

On behalf of all civil society, I wish to thank the chair for your considerable efforts to ensure that observers' comments are taken into account in the drafting process, even while governments are under extreme time pressure to complete the texts before them. We would also like to thank the chair for, in the future, making reference to the document DT3 which is the only document which contains contributions of observers, including civil society, made in May 31, 2003. Among other supportive countries, we also wish to thank the delegation of Romania for your strong support for the inclusion of civil society inputs. We look forward to seeing the new version of the Declaration of Principles and trust that our contributions have been carefully considered, and where appropriate, integrated into the text.

#### Literacy, Education, and Research

Literacy, education and research are fundamental components of information and knowledge societies. Research shows that civil society involvement is crucial to adoption and use of ICTs. Without it, technology remains a tool without a heart nor a hand to give it life. We regret that the already existing body of research in the humanities on the social uses of media and technologies has not been put to use in the WSIS process. We hope it will change in the future meetings and proceedings of the Summit. On principle we posit that education (formal, informal, lifelong) builds democracy both by creating a literate citizenry and a skilled workforce. The action plan should devote attention to the tools, facilities and resources that enable lifelong learning and that keeps publicly-funded research open and accessible.

For education:

- Capacity building designed to empower individuals and communities in the Information Society must include, in addition to basic literacy and ICT skills, information literacy (i.e. the ability to find, appraise, use and create information) and should stimulate the desire for learning and self-development.
- [38] E-learning should be focused on the social and personal development of the learners, especially young people. It should not be a threat to traditional education but a complement to it. Research and teaching practices applied in traditional environments should be transferred to e-learning and adapted to its new potential in relation to local needs.
- Governments should invest in nation-wide backbones providing access to scientific, cultural and educational information covering all categories of inhabitants, with support through continuous programs for research and development of educational resources and services. Degree and diploma accreditations, even when dealing with international or regional entities, should be designed, performed and granted by local and national legitimate entities, in keeping with their expectations of content and practices.

For work:

- [40] ICTs, both traditional and innovative media, should be used as an instrument for the creation of genuine and sustainable sources of work, thus providing new labor opportunities, above all for those who have been excluded from the formal employment system, as well as those affected by labor discrimination, such as the disabled and vulnerable groups (including those affected by HIV/AIDs, the elderly, former drug addicts, former prisoners, etc.).
- Education and training should contribute to a sustainable form of labor, which provides both correct safe living conditions and personal emancipation to the worker. Good working conditions (salaries, possibility of job advancement, social security, lifelong adult education and training, etc.) must be developed to preserve and enhance the dignity of the working people, including tele-workers.

For research:

- Publicly funded, independent scientific publications and research and public commons, in all parts of the world, are essential for building a pluralistic and diverse body of knowledge with respect for and special focus on local content. This body of knowledge should be made available in all public spaces, or spaces with public access (community centers, universities, schools, museums, libraries, media centers, and other dedicated entities, some of which still need to be invented). [12-21]
- It also should be supported and expanded through the use of free software community materials and through education and research exceptions; to copyright laws. Free, modifiable material seems to be a key to the development of free education and innovative independent research. International and regional cooperation should be promoted for formal education as well as lifelong learning and training

for all people, without any discrimination. It should be carried through multi-stakeholder involvement as a strategy for poverty alleviation and human development.