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Chair of Sub-Committee B

TUNIS AGENDA FOR THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION

- 1. We recognise** that it is now time to move from principles to action, considering the work already being done in implementing the Geneva Plan of Action and identifying those areas where progress has been made, is being made, or has not taken place.
- 2. We reaffirm the commitments** made in Geneva and build on them in Tunis by focusing on financial mechanisms for bridging the digital divide, on Internet governance and related issues, as well as on implementation and follow-up of the Geneva and Tunis decisions.

FINANCIAL MECHANISMS FOR MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF ICT FOR DEVELOPMENT

- 3. We thank** the UN Secretary-General for his efforts in creating the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms (TFFM) and we commend the members on their report.
- 4. We recall** that the mandate of the TFFM was to undertake a thorough review of the adequacy of existing financial mechanisms in meeting the challenges of ICT for development.
- 5.** The TFFM report sets out the complexity of existing mechanisms, both private and public, which provide financing for ICTs in developing countries. It identifies areas where these could be improved and where ICTs could be given higher priority by developing countries and their development partners.
- 6.** Based on the conclusion of the review of the report, **we have considered** the improvements and innovations of financial mechanisms, including the creation of a voluntary Digital Solidarity Fund, as mentioned in the Geneva Declaration of Principles.
- 7. We recognise** the existence of the digital divide and the challenges that this poses for many countries, which are forced to choose between many competing objectives in their development planning and in demands for development funds whilst having limited resources.
- 8. We recognise** the scale of the problem in bridging the digital divide, which will require adequate and sustainable investments in ICT infrastructure and services, and capacity building, and transfer of technology over many years to come.

- 9. We call upon the international community** to promote the transfer of technology on mutually-agreed terms, including ICTs, to adopt policies and programmes with a view to assisting developing countries to take advantage of technology in their pursuit of development through, *inter alia*, technical cooperation and the building of scientific and technological capacity in our efforts to bridge the digital and development divides.
- 10. We recognise** that the internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, are fundamental. The Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development is the basis for the pursuit of adequate and appropriate financial mechanisms to promote ICT for development, in accordance with the Digital Solidarity Agenda of the Geneva Plan of Action.
- 11. We recognise and acknowledge** the special and specific funding needs of the developing world, as referred to in paragraph 16 of the Geneva Declaration of Principles*, which faces numerous challenges in the ICT sector, and that there is strong need to focus on their special financing needs to achieve the internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals.
- 12. We agree** that the financing of ICT for development needs to be placed in the context of the growing importance of the role of ICTs, not only as a medium of communication, but also as a development enabler, and as a tool for the achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals.
- 13.** In the past, financing of ICT infrastructure in most developing countries has been based on public investment. Lately, a significant influx of investment has taken place where private sector participation has been encouraged, based on a sound regulatory framework, and where public policies aimed at bridging the digital divide have been implemented.
- 14. We are greatly encouraged** by the fact that advances in communication technology, and high-speed data networks are continuously increasing the possibilities for developing countries, and countries with economies in transition, to participate in the global market for ICT-enabled services on the basis of their comparative advantage. These emerging opportunities provide a powerful commercial basis for ICT infrastructural investment in these countries. Therefore, governments should take action, in the framework of national development policies, in order to support an enabling and competitive environment for the necessary investment in ICT infrastructure and for the development of new services. At the same time, countries should pursue policies and measures that would not discourage, impede or prevent the continued participation of these countries in the global market for ICT-enabled services.
- 15. We take note** that the challenges for expanding the scope of useful accessible information content in the developing world are numerous; in particular, the issue of financing for various forms of content and applications requires new attention, as this area has often been overlooked by the focus on ICT infrastructure.
- 16. We recognise** that attracting investment in ICTs has depended crucially upon an enabling environment, including good governance at all levels, and a supportive, transparent and pro-competitive policy and regulatory framework, reflecting national realities.

* For reference, Paragraph 16 of the Geneva Declaration of Principles reads as follows:

We continue to pay special attention to the particular needs of people of developing countries, countries with economies in transition, Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States, Landlocked Developing Countries, Highly Indebted Poor Countries, countries and territories under occupation, countries recovering from conflict and countries and regions with special needs as well as to conditions that pose severe threats to development, such as natural disasters.

