiting the notion of digital libraries and seeing these as dynamic universal knowledge environments;
  - developing standards and structuring content to facilitate sharing of and access to the cultural heritage;
- to encourage cooperative efforts for digitisation programmes linking preservation and universal user-centered access to multilingual cultural knowledge;
- to develop partnerships for action of cultural professionals, societal and political actors engaged in promoting cultural diversity in order to:
  - establish prioritised common objectives and methodologies;
  - encourage research and monitoring tools focused on user needs;
  - promote the development of virtual communities and networks that contribute to generation of new knowledge through interactive dialogue;
  - develop national measures to implement the e-charter on preservation of digital heritage to address the inherent instability of "born digital" content;
- to encourage the development of sustainable business plans for e-creative industries in developing countries.

7. Universal Access to Public Domain Information

We recommend UNESCO:
- to consider the problem of reasonable restriction of copyright principle for the sake of education, science, and culture in the Information Society and
- to develop the guiding policy principles for improving access to official public information.

We recommend that appropriate actions be taken at the national level:

- to encourage creation of programs of acquiring non-exclusive intellectual property rights to support the Information Society development and
- to facilitate creation of community centres providing free access to legal information.

8. Development of Communications and Freedom of Expression

We urge UNESCO and other international organisations:

- to promote free, independent and pluralistic media in both traditional and new forms as a major stakeholder in an open and equitable Information Society;
- to ensure that the Internet and other new media forms are afforded the same freedom of expression protections as traditional media;
- to support the international debate on and cooperation in the sphere of Internet governance;
- to ensure that there is no pretext to regulate Internet content in an improper way, in particular, security considerations and demands of the battle against crime, including terrorism, should not imperil freedom of expression and press freedom, nor should the "ethics" considerations become a veiled way to justify censorship;
- to ensure that the Internet governance system does not involve content controls or modifications of the Internet's technical "architecture" that facilitate or permit censorship of news or opinion; and
- to ensure that media representatives are involved as full partners in any future Internet governance system.

We urge the national governments and interest groups:

- to respect the right of journalists to establish their own professional and ethical standards;
- to recognise that Public Service Broadcasting is crucial for ensuring social cohesion, including minorities, and promoting social development in the digital world, as well as preserving and fostering multilingualism and cultural diversity;
- to transform state-controlled broadcasting outlets into the public service entities with statutes of editorial independence where journalists have autonomous professional status;
- to pay particular attention to media professionals' training; and
- to ensure that Internet Service Providers are not held liable for the content of the messages they carry.

9. Stakeholders' Partnership and Cooperation. NGO Role in the Information Society

We recommend UNESCO and other stakeholders:
- to recognise and promote Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) as an important tool to foster Information and Shared Knowledge Society and Sustainable Development;
- to support and implement multi-stakeholder partnerships aimed at promoting Culture, Education, Science and Linguistic Diversity and helping Good Governance;
- to model effective ICT partnerships with civil society and the private sector for other institutions by demonstrating clear rules of conduct, transparency, human social capital, balanced representation, equal participation, and focused work plans and evaluations;
- to collaborate with civil society by initiating partnerships, facilitating support and funding for civil society participation, capacity-building, and reaching beyond the traditional UNESCO and UN NGO communities;
- to promote the importance of the ICT content and services issues, freedom of expression and online and offline media freedom, cultural diversity, capacity-building, and universal access to information as well as emphasising the principles of openness, including open source, open standards, and open content; and
- to facilitate sharing of information, analyses, and best-practices among civil society networks at the local, regional and national levels.

We also acknowledge and support the collaborative work of UNESCO and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in implementing the Summit's Plan of Action and recommend submitting the coordinated proposals for further activity directions to the 3rd Preparatory Meeting of the Summit.

10. Business Environment for Knowledge Societies

We recommend UNESCO and other international organisations:
- to support creating an international country rating system for financial risks in the innovative investment business;
- to establish special international programs for training government officials in the principles, methodology, and technology of e-government; and
- to support creating a global multi-language knowledge warehouse summarising the best practices in using the ICT and knowledge for development.

We recommend the national governments and other stakeholders:
- to bring the national legislation in correspondence with the requirements of Information Society and Knowledge Economy development;

- to develop a national system of administrative, legal, and economic mechanisms, which would stimulate:
  - the demand for innovations;
  - the investment in the innovative and ICT business;
  - the development of the national stock market and competitive environment;
- to develop a system of state support for promoting the national innovative products at the global markets.

