

**The World Summit on the Information Society
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Information and communication technology is a key to the future prosperity of all nations.

Prosperity in the United States owes much to this technology. Today the information and communication technology industry comprises only eight percent of all enterprises in the American economy, but it produces 29 percent of U.S. exports, generates high quality jobs, and contributes strongly to our productivity growth in all sectors. An estimated 40% of U.S. productivity growth between 1995 and 2002 has been attributed to information technology. Our ability to seize the opportunities afforded by information and communication technology depends upon a philosophy of shared optimism about the power of individual creativity and entrepreneurship as the ultimate source of economic strength.

These human capabilities are universal. Every country has the potential to develop an information-based economy. For this reason the United States welcomes the global consensus that has emerged this week.

Technical innovation does not occur in a vacuum. It relies on an infrastructure of science, of skills, and of a nurturing environment for entrepreneurial fulfillment. My country is deeply committed to this algorithm of technology-based innovation. We endeavor to be a leader in its application. Our President, George W. Bush, has made continual development of the science and technology infrastructure for ICT a high priority. Our Government today invests more than \$2 billion annually in information technology R&D activities including aspects of large scale and broadband networking, advanced computing, software, and information management technologies.

The United States is already demonstrating its commitment to expanding international digital opportunity by incorporating information and communication technology throughout our international assistance efforts. Our Digital Freedom Initiative, for example, launched in Senegal earlier this year and expanded to Peru and Indonesia in November, is helping entrepreneurs make more effective use of information technology, leveraging existing infrastructure to expand connectivity, and promoting pro-growth policy and regulatory reform. We hope to expand the program to a dozen countries over the next five years.

Realizing this potential depends on the cultivation of science, skills, and business infrastructure. Innovation in the development and use of ICTs depends on three key principles:

First, domestic policies must encourage investment in research and innovation. This means supporting privatization, competition, and liberalization. Private investment is by far the largest source of funds for deployment of the world's communications and information networks, but its power cannot be released without stable and positive social and business environments. The consensus achieved this week supports this conclusion.

Second, investment in human capacity to utilize ICTs is essential. Infrastructure without people capable of using it is doomed. A trained and well-educated workforce is required to bring it to life. A vital communications infrastructure expresses the full range of cultural imagination, without the divisive barriers of censorship. Uncensored print and broadcast media bring new perspectives on old issues, and stimulate timely responses to emerging social needs. During the past week States have affirmed their commitment to freedom of the press as well as to independence, pluralism, and diversity of the media. We call upon all countries to affirm and implement Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Third, all consumers, innovators, and producers of content must have confidence their work will not be in vain. ICT products -- tools, networks, media content -- must be protected to the maximum possible extent. Respect for intellectual as well as physical property is a necessary part of the social infrastructure for success. This is an issue that transcends national boundaries, but together we can create a global culture of network security that seeks to protect users, no matter where they live. The consensus achieved this week emphasizes the importance of cyber-security.

These are the principles of success. Each nation that applies them will, we have no doubt, advance the prosperity of its people and the quality of its way of life.

The United States believes that this Summit is poised to take a significant step to enable all people to reap the benefits offered by the Information Society. We are committed to close partnership with governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations to implement the common vision of increased prosperity through information technology.

Thank you.