17. We endeavour to engage in a proactive dialogue on matters related to corporate social responsibility and good corporate governance of trans-national corporations and their contribution to the economic and social development of developing countries in our efforts to bridge the digital divide.

18. We underline that market forces alone cannot guarantee the full participation of developing countries in the global market for ICT-enabled services. Therefore, **we encourage** the strengthening of international cooperation and solidarity aimed at enabling all countries, especially those referred to in paragraph 16 of the Geneva Declaration of Principles, to develop ICT infrastructure and ICT-enabled services that are viable and competitive at national and international levels.

19. We recognise that, in addition to the public sector, financing of ICT infrastructure by the private sector has come to play an important role in many countries and that domestic financing is being augmented by North-South flows and South-South co-operation.

20. We recognise that, as a result of the growing impact of sustainable private sector investment in infrastructure, multilateral and bilateral public donors are redirecting public resources to other development objectives, including Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and related Programmes, policy reforms and mainstreaming of ICTs and capacity development. **We encourage** all governments to give appropriate priority to ICTs, including traditional ICTs such as broadcast radio and television, in their national development strategies. **We also encourage** multilateral institutions as well as bilateral public donors to consider also providing more financial support for regional and large-scale national ICT infrastructure projects and related capacity development. They should consider aligning their aid and partnership strategies with the priorities set by developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their national development strategies including their poverty reduction strategies.

21. We recognise that public finance plays a crucial role in providing ICT access and services to rural areas and disadvantaged populations including those in Small Island Developing States and Landlocked Developing Countries.

22. We note that ICT-related capacity building needs represent a high priority in all developing countries and the current financing levels have not been adequate to meet the needs, although there are many different funding mechanisms supporting ICTs for Development.

23. We recognise that there are a number of areas in need of greater financial resources and where current approaches to ICT for development financing have devoted insufficient attention to date. These include:

- a) ICT capacity building programmes, materials, tools, educational funding and specialised training initiatives, especially for regulators and other public sector employees and organisations;
- b) Communications access and connectivity for ICT services and applications in remote rural areas, Small Island Developing States, Landlocked Developing Countries and other locations presenting unique technological and market challenges;
- c) Regional backbone infrastructure, regional networks, Network Access Points and related regional projects, to link networks across borders and in economically-disadvantaged regions which may require coordinated policies including legal, regulatory and financial frameworks, and seed financing and would benefit from sharing experiences and best practices;
- d) Broadband capacity to facilitate the delivery of a broader range of services and applications, promote investment and provide Internet access at affordable prices to both existing and new users;

- e) Coordinated assistance, as appropriate, for countries referred to in paragraph 16 of the Geneva Declaration of Principles, particularly Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, in order to improve effectiveness and to lower transaction costs associated with the delivery of international donor support;
- f) ICT applications and content aimed at the integration of ICTs into the implementation of poverty eradication strategies and in sector programmes, particularly in health, education, agriculture and the environment;

In addition, there is a need to consider the following other issues, which are relevant to ICT for development and which have not received adequate attention:

- g) Sustainability of Information Society related projects, for example the maintenance of ICT infrastructure;
- h) Special needs of Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs), such as funding requirements;
- i) Local development and manufacturing of ICT applications and technologies by developing countries;
- j) Activities on ICT-related institutional reform and enhanced capacity on legal and regulatory framework;
- k) Improving organisational structures and business process change aimed at optimizing the impact and effectiveness of ICT projects and other projects with significant ICT components;
- l) Local government and initiatives based in local communities that deliver ICT services to communities in areas such as education, health and livelihood support.

24. Recognizing that the central responsibility for coordination of public financing programmes and public ICT development initiatives rests with governments, **we recommend** that further cross-sectoral and cross-institutional coordination should be undertaken, both on the part of donors and recipients within the national framework.

25. Multilateral development banks and institutions should consider adapting their existing mechanisms, and where appropriate designing new ones, to provide for national and regional demands on ICT development.

