

Civil Society comments on Point E of the Action Plan
Concerning its implementation and follow-up

Ms President, Mr Secretary General, Mr President, fellow delegates,

My name is Bertrand de LA CHAPELLE, animator of the OpenWSIS Initiative, speaking on behalf of the Civil Society Caucus on follow-up between Geneva and Tunis.

In December, Governments will adopt the WSIS Action Plan.

But a key question for civil society is : how will this WSIS Action Plan be implemented between Geneva and Tunis ? with what participation of non-governmental actors ?

This is a common concern for all stakeholders, as interventions from various governments, private sector and international organizations during the last days have already showed.

- They all **reaffirm that some follow-up process must be established** to monitor, coordinate and structure work between Geneva and Tunis.
- They also all reaffirm that governments cannot implement the Action Plan alone. Participation of civil society, the private sector and international organisations is necessary, even more than in the present drafting phase. Therefore, there is little doubt that **any follow-up mechanism need to be multi-stakeholder**.
- Problem is : for such a multi-stakeholder follow-up mechanism to be in place in early 2004, **discussion on its structure and mission must be launched right after PrepCom3** at the latest.
- And **this discussion itself can only be fruitful if conducted in a format associating all categories of stakeholders**, including civil society.

Let me say it again : a multi-stakeholder process is needed; discussion on its structure and mission should be launched at PrepCom3 and most importantly, be conducted itself in a multi-stakeholder format.

At the end of this intersession, civil society wants to stress the importance it attaches to the last but essential point E of the Action Plan and indicate its readiness to fully address it during PrepCom3 and after.

Representatives of governments, you need civil society for this Action Plan to have a chance to be really implemented; civil Society is ready to do its part; associate it.

Salman Rushdie once said : "only those who step out of the frame can see the whole picture". **WSIS is not just about producing another ambitious Action Plan with weak follow-up**. As President Samassekou was among the first to mention, it mission is to build a new, more inclusive way to address the world's pressing issues.

Therefore, building an efficient follow-up mechanism allowing all willing entities to participate is not only our common interest; **it is our common responsibility**.

Thank you for your attention.