



world summit  
on the information society  
Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005



ITU Role in Building the Information Society

A contribution to the WSIS

**Reports on Activities related to WSIS**

**Wednesday 3 July 2002**

**WSIS PREPCOM-1**

**Geneva, Switzerland**

Hamadoun I. TOURÉ

Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)

An ITU contribution to the WSIS page - 1

Mr. Chairman,

Participants,

For those of you who are not necessarily familiar with ITU, I shall give you a brief explanation as to how our organisation is structured:

- The General Secretariat,
- The Radiocommunication Sector,
- The Telecommunication Development Sector which is divided into two parts, namely: 1) the Telecommunication Development Bureau, and 2) the Study Groups, and
- The Standardisation Sector.

The Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau, who is one of the 4 elected officials of ITU, is the secretary of the Telecommunication Development Sector.

The Development Sectors provide services in almost all specialities required in telecommunication/ICT networks, service and application domains.

**world summit  
on the information society**  
Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005

Valletta Action Plan  
4 Chapters, 6 Programmes

- Chapter 1: Programme of cooperation
- Chapter 2: VAP programmes
- Chapter 3: Special programme for LDCs
- Chapter 4: Execution of Technical cooperation

*Prog 1*  
Reform  
Legislation  
Regulation

*Prog 2*  
Technologies  
and GIS

*Prog 3*  
Rural dev. &  
Universal Service

*Prog 4*  
Finance  
and Economics

*Prog 5*  
Partnerships  
& Private Sector

*Prog 6*  
Human Resources  
Development

An ITU contribution to the WSIS page - 2

The last development period was based on the implementation of four chapters, one of which contained the 6 programmes shown above. Each programme produced the results expected, on the basis of actions selected by the members themselves.


**world summit  
on the information society**  
 Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005
 


WTDC-02 and WSIS

World telecommunications development  
 Conference (WTDC), Istanbul ,TURKEY

- ✓ Issue of Digital Divide
- ✓ Action plan to bridge the digital divide
- ✓ 1152 participants representing:
  - ✓ 152 Member States,
  - ✓ 79 sector members,
  - ✓ 45 orgs, agencies and
  - ✓ many private sector entities.




An ITU contribution to the WSIS page - 3

WTDC-2002 was the third World Telecommunication Development Conference organised by the ITU. They are now held every four years.

The previous one, which was the second, was held in Valetta (Malta) in 1998 and adopted a six-programme action plan known as the Valetta Action Plan (VAP) which has been in the process of implementation since 1998.

WTDC-02 addressed the issue of the Digital Divide at several levels and adopted an action plan to bridge this divide.

As the world's largest and highest-level global conference on telecommunication development, WTDC 2002 brought together 1152 participants representing 152 countries and generated some 290 documents conveying ITU Members' proposals for strategies to be implemented in the development period from 2003-2006.

## The special session on Digital Divide

1. Identification of means to close the divide
2. Role of governments
3. Role of ITU/BDT
4. Recognition of regional initiatives

A special session on the Digital Divide was organised and gave a unique opportunity to the participants to receive country position statements delivered by very senior level officials, from governments, institutions and other community leaders.

The session identified the means to close the divide in both developing and developed countries.

The role of governments, particularly in their effort to create enabling frameworks and to exert political will to push through digital divide initiatives, was highlighted.

The session also recognised the role of ITU as one of the leading agencies in closing the gap between information 'haves' and 'have-nots'.

Clear recognition was also given to regional initiatives aimed at extending the use of ICTs to bring the benefits to people with special needs, through societal services and applications.



## WTDC-02 Conclusions

1. Istanbul Declaration
2. ITU-D Strategic Plan
3. Istanbul Action Plan (IsAP)
  - a. Cooperation among the members;
  - b. Regional initiatives
  - c. Resolutions and Recommendations (resolution 37: role of the ITU-D in bridging the Digital Divide)
  - d. **IsAP Actions**

WTDC-02 conclusions included:

- the Istanbul Declaration which includes strong statements put forward by members with a view to setting goals and objectives for the future;
- the ITU-D Strategic Plan which outlines the vision for the future, charts the course, and identifies the strategies for the next 4 years (2003-2006); and
- the Istanbul Action Plan (IsAP) which focusses on:
  - 1) ways to strengthen cooperation amongst members through regional meetings/conferences, consultative development groups and participation in study groups;
  - 2) full support for regional initiatives aimed at closing the divide;
  - 3) targeted resolutions and recommendations, such as Resolution 37 which includes telecommunication/ICT development actions within the broader sustainable human development promoted by the United Nations, in particular through WSIS;
  - 4) and, last but not least, the IsAP actions described in the next slide.