26. **We acknowledge** the following prerequisites for equitable and universal accessibility to, and better utilisation of, financial mechanisms:

- a) Creating policy and regulatory incentives aimed at universal access and the attraction of private sector investment;
- b) Identification and acknowledgement of the key role of ICTs in national development strategies, and their elaboration, when appropriate, in conjunction with e-strategies;
- c) Developing institutional and implementation capacity to support the use of national universal service/access funds, and further study of these mechanisms and those aiming to mobilise domestic resources;
- d) Encouraging the development of locally-relevant information, applications and services that will benefit developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

- e) Supporting the “scaling-up” of successful ICT-based pilot programmes;
 - f) Supporting the use of ICTs in government as a priority and crucial target area for ICT-based development interventions;
 - g) Building human resource and institutional capacity (knowledge) at every level for achieving Information Society objectives, especially in the public sector;
 - h) Encouraging business sector entities to help jump-start wider demand for ICT services by supporting creative industries, local producers of cultural content and applications as well as small businesses;
 - i) Strengthening capacities to enhance the potential of securitised funds and utilising them effectively.
- 27. We recommend** improvements and innovations in existing financing mechanisms, including:
- a) Improving financial mechanisms to make financial resources become adequate, more predictable, preferably untied, and sustainable;
 - b) Enhancing regional cooperation and creating multi-stakeholder partnerships, especially by creating incentives for building regional backbone infrastructure;
 - c) Providing affordable access to ICTs, by the following measures:
 - i. Reducing international Internet costs charged by backbone providers, supporting, *inter alia*, the creation and development of regional ICT backbones and Internet Exchange Points to reduce interconnection cost and broaden network access;
 - ii. Encouraging ITU to continue the study of the question of the International Internet Connectivity (IIC) as an urgent matter to develop appropriate Recommendations;
 - d) Coordinating programmes among governments and major financial players to mitigate investment risks and transaction costs for operators entering less attractive rural and low income market segments;
 - e) Helping to accelerate the development of domestic financial instruments, including by supporting local microfinance instruments, ICT business incubators, public credit instruments, reverse auction mechanisms, networking initiatives based on local communities, digital solidarity and other innovations;
 - f) Improving the ability to access financing facilities with a view to accelerating the pace of financing of ICT infrastructure and services, including the promotion of North-South flows as well as North-South and South-South cooperation;
 - g) Multilateral, regional and bilateral development organisations should consider the utility of creating a virtual forum for the sharing of information by all stakeholders on potential projects, on sources of financing and on institutional financial mechanisms;
 - h) Enabling developing countries to be increasingly able to generate funds for ICTs and to develop financial instruments, including trust funds and seed capital adapted to their economies;

- i) Urging all countries to make concrete efforts to fulfil their commitments under the Monterrey Consensus;
- j) Multilateral, regional and bilateral development organisations should consider cooperating to enhance their capacity to provide rapid response with a view to supporting developing countries that request assistance with respect to ICT policies;
- k) Encouraging increased voluntary contributions;
- l) Making, as appropriate, effective use of debt relief mechanisms as outlined in the Geneva Plan of Action, including *inter alia* debt cancellation and debt swapping, that may be used for financing ICT for development projects, including those within the framework of poverty reduction strategies.

28. We welcome the Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF) established in Geneva as an innovative financial mechanism of a voluntary nature open to interested stakeholders with the objective of transforming the digital divide into digital opportunities for the developing world by focusing mainly on specific and urgent needs at the local level and seeking new voluntary sources of “solidarity” finance. The DSF will complement existing mechanisms for funding the Information Society, which should continue to be fully utilised to fund the growth of new ICT infrastructure and services.

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

PARAS 29-82

IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

83. Building an inclusive development-oriented Information Society will require unremitting multi-stakeholder effort. **We thus commit ourselves** to remain fully engaged—nationally, regionally and internationally—to ensure sustainable implementation and follow-up of the outcomes and commitments reached during the WSIS process and its Geneva and Tunis phases of the Summit. Taking into account the multi-faceted nature of building the Information Society, effective cooperation among governments, private sector, civil society and the United Nations and other international organisations, according to their different roles and responsibilities and leveraging on their expertise, is essential.

84. Governments and other stakeholders should identify those areas where further effort and resources are required, and jointly identify, and where appropriate develop, implementation strategies, mechanisms and processes for WSIS outcomes at international, regional, national and local levels, paying particular attention to people and groups that are still marginalised in their access to, and utilisation of, ICTs.

