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Agenda item 44

Information and communication technologies for development

Report of the Second Committee

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I. Introduction

1.   At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 17 September 2004, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-ninth session the item entitled "Information and communication technologies for development" and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2.   The Second Committee considered the item at its 23rd, 34th to 36th and 38th meetings, on 3, 16, 17 and 24 November and 7 December 2004. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/59/SR.23, 34-36 and 38). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 2nd to 8th meetings, from 4 to 6 and on 12 October (see A/C.2/59/SR.2-8).

3.   For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a)   Report of the Secretary-General on information and communication technologies for development: progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/295 (A/59/563);

(b)   Note by the Secretary-General of the United Nations transmitting the report of the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union on the first phase and progress in the preparations for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (A/59/80-E/2004/61 and Corr.1);

(c)   Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

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Organization on communication for development programmes in the United Nations system (A/59/207);

(d) Letter dated 7 October 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.2/59/3).

4.   At the 34th meeting, on 16 November, introductory statements were made by the Executive Coordinator of the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force, the Director of the Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Director of the Division for Communication Development at United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Headquarters in Paris (see A/C.2/59/SR.34).

5.   At the same meeting, the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States made a statement (ibid.).

II.   Consideration of proposals

A.   Draft resolutions A/C.2/59/L.18 and A/C.2/59/L.32

6.   At the 23rd meeting, on 3 November, the representative of Switzerland, on behalf of Switzerland and Tunisia, introduced a draft resolution entitled "World Summit on the Information Society" (A/C.2/59/L.18). Subsequently, the Group of 77 and China, as well as Andorra, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Turkey, joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which read as follows:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolutions 56/183 of 21 December 2001 and 57/238 of 20 December 2002,

"*Reaffirming* the potential of information and communication technologies as powerful tools to foster socio-economic development and contribute to the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

"1.   *Expresses its gratitude* to the Government of Switzerland for having hosted the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society at Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003 and for the support and arrangements put at the disposal of the Summit;

"2.   *Renews its acknowledgement* with gratitude for the generous offer of the Government of Tunisia to host the second phase of the Summit, which will take place at Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005;

"3.   *Takes note* of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union on the first phase and progress in preparation for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society;

"4.   *Endorses* the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action adopted by the Summit on 12 December 2003, and welcomes, in this regard, the strong development orientation of both documents, and stresses the importance of the effective and timely implementation of the Plan of Action;

"5.   *Welcomes* the contribution of Member States, relevant United Nations bodies, including the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector to the success of the first phase of the Summit;

"6.   *Urges* Member States, relevant United Nations bodies, including the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector to contribute actively to the implementation of the outcome of the first phase and to the preparatory process of the second phase of the Summit as well as to the Summit itself in order to ensure its overall success and impact on sustainable development;

"7.   *Takes note* of the results and decisions of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee, held at Hammamet, Tunisia, from 24 to 26 June 2004, concerning the structure and output of the second phase of the Summit;

"8.   *Welcomes* the establishment of the Working Group on Internet Governance and the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms, set up in accordance with the decisions of the first phase of the Summit;

"9.   *Invites* countries to send representation at the highest political level to the second phase of the Summit;

"10.   *Reiterates its call* to the international community to make voluntary contribution to the special fund established by the International Telecommunication Union to support the preparations for and holding of the Summit;

"11.   *Invites* the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union to transmit to the General Assembly, as soon as it is available, the report of the World Summit on the Information Society."

7.   At the 36th meeting, on 24 November, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Antonio Bernardini (Italy), introduced a draft resolution entitled "World Summit on the Information Society" (A/C.2/59/L.32), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/59/L.18.

8.   At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/59/L.32 (see para. 12).

9.   In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/59/L.32, draft resolution A/C.2/59/L.18 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B.   Draft decisions proposed by the Chairman

10.   At the 36th meeting, on 24 November, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision (see para. 13, draft decision I).

11.   At the 38th meeting, on 7 December, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision (see para. 13, draft decision II).

III.   Recommendations of the Second Committee

A.   Draft resolution

12.   The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

World Summit on the Information Society

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 56/183 of 21 December 2001 and 57/238 of 20 December 2002,

Reaffirming the potential of information and communication technologies as powerful tools to foster socio-economic development and contribute to the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[1]

1.   *Expresses its gratitude* to the Government of Switzerland for having hosted the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003 and for the support and arrangements put at the disposal of the Summit;

2.   *Renews its acknowledgement* with gratitude for the generous offer of the Government of Tunisia to host the second phase of the Summit, which will take place in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005;

3.   *Takes note* of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union on the first phase and progress in preparation for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society; [2]

4.   *Endorses* the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action adopted by the Summit on 12 December 2003,[3] and welcomes, in this regard, the strong development orientation of both documents, encourages developing and developed countries in partnership to continue to identify how information technologies can further contribute to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[1] and stresses the importance of the effective and timely implementation of the Plan of Action;

5.   *Welcomes* the contribution of Member States, relevant United Nations bodies, including the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector to the success of the Geneva phase of the Summit;

6.   *Urges* Member States, relevant United Nations bodies, including the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society and

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[1] See resolution 55/2.
[2] A/59/80 and Corr.1-E/2004/61 and Corr.1.
[3] See A/C.2/59/3.

the private sector to contribute actively to the implementation of the outcome of the Geneva phase and to the preparatory process of the Tunis phase of the Summit as well as to the Summit itself in order to ensure its overall success;

7.   *Takes note* of the results and decisions of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee, held in Hammamet, Tunisia, from 24 to 26 June 2004, concerning the structure and output of the second phase of the Summit;

8.   *Welcomes* the establishment of the Working Group on Internet Governance and the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms, set up in accordance with the decisions of the first phase of the Summit;

9.   *Invites* countries to be represented at the highest possible political level at the second phase of the Summit, to be held in Tunis in 2005;

10.   *Reiterates its call* to the international community to make voluntary contributions to the special fund established by the International Telecommunication Union to support the preparations for and holding of the Summit;

11.   *Invites* the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union to transmit to the General Assembly, as soon as it is available, the report of the World Summit on the Information Society.

B.   Draft decisions

13.   The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decisions:

Draft decision I
Report of the Secretary-General on information and communication technologies for development

The General Assembly:

(a)   Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Information and communication technologies for development: progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/295";[1]

(b)   Requests the Secretary-General to submit a further report on the implementation of the strategy to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.

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[1] A/59/563.

Draft decision II
Report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization on communication for
development programmes in the United Nations system

The General Assembly takes note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on communication for development programmes in the United Nations system.[1]

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[1] A/59/207.