11. Policies of Cultural and Scientific Heritage Digitisation and Preservation

We call upon UNESCO:
- to promote international and national policies for digitisation, and for preservation, access, use, and coordination of digital heritage;
- to recognise the role of existing heritage institutions and new ones that consolidate their functions (along with other stakeholders) in:
  - the formulation of policies;
  - the preservation of new and existing recorded information;
  - the provision of content;
  - the assurance of open content standards;
- to support efforts by national governments that take responsibility for digitising the comprehensive published heritage of their nations, ensure that these remain in the public domain and make them available as open source images;
- to promote the responsibility of nations for the preservation of their own patrimony, with special attention to at risk audio, visual, and digital forms;
- to promote preservation, together with access, through mechanisms such as "Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe" strategies which are harmonious with UNESCO goals of promoting access to knowledge;
- to support the efforts to harmonise legal mechanism for digital objects throughout their life, including addressing the pressing legal issues posed by the need to create exemptions for preservation copying;
- to encourage the implementation of mechanisms that ensure digital authenticity, and the registration of legal digital records;
- to promote access and use policies that provide access to:
  - existing recorded content;
  - born digital content;
  - new oral, audio, visual and written forms, and
  - value added content,

  and that enable new uses and uses of complex digital objects;

- to encourage national governments to promote open content;
- to promote legal and social mechanisms for making out-of-print/in copyright material available digitally, such as a digital public lending right;
- to promote the use of open architectures by all publicly funded information products;
- to promote norms and procedures that support and facilitate the exchange of digital content which national policies might otherwise obstruct;
- to promote overcoming of barriers between heritage institutions such as libraries, archives, museums, parks, and archaeological sites, that have traditional segregated knowledge based on media and genres; to encourage redirection of existing funding streams that now perpetuate the differences between these traditionally distinct heritage institutions;
- to support coordination between national digitisation, preservation and access programmes at technical and strategic levels, based on best practices worldwide;
- to reaffirm and implement commitments made in The Charter on Digital Heritage Preservation and the "Memory of the World" and "Remember the Future" Programmes;
- to develop and monitor indicators of progress in digitisation and preservation of the worlds heritage;
- to consider potential for a programme in UNESCO for digitisation, preservation and access;
- to broaden the "Special Fund" created by UNESCO under its Information for All Programme, to increase support for Knowledge Society initiatives, including by involving commercial interests in augmenting UNESCO funding;
- to revisit and reinforce commitments to existing recommendations including pre-digital age agreements on information flow such as the Florence Accords of 1950';
- to launch a special international program for preservation and digitisation of invaluable video and audio archives, in particular those accumulated in Russia and other CIS countries.

Appendix. Conference Recommendations Drafting Committee

The Drafting Committee was composed of the following representatives:
Chairman: Evgeny Kuzmin, Chairman of the National Committee of Russia and member of the Intergovernmental Council, UNESCO Information for All Programme; member of the Russian Federation Commission for UNESCO

Vice-Chairman: Yuri Hohlov, Chairman, High-Level Expert Group on Information Society Development at the Moscow City Duma (Council); Coordinator, UN ICT Task Force Regional Network for Europe and Central Asia (Russia)

Rapporteurs:

David Bearman, President, Archives and Museum Informatics (Canada)

Tatiana Ershova, General Director, Institute of the Information Society (Russia)

Divina Frau-Meigs, Professor, University Paris 3-Sorbonne; Vice-president, International Association for Media and Communication Research focal point, education, academia and research taskforce in WSIS (France)

Earl Mardle, Principal, KeyNet Consultancy (Australia)

Vladimir Minkin, Deputy General Director, Radio Research & Development Institute (Russia)

Victor Naumov, Ernst & Young CIS (Russia)

Paul Resta, Director, Learning Technology Center, The University of Texas at Austin (USA)

Sergey Shaposhnik, Head, Directorate of Monitoring Information Society Development, Institute of the Information Society (Russia)

Taras Shevchenko, Director, Kiev Institute of Media Law (Ukraine)

Olga Vershinskaya, Senior Researcher, Institute for Socio-Economic Studies of Population, Russian Academy of Sciences (Russia)

Isabelle Vinson, Museum International (UNESCO)

Alexander Yevtiushkin, Head of Directorate of Innovation and Investment Projects, Institute of the Information Society (Russia)

The Conference also approved the following representatives as **members of the Drafting Committee:**

Nadezhda Brakker, Senior Expert, Centre for Informatisation of the Sphere of Culture (Russia)

Victor Montviloff, independent expert (France)

Mariana Patru, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Education Sector (UNESCO)

Vladimir Tikhomirov, Rector, Moscow State University for Economics, Statistics and Informatics (Russia)