



WSIS

INTERSESSIONAL MEETING

Paris, 15-18 juillet 2003

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Secretary-General
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It is a great pleasure for us that we can organize this inter-sessional meeting here on the premises of UNESCO supported by UNESCO staff. I appreciate very much the understanding and generous gesture of Director General Matsuura for the preparation of WSIS.

At this critical moment, just five months before the Summit, in my capacity of Secretary General of the Prepcom, I would like to reiterate the following few points to you.

- o Firstly, I would urge you to work so as to try and significantly shorten the length of the Action Plan and Declaration, and not to leave this huge task to PrepCom-3. I have met many Heads of State and most of them wondered what they would get by coming to the Summit and what they would discuss at the Summit. If we cannot answer these simple questions now we cannot convince them to participate in the Summit. Their schedule will be fixed now. In September, it will be too late to have a clearer idea for them.
- o Secondly, I believe that we have had some very valuable contributions submitted by the "observer" community and would request that these be considered carefully and taken into account. It is observers, international organizations, industry and NGOs that will implement the Action Plans you will make as a draft for the Summit. Their opinions must be heard seriously. Action plans not consulted with them are very difficult to implement by them. Impractical Action Plans are simply "pies in the sky".
- o Thirdly, it is necessary to tackle contentious issues now and not simply set them aside for discussion later. These are the issues that attract Heads of State to come to the Summit. Do not escape from these. The Summit is the meeting to get political commitments at the highest level. Let us to be bold enough to attack those issues that could not be solved at normal bureaucratic levels.

A four-day meeting is too short for us. We must have a firm will to finish the work within four days. The secretariat is ready to hold night sessions as from today.

I wish you a very successful meeting.
