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**REPORT ON THE PREPARATION PROCESS  
LEADING TO PREPCOM-2**

**I Introduction**

1 The General Assembly of the United Nations on 21 December 2001 adopted Resolution A/RES/56/183 concerning the organization of a World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). That Resolution recommended creating an open-ended intergovernmental Preparatory Committee which would be responsible for the preparations for WSIS. Its tasks would include drawing up an agenda for the Summit, finalizing a draft declaration and a draft action plan, and deciding on the arrangements for participation by other stakeholders. The Resolution further invited governments to participate actively in the WSIS preparatory process and encouraged other intergovernmental organizations, including international and regional institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector to contribute to, and actively participate in, the intergovernmental preparatory process of the Summit and the Summit itself.

**II Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee (PrepCom)**

**2 PrepCom presidency**

The first meeting of the intergovernmental WSIS Preparatory Committee, convened by the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), took place in Geneva from 1 to 5 July 2002. A total of 969 delegates, representing 142 governments, numerous international organizations, and groups from the private sector and civil society, elected as President of the Committee Mr Adama Samassékou of Mali. Mr Samassékou, who served for seven years (from 1993 to 2000) as Mali's minister of education, is currently the president of the African Academy of Languages. He is very active in the work of volunteer organizations, being the founding president of the People's Movement for Human Rights Education.

**3 WSIS Bureau**

At its first meeting PrepCom elected fourteen Vice-Presidents (three from each region of the UN system, and two more ex officio from the host countries, Switzerland and Tunisia). Together with Committee President Samassékou, they constitute the Bureau of WSIS. The Bureau members are drawn from the following countries: Republic of South Africa, Brunei Darussalam, Brazil,

Dominican Republic, United States of America, Finland, France, Latvia, Libya, Mali, Mexico, Romania, Japan, Pakistan, Russia, Switzerland and Tunisia.

#### **4 Arrangements for participation by other stakeholders in WSIS**

The arrangements for non-government stakeholders to participate in the Summit preparation process<sup>1</sup> were also decided at the first PrepCom meeting. As for their participation in the Summit itself, those arrangements will be decided at the third PrepCom meeting in September 2003.

### **III WSIS Preparatory process**

#### **III.A Contents**

#### **5 Draft declaration and draft action plan for WSIS**

The Bureau membership decided to authorize the President, Mr Samassékou, to give direction to the Summit preparatory process with regards to content, with a particular emphasis on the principles of transparency and involving all the major stakeholders in the process.

In keeping with this, the Bureau membership asked Mr Samassékou, with the help of an informal drafting group, to prepare a preliminary draft declaration and action plan for WSIS, which would form the basis for discussing the content of the Summit at the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee in February 2003. Upon consideration, the President came to the conclusion that it was up to PrepCom-2 to elaborate the draft declaration and action plan through a participatory and effective process, and decided therefore to produce an orientation document instead. As he explained to the Bureau members, this would be an informal document, produced under his authority but in no way to be considered as the outcome of any preliminary negotiations between the various Summit stakeholders.

The members of the informal drafting group were chosen with a view to not only bringing together experts with great experience in information society issues, but also balancing representation from all the various groups of information society stakeholders and achieving geographical balance. The experts were invited strictly as private persons and not as representatives of any country, region or employer.

The informal drafting group met from 13 to 16 December 2002 at Glion (Montreux, Switzerland). For their discussions the group experts drew on the Bamako and Bucharest Declarations, on the document produced by the 16-18 September informal meeting of PrepCom-1 Sub-Committee 2<sup>2</sup> and on written contributions which the various information society stakeholders had submitted to the WSIS Executive Secretariat prior to 7 December.

At the end of January 2003, the result of their work was published on the WSIS website under the title "Proposal of an orientation document for PrepCom-2: Information and communication for all".

The Glion meeting was organized and funded by Switzerland.

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<sup>1</sup> See WSIS/PC-1/DOC/9 and WSIS/PC-1/DOC/9(Add.1).

<sup>2</sup> See [http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents/listing-all-pc.asp?lang=en?&c\\_event=pc/2](http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents/listing-all-pc.asp?lang=en?&c_event=pc/2)

### **III.B The Summit framework: two phases**

#### **6 The Geneva - Tunis framework**

Following consultation with the competent authorities of the two host countries, the following framework for the two phases of WSIS will be proposed to the participants of PrepCom-2.

- Prior to the start of the first phase, an international colloquium will be organized by UNESCO. It will bring together eminent thinkers (Nobel prize-winners, leading academics and philosophers) having an interest in the information society and a vision to share, in order to consider the long-term implications and challenges of the digital revolution and present the WSIS participants with their vision. A global wake-up call such as this should establish the intellectual credentials of the Summit.
- An initial response to this challenge would be provided in the first phase of WSIS, with the adoption, in December 2003 at Geneva, of a **Statement of Principle** and an **Action Plan** that will give substance to the hopes raised by the Summit.
- Evaluation of the implementation of decisions taken at Geneva, and using the second phase of the Summit, at Tunis, to broaden the scope of deliberations and actions set in motion during the previous stages. The objective is to agree on long-term commitments that could be embodied in a **Charter of Ethical Conduct**, to be proposed to states and to other major stakeholders in the information society.

#### **IV Raising the profile of WSIS**

The Bureau membership also approved Mr Samassékou's initiatives to meet with heads of state interested in the Summit and with United Nations authorities and agencies, and with officials of international organizations and other bodies and institutions from the public sector, the private sector and civil society; the goal being to rally them to take an active part in the preparations and in the Summit itself.

#### **7 Participation in international conferences**

In his capacity as President of the WSIS Preparatory Committee, Mr Samassékou participated in several conferences and other events with a view to informing the participants about Summit preparations and sharing his vision.

- 23rd University Summer Course in Communication, 26-30 August, Hourtain
- World Summit on Sustainable Development, 26 August-4 September 2002, Johannesburg
- GlobalCN 2002, the third world congress on community networks of the digital age, 9-13 October 2002, Montreal
- General Assembly of the United Nations, Commission II, 16 October 2002, New York
- Bishkek-Moscow conference on the information society (WSIS preparatory conference for CIS countries), 22-24 October 2002, Moscow
- G77 High-level conference on science and technology, 27-30 October 2002, Dubai
- Civil society consultative meeting in preparation for WSIS, UNESCO, 27-28 November 2002, Paris
- Ministerial meeting of francophone countries, 12-13 December 2002, Lausanne
- Asia-Pacific Regional Conference for WSIS, 13-15 January 2003, Tokyo
- Latin America and Caribbean Regional Conference for WSIS, 29-31 January 2003, Bávaro, Dominican Republic

## **8 Bilateral meetings and consultation**

Since his election in July 2002, the President of PrepCom has held bilateral meetings or consultations with top authorities in the two host countries (the president and the minister of foreign affairs of the Swiss Confederation, and the Tunisian prime minister, minister of communication and minister of foreign affairs), regional conferences preparing for WSIS (the president and the minister of foreign affairs, minister for international cooperation, and minister for communication and new information technologies of Mali; the president and the minister for telecommunication of Romania; the prime minister and minister for telecommunication of Japan; and the president, vice-president and under-secretary of state of the Dominican Republic). He has also met with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his staff in New York, with the directors-general of United Nations agencies and international organizations in Geneva, and with a large number of heads of permanent missions to the international organizations in Geneva involved in WSIS. The President used these meetings (in some cases, more than one meeting) to inform his listeners about Summit preparations, issues and objectives, and, above all, to share with them his vision of the overall process.

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