At a time when information and knowledge are at the core of human activities, technology is not an end in itself, but a means of creating, supplying, exchanging and preserving content, thereby enhancing diversification, personalization and interactivity. In this context, fundamental principles such as freedom of expression and information, pluralism and cultural diversity, should underpin the production and distribution of content.

Quality content, the content which truly meets the basic needs of people and which is reliable in terms of authenticity and accuracy, is shaping the emerging information society’s credibility. In this regard, the intellectual work of those who are creating, processing, disseminating and preserving content, is critical to an information society based on trust. Professional groups such as scientists, archivists, librarians, teachers, statisticians and journalists have a specific responsibility to serve public interests in providing people with authentic, accurate and unbiased information essential to democratic participation. In so doing, these groups are decisively contributing to people’s educational, and to political and cultural development. In this sense, quality information should be considered as a public good, and therefore accessible and affordable for everybody. A vibrant and rich public domain is an essential element for the growth of the information society. Public institutions such as libraries and archives must function as trustworthy information brokers to guarantee free access.

- Science is a public good that underpins the information society by helping develop cost-effective innovative technologies and beyond. The achievement of the Millennium goals depends on maximizing the possible benefit from these revolutionary developments in the areas of science, education, health, technology, economic development and governance. Scientific knowledge itself being of the greatest importance in a global information society, open and equitable access to this knowledge must be ensured. Scientific data and information generated through public funding should be made available free of charge on the World-Wide Web; software tools for analysing and disseminating this data and information should be made available at a reasonable price; affordable networking infrastructure should be provided to universities, public libraries and research institutions.
world-wide; information-processing equipment and training for using this information should also be accessible world-wide.

• In the long-term, archives guarantee the authenticity and integrity of information. They enable reconstruction of the past and thus help society to better deal with the problems of the present and future. As publicly accessible institutions, they are the expression of the democratic right to information. They provide the basis for informed citizens, contain proof of their rights and entitlements and form the requisites for an efficient, conscientious and democratically controlled administration and government. Archives are the most extensive existing sources of publicly available information and provide free and unlimited use of public domain information by citizens.

• Library and information services are key actors in providing unhindered access to essential resources for economic and cultural advance. In doing so, they contribute effectively to the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom, safeguarding democratic values and universal civil rights. They encourage social inclusion, by striving to serve all those in their user communities without distinction of any kind. The communities they serve may be geographically based or, increasingly, linked only by technology and shared interests.

• Statistics are indispensable for an informed understanding of the implications of a developing Information Society. This highlights the need for the monitoring of progress through internationally harmonised concepts, definitions and indicators, and for frameworks and standards that would guide measurements for international comparability. Statistics are essential tools for country benchmarking and the monitoring of progress.

• Traditional media as well as new media are in a position to provide citizens with unbiased information and a plurality of opinions for democratic participation. Therefore new media should be entitled with the same freedom of expression rights as traditional media. Effective rules are needed to safeguard media independence and pluralism, to guarantee access to information, and to protect human dignity, individual privacy and intellectual property. The principle of legality is essential not only for the protection of rights and freedoms but also, for example, for ensuring efficient and orderly use of frequency bands. Media concentration, in all areas including those in the ICTs, should be subject to general anti-monopoly scrutiny and laws, in keeping with national and/or regional practices and customs respecting diversity and pluralism.

Moreover, the traditional media, and especially radio and television, are effective tools for fostering public information, societal development and social cohesion, and remain the prevailing form of access to the information society for much of the world's population. The electronic media and public service broadcasting in particular, have responsibility to produce, gather and distribute diverse quality content to meet the political, social and cultural needs of democratic societies. Independent public service broadcasting is required to cater for all segments of the population, including vulnerable and minority groups, by providing a wide range of content in various forms, encompassing audiovisuals productions, material reflecting national and regional cultures and content relevant to
local communities, to their cultures and languages (local content). In this regard, the role of community media is particularly pertinent. State-controlled media should be transformed into editorially independent public service organizations.

Active steps should be taken towards encouraging the development of new models for local content distribution, such as “social licensing” and “open source”. These steps involve the establishment of innovative conditions for developing digital content and local multimedia industries, the promotion of tools for the management of local languages, including international domain names, as a means for promoting multilingualism and investment in projects aiming at the promotion of this objective.