85. Taking into consideration the leading role of governments in partnership with other stakeholders in implementing the WSIS outcomes, including the Geneva Plan of Action, at the national level, **we encourage** those governments that have not yet done so to elaborate, as appropriate, comprehensive, forward-looking and sustainable national e-strategies, including ICT strategies and sectoral e-strategies as appropriate¹, as an integral part of national development plans and poverty reduction strategies, as soon as possible and before 2010.

¹ Throughout this text, further references to “e-strategies” are interpreted as including also ICT strategies and sectoral e-strategies, as appropriate.

86. We support regional and international integration efforts aimed at building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, and **we reiterate** that strong cooperation within and among regions is indispensable to support knowledge-sharing. Regional cooperation should contribute to national capacity building and to the development of regional implementation strategies.

87. We affirm that the exchange of views and sharing of effective practices and resources is essential to implementing the outcomes of WSIS at the regional and international levels. To this end, efforts should be made to provide and share, among all stakeholders, knowledge and know-how, related to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of e-strategies and policies, as appropriate. **We recognise** as fundamental elements to bridge the digital divide in developing countries, in a sustainable way, poverty reduction, enhanced national capacity building and the promotion of national technological development.

88. We reaffirm that through the international cooperation of governments and the partnership of all stakeholders, it will be possible to succeed in our challenge of harnessing the potential of ICTs as a tool, at the service of development, to promote the use of information and knowledge to achieve the internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, as well as to address the national and local development priorities, thereby further improving the socio-economic development of all human beings.

89. We are determined to improve international, regional and national connectivity and affordable access to ICTs and information through an enhanced international cooperation of all stakeholders that promotes technology exchange and technology transfer, human resource development and training, thus increasing the capacity of developing countries to innovate and to participate fully in, and contribute to, the Information Society.

90. We reaffirm our commitment to providing equitable access to information and knowledge for all, recognising the role of ICTs for economic growth and development. **We are committed** to working towards achieving the indicative targets, set out in the Geneva Plan of Action, that serve as global references for improving connectivity and universal, ubiquitous, equitable, non-discriminatory and affordable access to, and use of ICTs, considering different national circumstances, to be achieved by 2015, and to using ICTs, as a tool to achieve the internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, by:

- a) *mainstreaming and aligning national e-strategies*, across local, national, and regional action plans, as appropriate and in accordance with local and national development priorities, with in-built time-bound measures;
- b) *developing and implementing enabling policies* that reflect national realities and that promote a supportive international environment, foreign direct investment as well as the mobilisation of domestic resources, in order to promote and foster entrepreneurship, particularly Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs), taking into account the relevant market and cultural contexts. These policies should be reflected in a transparent, equitable regulatory framework to create a competitive environment to support these goals and strengthen economic growth;
- c) *building ICT capacity* for all and confidence in the use of ICTs by all -- including youth, older persons, women, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, and remote and rural communities -- through the improvement and delivery of relevant education and training programmes and systems including lifelong and distance learning;
- d) *implementing effective training and education*, particularly in ICT science and technology, that motivates and promotes participation and active involvement of girls and women in the decision-making process of building the Information Society;

