The World Summit on the Information Society

Summer University Programme 2003
ITU, 7-8 July 2003
Towards the Summit

- Brief overview
- Achievements
- Content
- The process
- Next steps
19th century: Industrial revolution

21st century: Information Revolution
Why the Summit?

Emergence of the concept of the information society

Need for a harmonious evolution in policies, regulations, networks and services in all Member States

(*ITU Res. 73*, Minneapolis, 1998)
Why the Summit?

The UN General Assembly recognized “the urgent need to harness the potential of knowledge and technology for promoting the goals of the United Nations (UN) Millennium Declaration and to find effective and innovative ways to put this potential at the service of development for all”
And the need to "ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies ... are available to all".

(UNGA Res. 56/183, UN Millennium Declaration)
What can the Summit hope to achieve?

- A **common** vision of the Information Society
- A declaration of principles and action plan
Declaration of Principles and Action Plan

“We the representatives of the peoples of the world, declare our common desire and commitment to build a new kind of society, the Information Society”

• A declaration of principles and action plan
  ➢ Using ICTs to achieve Millennium Development Goals
  ➢ A firm foundation for the development of the Information Society
  ➢ New projects and partnerships
Key issues addressed in the Declaration and Action Plan

- ICTs for development
  - Using ICTs to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals
  - Addressing the injustice of the digital divide

- ICTs and policy
  - Responding to challenges to privacy, security, intellectual property rights
  - Using ICTs to advance democracy, human rights, justice

- ICTs applications and content
  - Overcoming digital exclusion (access to ICTs and ability to use: content, cultural and linguistic diversity, education in ICTs and ICTs for education)
  - E-applications: to improve accessibility, efficiency and transparency
More issues for discussion...

- **Financing**: ICTs as a tool for development - Digital solidarity fund, global digital compact, other initiatives?

- **Respecting rights in the virtual world**: Human rights, including freedom of expression, consumers’ rights, protection of childhood, etc.

- **Policy framework for cyberspace**: Need to move towards a more formal and structured treaty-approach to international cooperation in cyberspace?
Cont...

- **Internet governance**: [international] versus [intergovernmental]

- **Intellectual Property Rights**: need to re-balance IPR in the digital environment?

- **Open source software**: Great hope in open source as a way to make ICTs more affordable

- **Competition and liberalisation, responsibilities of stakeholders, security, spamming, Internet traffic contracts, trade embargoes...**
Summit process up to now

- Regional conferences
- PrepCom-1 (July 1-5 2002)
Inputs received:

- **35 Contributions from Governments** - about 300 pages
- **20 contributions from inter-governmental organizations** - 170 pages
- **42 contributions from civil society NGOs** - about 300 pages
- **7 contributions from the business sector** - about 15 pages
Paris Intersessional meeting (15-18 July):

Entering the negotiating phase
• Where we are: Refined Declaration and Action Plan + government contributions
• Where we are going: Paris meeting (Formal open-ended intergovernmental drafting group). Good percentage of the text should be approved before PrepCom-3 (September 2003)
Future:

WSIS First Phase: Geneva, 10-12 December 2003 - Declaration and Action Plan

WSIS Second Phase: Tunis, 2005: Focus on development - assessment of progress made in the adoption of the action plan - new projects and partnerships
Further information

WWW.ITU.INT/WSIS
Working documents have been posted on the Web Site
www.itu.int/visions
Thanks!

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