

**1st meeting of the Group of the Friends of the Chair (GFC),
Geneva, September, 20, 2004**

**Intervention by Wolfgang Kleinwächter,
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Thank you Mr. Chairman,

my name is Wolfgang Kleinwächter. I am a member of the Civil Society WSIS Bureau and a professor at the University of Aarhus, but I speak here in my personal capacity.

First let me congratulate that you have designed the Group of the Friends of the Chair (GFC) as open and transparent as possible. Civil society representatives are very pleased that they can participate in this meeting as equal partners. Civil Society made substantial and constructive contributions to WSIS I and it will continue to do so in the forthcoming second WSIS phase. The Geneva Declaration has introduced "multistakeholderism" as a guiding principle for the WSIS process and we hope that this new form of interaction among different stakeholders will lead to more efficiency and to further innovations in the emerging new global diplomacy of the 21st century.

Civil Society feels encouraged by the recent developments both within and outside the WSIS process. The recent consultations of the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG), here in Geneva in September 2004, saw a full inclusion of civil society in its deliberations. And in the United Nations, the Cardoso-Report "We the People: Civil Society, the United Nations and Global Governance" from June 2004, conceptualized further this new principle of "multistakeholderism". As Mr. Cardoso in his letter to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has said, "global governance is no longer the sole domain of governments." He added: "The growing participation and influence of non-State actors is enhancing democracy and reshaping multilateralism. Civil society organisations are also the prime movers of some of the most innovative initiatives to deal with emerging global threats." And he concluded that his commission sees "in an opening up of the United Nations to a plurality of constituencies and actors not a threat to governments but a powerful way to reinvigorate the intergovernmental process itself."

The Cardoso Commission tabled 30 recommendations for consideration by the United Nations. The interesting point here is, that if you put the Cardoso-Report into the WSIS context, you will find, that a lot of the ideas, expressed in the Cardoso-Report, has been already tested out in practice by WSIS I. WSIS is insofar like a laboratory which develops innovative models and mechanisms for a new global diplomacy.

During WSIS I we moved step by step from "turmoil" to "trust". And, at the end of the day, civil society "input" led also to some "impact", although civil society was not really satisfied with all the results of the intergovernmental negotiations and produced its own complementary "Information Society Declaration". We hope that on the way to Tunis we can increase our impact and move forward with more flexible arrangements.

Mr. Chairman,

in your working paper you refer to the work methods of the GFC and the way how via "proposals" the basis for further negotiations could be developed. We would be very pleased if you would allow also non-governmental stakeholders to present officially proposals and to keep the process as inclusive, open and transparent as possible. We understand the intergovernmental nature of the process, but we hope that we can reach a new level of interaction which could go beyond the WSIS I experience.

In your outline you describe furthermore, inter alia, the structure of the forthcoming final document. You refer to a "Political Chapeau" which will contain "a concise statement of the determination of member states and other stakeholders in the WSIS process". We welcome this intention, but we hope also that you will create such a flexible environment which would facilitate a high level of communication among governments and civil society in all phases of the negotiation processes and allow us to become an equal partner in the process.

This is a time for innovations in global governance. Why not also to invent a new type of final documents which go beyond a consensus of governments and include non-governmental stakeholders positions on an equal footing?. Such a new type of final document could have full consensus sections and other sections where different stakeholders express their different perspectives and priorities on specific issues. Such an approach would reflect the plurality and diversity of the reality, it would give the document more credibility and legitimacy and it would promote a more constructive interaction among the stakeholders also in the process of implementation.

Mr. Chairman, be ensured that civil society will support you in your exploration of the new territory of the global diplomacy of the 21st century.

Thank you for your attention.