**world summit  
on the information society**  
Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005



## The Istanbul Action Plan Programmes

1. Regulatory Reform
2. Technologies and Telecommunications  
Network Development
3. E-Strategies and E-Services/Applications
4. Economics and Finance
5. Human Capacity Building
6. Special Programme for LDCs

An ITU contribution to the WSIS page - 6

Six programmes were adopted covering regulatory reform, telecommunication network development, e-strategies and e-services, economics and finance, human capacity building, and a special programme for least developed countries.

These six programmes are the basic ingredients for the development of telecommunication networks and ICTs.

They provide the mechanisms and the mandate for ITU to provide assistance in creating a conducive environment for telecommunication development, foster the development of the core infrastructure, bring the benefits of ICTs to all sectors of developing countries, provide assistance in the investment framework through economic and financial studies, build local capacity through human resources development, and pay special attention to the needs of least developed countries.



## IsAP Activities and Initiatives

1. Statistics and information on telecommunications/ICT;
2. Partnership and Promotion;
3. Private sector initiatives;
4. Gender issues;
5. Youth initiatives;
6. Indigenous people issues

In addition to these programmes, WTDC-02 decided that information-sharing remains a constant and key factor to increase the efficiency of resources used.

In the same context, it was found necessary to continue to build strong and mutually beneficial partnerships with other stakeholders to develop synergies and avoid duplication of efforts.

In order to work towards a truly global information society that is inclusive, special initiatives were adopted to address the concerns of youth, gender and indigenous people. They too, must be given an equal chance to benefit from the potentials of ICTs.



## WSIS Proposed Themes

1. Building the Infrastructure
2. Opening the Gates
3. Services and Applications
4. The Needs of Users
5. Developing a Framework
6. ICTs and Education
7. The Role of ICTs in Good Governance

Let us now take a closer look at some of the proposed themes for WSIS.

They include:

Building the infrastructure;

Opening the gates;

Providing services and applications;

Taking care of the needs of users;

Developing a framework;

Addressing ICTs and education;

Using ICTs as a vehicle for good governance.



As you can see from the previous slides on the Istanbul Action Plan and the proposed themes of WSIS, the Istanbul Action Plan is a roadmap for building an action plan for the Global Information Society.

There is a direct correlation between the programmes and other decisions adopted by the World Telecommunication Development conference at Istanbul and the proposed themes for WSIS.

Even though IsAP is a core ingredient for the WSIS Action Plan, it is only part of the solution.

ITU cannot play this role alone.

It needs to work with all the main stakeholders from governments, civil society, NGOs, United Nations and its specialized agencies, international, regional and national organizations and with the private sector.

The two-phased approach for the World Summit on the Information Society (in Geneva next year and in Tunis in 2005) gives us ample opportunities to build on these synergies.

## Proposed Recommendations for WSIS Action Plan

1. The Istanbul Action Plan be part of the Action Plan resulting from the WSIS;
2. Use the WSIS as a catalyst to boost the development activities worldwide;
3. Provide a platform for cooperation among Members and all stakeholders;
4. Highlight the WIN-WIN opportunities provided by an early involvement of relevant parties as it will foster early awareness and build stronger synergies.

While exchanging views and discussing how we can work towards an Action Plan for the World Summit on the Information Society, I take this opportunity to propose the following recommendations for your consideration:

1. The Istanbul Action Plan should be considered an integral part of the Action Plan resulting from WSIS;
2. We need to use WSIS as a catalyst to boost development activities worldwide;
3. WSIS should provide a platform for cooperation among members and all stakeholders;
4. And finally, it highlights the 'win-win' opportunities provided by early involvement of relevant parties because this will foster awareness and build stronger synergies.



**world summit  
on the information society**  
Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005



TODAY'S DIGITAL DIVIDE IS A  
FERTILE FIELD FOR THE GROWTH OF  
TOMORROW'S SOCIETAL DIGITAL  
OPPORTUNITIES IN BOTH  
DEVELOPING AND DEVELOPED  
COUNTRIES

An ITU contribution to the WSIS page - 11

In conclusion, I believe that today's digital divide is a fertile field for the growth of tomorrow's societal opportunities for both developing and developed countries.

I thank you for your attention.