ICT must serve SD

**Statement by Thomas Ruddy, Environment Caucus, to the
Intergovernmental Bureau Drafting Group,
WSIS, PrepCom 2, Geneva, 27.2.03**

Our civil society working group on content and themes has looked over your draft declaration, and we of the Environment and ICT Caucus applaud the mention of sustainable development (SD) there. Under the section heading Common Vision" – SD is mentioned 5 times. I hope it is not only aspirational. It needs to be filled with meaning: ICT must serve SD.

Under the section heading "Key principles" (page 9, under Item 10) "Int. coop." we think the draft declaration should refer to UN events such as

- Johannesburg Summit on SD

- Basel Convention on Toxic Waste for electronic waste -- *negative* effects of ICT use

- Kyoto Protocol and energy consumption of the Internet

In fact, attention to that same energy consumption of the Internet is a demand made in a document we have handed to the Chair of the drafting group, as my colleague Guillaume Cheneviere just indicated. Please acknowledge it. Furthermore our comments on the draft Action Plan are forthcoming.

Two side-events, one on Tuesday and another today, have focussed on the *positive* effects of ICT use. Let us now look at them more closely.

Our Environment and ICT Caucus, built around a core of Swiss academics, has contributed a paragraph in a civil society document dated 26.2.03 and headed "CS Contribution on Common Vision". Attention should be paid to the potential of ICTs to increase ecological efficiency. There is a great potential benefit thr. services such as use of teleconferencing instead of burning aircraft fuel, for instance.

Yes, the potential of technology is great -- but low costs of computers rebound in an increase in consumption, a "market failure". Hence there is an imp. role for govt: to add a framework to guide structural change, to promote new sustainable lifestyles for developing countries to emulate .

ICT must serve SD.