- e) *paying special attention to the formulation of universal design concepts and the use of assistive technologies* that promote access for all persons, including those with disabilities;
- f) *promoting public policies aimed at providing affordable access* at all levels, including community-level, to hardware as well as software and connectivity through an increasingly converging technological environment, capacity building and local content;
- g) *improving access to the world's health knowledge and telemedicine services*, in particular in areas such as global cooperation in emergency response, access to and networking among health professionals to help improve quality of life and environmental conditions;
- h) *building ICT capacities* to improve access and use of postal networks and services;
- i) *using ICTs to improve access to agricultural knowledge*, combat poverty, and support production of and access to locally-relevant agriculture-related content;
- j) *developing and implementing e-government applications* based on open standards in order to enhance the growth and interoperability of e-government systems, at all levels, thereby furthering access to government information and services, and contributing to building ICT networks and developing services that are available anywhere and anytime, to anyone and on any device;
- k) *supporting educational, scientific, and cultural institutions*, including libraries, archives and museums, in their role of developing, providing equitable, open and affordable access to, and preserving diverse and varied content, including in digital form, to support informal and formal education, research and innovation; and in particular supporting libraries in their public service role of providing free and equitable access to information and of improving ICT literacy and community connectivity, particularly in underserved communities;
- l) *enhancing the capacity of communities* in all regions to develop content in local and/or indigenous languages;
- m) *strengthening the creation of quality e-content*, on national, regional and international levels;
- n) *promoting the use of traditional and new media* in order to foster universal access to information, culture and knowledge for all people, especially vulnerable populations and populations in developing countries and using, *inter alia*, radio and television as educational and learning tools;
- o) *Reaffirming the independence, pluralism and diversity of media, and freedom of information* including through, as appropriate, the development of domestic legislation, **we reiterate** our call for the responsible use and treatment of information by the media in accordance with the highest ethical and professional standards. **We reaffirm** the necessity of reducing international imbalances affecting the media, particularly as regards infrastructure, technical resources and the development of human skills. These reaffirmations are made with reference to Geneva Declaration of Principles paragraphs 55 to 59.
- p) *strongly encouraging ICT enterprises and entrepreneurs to develop and use environment-friendly production processes* in order to minimise the negative impacts of the use and manufacture of ICTs and disposal of ICT waste on people and the environment. In this context, it is important to give particular attention to the specific needs of the developing countries;

- q) *incorporating regulatory, self-regulatory, and other effective policies and frameworks to protect children and young people from abuse and exploitation through ICTs into national plans of action and e-strategies;*
- r) *promoting the development of advanced research networks, at national, regional and international levels, in order to improve collaboration in science, technology and higher education;*
- s) *promoting voluntary service, at the community level, to help maximise the developmental impact of ICTs;*
- t) *promoting the use of ICTs to enhance flexible ways of working, including teleworking, leading to greater productivity and job creation.*

91. We recognise the intrinsic relationship between disaster reduction, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and that disasters seriously undermine investment in a very short time and remain a major impediment to sustainable development and poverty eradication. **We are clear** as to the important enabling role of ICTs at the national, regional and international levels including:

- a) Promoting technical cooperation and enhancing the capacity of countries, particularly developing countries, in utilising ICT tools for disaster early warning, management and emergency communications, including dissemination of understandable warnings to those at risk;
- b) Promoting regional and international cooperation for easy access to and sharing of information for disaster management, and exploring modalities for the easier participation of developing countries;
- c) Working expeditiously towards the establishment of standards-based monitoring and worldwide early-warning systems linked to national and regional networks and facilitating emergency disaster response all over the world, particularly in high-risk regions.

92. We encourage countries, and all other interested parties, to make available child helplines, taking into account the need for mobilization of appropriate resources. For this purpose, easy-to-remember numbers, accessible from all phones and free of charge, should be made available.

93. We seek to digitise our historical data and cultural heritage for the benefit of future generations. **We encourage** effective information management policies in the public and private sectors, including the use of standards-based digital archiving and innovative solutions to overcome technological obsolescence, as a means to ensure the long-term preservation of, and continued access to, information.

94. We acknowledge that everyone should benefit from the potential that the Information Society offers. Therefore, **we invite** governments to assist, on a voluntary basis, those countries affected by any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impedes the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries, and that hinders the well-being of their population.

95. We call upon international and inter-governmental organisations to develop, within approved resources, their policy analysis and capacity building programmes, based on practical and replicable experiences of ICT matters, policies and actions that have led to economic growth and poverty alleviation, including through the improved competitiveness of enterprises.

96. We recall the importance of creating a trustworthy, transparent and non-discriminatory legal, regulatory and policy environment. To that end, **we reiterate** that ITU and other regional organisations

should take steps to ensure rational, efficient and economic use of, and equitable access to, the radio-frequency spectrum by all countries, based on relevant international agreements.

97. We acknowledge that multi-stakeholder participation is essential to the successful building of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society and that governments could play an important role in this process. **We underline** that the participation of all stakeholders in implementing WSIS outcomes, and following them up on national, regional and international levels with the overarching goal of helping countries to achieve internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, is key to that success.

98. We encourage strengthened and continuing cooperation between and among stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of the Geneva and Tunis outcomes, for instance through the promotion of national, regional and international multi-stakeholder partnerships including Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), and the promotion of national and regional multi-stakeholder thematic platforms, in a joint effort and dialogue with developing and less developed countries, development partners and actors in the ICT sector. In that respect, **we welcome** partnerships such as the ITU-led “Connect the World” initiative.

