



INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BUREAU

**WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE (WTDC-98)**

Valletta, Malta, 23 March - 1 April 1998

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For information

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PLENARY MEETING

The Youth Network

CONTRIBUTION TO THE 1998 WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

It is the goal of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (Valletta, Malta, 23 March - 1 April 1998) to examine all aspects of telecommunication development worldwide and to define the role which the ITU will play to assist development on a global scale.

On these grounds, it is vital that the world's youth are not left in the dark. Youth participation in telecommunication development must be brought to the forefront in order to create awareness and initiate positive action.

Specifically, the question must be answered:

How can the ITU/BDT support the active participation of young people from every country around the world in telecommunication development?

Rationale

The role of youth in telecommunication development is an emerging force at major international conferences and in the media.

At the Global Information Infrastructure Junior Summit '95, Brandon Bruce (16), delivered the closing speech of the Summit:

"The Junior Summit here in Tokyo has provided an intellectually exciting environment in which we have learned from one another and worked as a cohesive group to promote the free-flow of information."

At the Information Society and Development (ISAD) G7 Conference in South Africa, 1996, Brandon Bruce (17) and Hayley Goodwin (16), urged delegates to:

"... turn to children for the answers and you will find that they have them."

Following the ISAD G7 Conference, Brandon Bruce and Allyn Enderlyn (Head of Resource Mobilization for the ITU/BDT) began work to develop a new and exciting way for young people in both developed and developing nations to play active roles in the evolution of the Internet.

The WTDC-98 is the perfect opportunity to unveil this project entitled The Youth Network.

The Youth Network

Background

The success of WTDC-98 is in direct relation to its commitment to inclusion. Access to opportunity for all is the keystone of the Conference.

Concept

The Youth Network is a network of young people dynamically interacting with one another and actively participating in the worldwide development of electronic content and physical infrastructure.

The Youth Network will be founded by one youth from every country in the world. These Founders will comprise the Founder's Council and will be instrumental in the original development and future expansion of The Youth Network.

Structure

The Youth Network will be composed of Youth Ambassadors which will form the Ambassador Council. This Council will examine and discuss issues regarding telecommunication and content development. Most importantly, the Ambassador Council will create proposals for concrete Youth Network Action Projects. Action Projects will be initiated and executed through Youth Network resources - namely, collective action, electronic communication and physical capital. Sponsors & Partners from the public and private sectors will be instrumental in supporting the success of the Youth Network and its Action Projects. In addition, parents, teachers and adults in general will be encouraged to join the Youth-at-Heart Ambassador Council. This Council will help educators, mentors and community leaders keep plugged-in to Youth Network activities. In addition, the Council will foster networking opportunities between schools around the globe. Youth-at-Heart Ambassadors will be informed and effective leaders in the classroom and the community who will help to promote and create The Youth Network.

The Youth Network web site

The Youth Network web site will be "the hub of youth activity on the Internet". The web site will be composed of sections which explain and display the Mission & Goals, the Founder's Council, the Ambassador Council, the Sponsors & Partners and Contact Information.

Furthermore, the site will include:

Virtual Handshake

Virtual Handshake will be The Youth Network's Communication Centre. Virtual Handshake will house interactive discussion round tables, and message-based IdeaForums.

Super-Directory

The Super-Directory will be the Internet's largest, most comprehensive searchable database of youth web sites dedicated to telecommunication development, education and international relations.

Flashpoint News

Flashpoint News will give detailed reports of breaking news that affects young people. Moreover, it will provide updates on news within The Youth Network including upcoming events, newly adopted Action Projects and much more.

Media Central

Media Central will show what reporters around the world are saying about The Youth Network. In addition, Media Central will provide press releases on current Youth Network activities and upcoming events.

StoryNet

StoryNet will be the ultimate in cross-cultural learning through story-telling. It will be open access to children around the world to tell about themselves, their country, their favourite things, ... anything that's on their minds. And youth on the other side of the globe will be able to share their stories. Young people will entertain one another and also forge friendships. Furthermore, this will be an excellent classroom activity.

ProjectNet

ProjectNet will be a showcase of youth's investigative projects into all realms of study. Students will be encouraged to publish science fair projects and history essays from school, as well as any other project that will add to ProjectNet's knowledge. ProjectNet is all about kids teaching kids.

The first page of The Youth Network web site will read:

Welcome to The Youth Network, the hub of youth activity on the Internet! The Youth Network creates an intellectually exciting environment. Young people engage in a lively global discussion on the impacts of the Information Revolution. Most importantly, The Youth Network is the vehicle for youth-driven action projects aimed at improving life throughout the world. The Youth Network knows that what the mind can conceive and the heart can believe, we can achieve.

Let's take the first step at WTDC-98!
