

SECOND PHASE OF WSIS, 16-18 NOVEMBER, TUNIS

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Tunis, November 16, 2005

Secretary-General, Heads of State and Government, Ministers, Ambassadors, representatives from the private sector and civil society,

It is a great pleasure to be here with you this afternoon.

I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to share how Vivendi Universal is contributing to this second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society.

Vivendi Universal is a communications group, a global leader in two sectors: media and telecommunications.

Our businesses range from music, television, motion pictures, interactive games, to telephony—fixed and mobile: all businesses that bring people together and facilitate access to information, and we develop them internationally.

Given the impact our Group has as a producer and distributor of content, I will illustrate the potential contribution of new information and communication technologies on human development by focusing on the question of content, and in particular, on the critical issue of cultural diversity.

The Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions, which the UNESCO General Conference adopted in Paris, on October 21st of this year, recalls that "cultural diversity is a mainspring for sustainable development for communities, peoples and nations."

Allowing present and future generations to satisfy their curiosity and develop their talents is indeed a priority for Vivendi Universal. That is the heart of our policy on sustainable development and of our vision of corporate responsibility.

Let me share a concrete example: music.

The international division of our subsidiary, Universal Music Group, the world leader in music, has 2,000 artists under contract in more than 50 countries, including Mali, Cameroon, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Brazil, Colombia, China, and India, as well as in North America and Europe, Russia, Japan, and the Pacific Islands.

We devote every drop of our energy to promoting and fostering the expression of local talents in all musical genres, including jazz, classical music, variety, pop, rap, and world music.

Most of our international artists express themselves in their native language—the best way to convey the wealth of linguistic diversity and touch the hearts and feelings of our listeners around the world.

New information and communication technologies are driving an explosion of new consumer practices in the world of music, such as paid music downloads via the Internet, and music sales on cellphones. As such, these technologies are a tremendous springboard for the promotion of artists, and that includes promoting local talent in developing countries.

As a player in the private sector, we want to go further still in our determination to stimulate creativity and to bolster production and distribution in developing countries in order to contribute to the emergence of a dynamic cultural sector, as a source of economic progress, social cohesion, enabling individuals and communities to find fulfillment.

The underlying theme to promoting cultural diversity through our various businesses, in the media or through telecommunications, is respect for intellectual property. Fighting piracy is a major concern for us, in developed and emerging markets alike. We also pay great attention to the quality of programs we deliver, to the expression of pluralism and dialogue between cultures.

Inspired by these goals, and in partnership with other players, Vivendi Universal intends to contribute to the emergence of an information society respectful of the capacities and values of humanity.

Thank you for your time.