99. We agree to ensure the sustainability of progress towards the goals of WSIS after the completion of its Tunis phase and **we decide**, therefore, to establish a mechanism for implementation and follow-up at national, regional and international levels.

100. At the national level, based on the WSIS outcomes, **we encourage** governments, with the participation of all stakeholders and bearing in mind the importance of an enabling environment, to set up a national *implementation* mechanism, in which:

- a) National e-strategies, where appropriate, should be an integral part of national development plans, including Poverty Reduction Strategies, aiming to contribute to the achievement of internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals;
- b) ICTs should be fully mainstreamed into strategies for Official Development Assistance (ODA) through more effective information-sharing and co-ordination among development partners, and through analysis and sharing of best practices and lessons learned from experience with ICT for development programmes;
- c) Existing bilateral and multilateral technical assistance programmes, including those under the UN Development Assistance Framework, should be used whenever appropriate to assist governments in their implementation efforts at the national level;
- d) Common Country Assessment reports should contain a component on ICT for development.

101. At the regional level:

- a) Upon request from governments, regional inter-governmental organisations in collaboration with other stakeholders should carry out WSIS implementation activities, exchanging information and best practices at the regional level, as well as facilitating policy debate on the use of ICT for development, with a focus on attaining the internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals;
- b) UN Regional Commissions, based on request of Member States and within approved budgetary resources, may organise regional WSIS follow-up activities in collaboration with regional and sub-regional organisations, with appropriate frequency, as well as assisting Member States with technical and relevant information for the development of regional strategies and the implementation of the outcomes of regional conferences;

- c) **We consider** a multi-stakeholder approach and the participation in regional WSIS implementation activities by the private sector, civil society, and the United Nations and other international organisations to be essential.

102. At the international level, bearing in mind the importance of the enabling environment:

- a) *Implementation and follow-up* of the outcomes of the Geneva and Tunis phases of the Summit should take into account the main themes and action lines in the Summit documents;
- b) Each UN agency should act according to its mandate and competencies, and pursuant to decisions of their respective governing bodies, and within existing approved resources;
- c) Implementation and follow-up should include inter-governmental and multi-stakeholder components.

103. **We invite** UN agencies and other inter-governmental organisations, in line with UNGA Resolution 57/270 B, to facilitate activities among different stakeholders, including civil society and the business sector, to help national governments in their implementation efforts. **We request** the UN Secretary-General, in consultation with members of the UN system Chief Executives Board for coordination (CEB), to establish within the CEB, a UN Group on the Information Society consisting of the relevant UN bodies and organisations with the mandate to facilitate the implementation of WSIS outcomes and to suggest to CEB that, in considering lead agency(ies) of this Group, it takes into consideration the experience of and activities in the WSIS process undertaken by ITU, UNESCO and UNDP.

104. **We further request** the UN Secretary-General to report to the UNGA through ECOSOC by June 2006, on the modalities of the inter-agency coordination of the implementation of WSIS outcomes including recommendations on the follow-up process.

105. **We request** that ECOSOC oversees the system-wide follow-up of the Geneva and Tunis outcomes of WSIS. To this end, **we request** that ECOSOC, at its substantive session of 2006, reviews the mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), including considering the strengthening of the Commission, taking into account the multi-stakeholder approach.

106. WSIS implementation and follow-up should be an integral part of the UN integrated follow-up to major UN conferences and should contribute to the achievement of internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals. It should not require the creation of any new operational bodies.

107. International and regional organisations, should assess and report regularly on universal accessibility of nations to ICTs, with the aim of creating equitable opportunities for the growth of ICT sectors of developing countries.

108. **We attach great importance** to multi-stakeholder implementation at the international level, which should be organised taking into account the themes and action lines in the Geneva Plan of Action, and moderated or facilitated by UN agencies when appropriate. An Annex to this document offers an indicative and non-exhaustive list of facilitators/moderators for the action lines of the Geneva Plan of Action.

109. The experience of, and the activities undertaken by, UN agencies in the WSIS process—notably ITU, UNESCO and UNDP—should continue to be used to their fullest extent. These three agencies should play leading facilitating roles in the implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action and organise a meeting of moderators/facilitators of action lines, as mentioned in the Annex.

