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**Document WSIS-II/PC-3/CONTR/24-E**  
**3 August 2005**  
**Original: English/French**

**Conseil Régional de Dakar**

# **Declaration of the African Forum of the Local Authorities on the Information Society**

African Regional Forum preparatory to the II World Summit of Cities and  
Local Authorities on the Information Society (Bilbao 2005)

Dakar, Senegal, 13th, 14th and 15th of July 2005

Approved in Dakar on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2005



## Dakar Declaration

We, participants, representing Cities, Regions and Local Authorities, Civil Society and International Organizations, gathered in the African Forum of the Local Authorities on the Information Society (FACLOSI), organized by the Regional Council of Dakar, from the 13<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2005 in Dakar, Senegal, thank the government of Senegal and the Regional Council of Dakar to have given us this opportunity to exchange views on building a more equitable Information Society.

### Considering

- the Declaration of Principles and the Action Plan of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva 2003;
- the African Regional Action Plan for the Knowledge Economy (APAKE) initiated by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) ;
- the Declaration of Bilbao (7th February 2003) ;
- the Declaration and Action Plan of Nouakchott ;
- the Declaration and Action Plan of Lyon ;
- the commitment of Accra for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis;

**Considering** that the building of the Information Society should take into account the development strategies and the specific needs of all countries and especially the least developed countries ;

**Considering** that the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) offer equitable access to redefined citizenship ;

**Considering** that the roles of the civil society, the private sector and the African public authorities are fundamental to the implementation of ICT based solutions for sustainable development in Africa ;

**Considering** that Cities, Regions and Local Authorities are key actors in the development of a more equitable Information Society, and that they all have a fundamental role in ensuring a universal access to knowledge ;

**Observing** that Local Authorities view the ICT as a significant component for economic development, employment creation and improvement of social conditions;

**Observing** that the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society could not reach a consensus on some essential matters for Africa in order to bridge the digital divide ;

**Convinced** that, in order to find practical solutions to different issues emerged in building the Information Society, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to effectively bridge the digital divide, the Local Authorities have an important role to play in the process towards the II World Summit of the Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society ;

**Convinced** that decentralization is a process that cannot be ignored in order to effectively undertake the fundamental concerns of the population, especially related to the Information Society ;

**Noting** with satisfaction the establishment of the Digital Solidarity Fund ;

The Forum adopts the following :

1. To support the funding and the operationalization of the Digital Solidarity Fund through the establishment of an African Network of Local Authorities for the Digital Solidarity (RACOLSON) ;
2. To support the proposal of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to promote the Digital Solidarity Fund initiated by the President of Senegal, Mr. Abdoulaye Wade ;
3. To ask the President of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), Mr. Bertrand Delanoë, Mayor of Paris, to reaffirm, at the next General Assembly of the United Nations, the necessity to implement the "Geneva Principle" at a global scale by involving every partner of the international community ;
4. To support the project to convene a world conference on Digital Solidarity, at the end of 2006 or the beginning of 2007, aiming at ensuring the long term funding for bridging the digital divide, and to ask international, governmental and non-governmental institutions, Local Authorities associations, the private sector and the civil society to take all the adequate measures to ensure success of the conference ;
5. To promote good governance through the installation of adequate infrastructures in order to reinforce the instruments and the mechanisms for governance and management of local economy ;
6. To promote the popularization of, the training of trainers on and the use of free and open-source software for the development of local agendas on e-governance ;
7. To promote the implementation of a legal framework for the Information Society including a security policy ;
8. To reinforce the capacities of Local Authorities and their representatives, especially with the support of pedagogical tools available through the network of International Training Centers for the Local Authorities/Actors (CIFAL) ;

9. To establish a partnership for the development of a true Information Society based on a North-South and South-South economic model which is mutually profitable to all partners;
10. To encourage partnerships between technical training institutions and universities within local development policies for the Information Society ;
11. To promote a partnership which consists of governments, international actors, the private sector and the civil society, through a multi-sectoral approach essential to the development of good e-governance ;
12. To take into account and to integrate ICT in decentralized cooperation projects ;
13. To promote decentralized cooperation in order that more cooperation programmes take ICT development into consideration ;
14. To support the proposal by the Digital Solidarity Fund to offer a "digital solidarity package" at a large scale, which will give Local Authorities opportunities to connect and access the contents. This package will enable those Local Authorities, who are presently marginalized due to lack of resources, to develop social applications meeting the fundamental expectations of their citizens ;
15. To promote the participation of African local elected officials in the management of various aspects of the Digital Solidarity;
16. To seek support from the "Digital Solidarity Agency" for the development and the implementation of local agendas on e-governance and for the access to funding for decentralized cooperation projects ;
17. To raise awareness among the African population and to mobilize them for the implementation of a "local e-authorities" project (Integrated Management System for the records office, identification cards, city and regional planning, financial management, etc.), and for reaching a strong consensus on emerging issues, especially on the Internet governance;
18. To raise awareness among key actors in the fields of culture, sports, economics and politics in order to mobilize them for the building of an Information Society that is more inclusive and with more solidarity, for the well-being of all.

**The representatives of the African Local Authorities ask every mayor and president of Local Authorities to actively participate in the II World Summit of the Cities and Local**

**Authorities on the Information Society which will take place from 9th to 11th of November 2005 in Bilbao, Spain.**

DAKAR, SENEGAL, 15th of July 2005