110. The coordination of multi-stakeholder implementation activities would help to avoid duplication of activities. This should include, *inter alia*, information exchange, creation of knowledge, sharing of best practices, and assistance in developing multi-stakeholder and public/private partnerships.

111. We request the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to make an overall review of the implementation of WSIS outcomes in 2015.

112. We call for periodic evaluation, using an agreed methodology, such as described in paragraphs 113-120.

113. Appropriate indicators and benchmarking, including community connectivity indicators, should clarify the magnitude of the digital divide, in both its domestic and international dimensions, and keep it under regular assessment, and track global progress in the use of ICTs to achieve internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals.

114. The development of ICT indicators is important for measuring the digital divide. **We note** the launch, in June 2004, of the *Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development*, and its efforts:

- a) to develop a common set of core ICT indicators; to increase the availability of internationally comparable ICT statistics as well as to establish a mutually-agreed framework for their elaboration, for further consideration and decision by the UN Statistical Commission;
- b) to promote capacity building in developing countries for monitoring the Information Society;
- c) to assess the current and potential impact of ICTs on development and poverty reduction;
- d) to develop specific gender-disaggregated indicators to measure the digital divide in its various dimensions.

115. We also note the launch of the *ICT Opportunity Index* and the *Digital Opportunity Index*, which will build upon the common set of core ICT indicators as they were defined within the *Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development*.

116. We stress that all indices and indicators must take into account different levels of development and national circumstances.

117. The further development of these indicators should be undertaken in a collaborative, cost-effective and non-duplicative fashion.

118. We invite the international community to strengthen the statistical capacity of developing countries by giving appropriate support at national and regional levels.

119. We commit ourselves to review and follow up progress in bridging the digital divide, taking into account the different levels of development among nations, so as to achieve the internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, assessing the effectiveness of investment and international cooperation efforts in building the Information Society, identifying gaps as well as deficits in investment and devising strategies to address them.

120. The sharing of information related to the implementation of WSIS outcomes is an important element of evaluation. **We note with appreciation** the *Report on the Stocktaking of WSIS-related activities*, which will serve as one of the valuable tools for assisting with the follow-up, beyond the conclusion of the Tunis Phase of the Summit, as well as the “*Golden Book*” of initiatives launched during the Tunis phase. **We encourage** all WSIS stakeholders to continue to contribute information on their activities to the public WSIS stocktaking database maintained by ITU. In this regard, **we invite** all countries to gather information at the national level with the involvement of all stakeholders, to contribute to the stocktaking.

121. There is a need to build more awareness of the Internet in order to make it a global facility which is truly available to the public. **We call upon the UNGA** to declare 17 May as World Information Society Day to help to raise awareness, on an annual basis, of the importance of this global facility, on the issues dealt with in the Summit, especially the possibilities that the use of ICT can bring for societies and economies, as well as of ways to bridge the digital divide.

122. We request the Secretary-General of the Summit to report to the General Assembly of the United Nations on its outcome, as requested in UNGA Resolution 59/220.

Annex

Action Line

C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development

C2. Information and communication infrastructure

C3. Access to information and knowledge

C4. Capacity building

C5. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs

C6. Enabling environment

C7. ICT Applications

- E-government
- E-business
- E-learning
- E-health
- E-employment
- E-environment

- E-agriculture
- E-science

C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content

C9. Media

C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society

C11. International and regional cooperation

**Possible
moderators/facilitators**

ECOSOC/UN Regional
Commissions/ITU

ITU

ITU/UNESCO

UNDP/UNESCO/ITU/

UNCTAD

ITU

ITU/UNDP/UN REGIONAL
COMMISSIONS/UNCTAD

UNDP/ITU

WTO/UNCTAD/ITU/UPU

UNESCO/ITU/UNIDO

WHO/ITU

ILO/ITU

WHO/WMO/UNEP/UN-
Habitat/ITU/ICAO

FAO/ITU

UNESCO/ITU/UNCTAD

UNESCO

UNESCO

UNESCO/ECOSOC

UN REGIONAL
COMMISSIONS/

UNDP/ITU/UNESCO/ECOSOC
