President of the PrepCom of the Tunis Phase

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE GROUP OF FRIENDS OF THE CHAIR

1.   The Group of Friends of the Chair (GFC) was created in accordance with the decision of PrepCom-1 (Hammamet), and following discussion within the WSIS Bureau, in order to prepare a document to serve as a basis for negotiations in PrepCom-2.

2.   The membership of the Group comprised representatives from six governments from each region, plus five regional coordinators and the two host countries. The secretary-general of the ITU and a representative of the secretary-general of the UN participated as ex-officio members of the group. Non-member governments participated in the meeting as observers.

3.   The Group held 6 meeting days between 22 October 2004 and 11 January 2005. Some 2.5 days of the meetings were held as "special sessions" with participation open to all stakeholders. In addition, members of the Group took part in consultations to discuss the work of the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms (TFFM), on 16 November 2004 (am) and in the week beginning 7 February 2005.

4.   The Group worked on the assumption that the outcome of the Tunis phase would be one document in two parts. To facilitate the work, the document was split into a Political Chapeau and an Operational Part.

5.   The Group developed drafts on the basis of contributions from all stakeholders, as well as discussions during the meetings. Contributions to the work of the Group and drafts of the rolling texts are available on the Group's website at www.itu.int/wsis/gfc.

6.   The two annexes to this document present the current versions of the Political Chapeau (Tunis Commitment) and Operational Part (Tunis Agenda for Action). Chapter two of the Operational Part, on financial mechanisms, is provisional and may be further revised ahead of PrepCom-2. These documents are presented for the consideration of PrepCom-2 as a possible basis for negotiations.

Annexes: Political Chapeau (Tunis Commitment).
                 Operational Part (Tunis Agenda for Action)

11 January 2005

[**Political chapeau / Tunis Commitment**

Idea	Text
From Geneva to Tunis	**1. We, the representatives of the peoples of the world, have gathered in Tunis from 16-18 November 2005 for this second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to reiterate** our unequivocal support for the *Declaration of Principles* and *Plan of Action* adopted at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in December 2003. **We reaffirm our desire and commitment** to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, premised on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and effective multilateralism, and respecting fully and upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, so that people everywhere can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, to achieve their full potential and to promote sustainable development, to improve quality of life, to eradicate poverty and to attain the internationally-agreed development goals of the Millennium Declaration. 2. The Tunis Summit represents a unique opportunity for us to strengthen the confidence in the future while its core subjects concerning the Information Society shift world attention away from narrowly-defined concepts to global ones, which transform peoples' activities and interactions in ways that challenge traditional assumptions. The implementation of the commitments undertaken in the Geneva Summit is taking place amidst accelerating development of ICTs, which impact policies, human, economic, social and cultural development, bringing about profound changes in society. 3. This Summit is an important stepping-stone in the world's efforts to eradicate poverty and to attain the internationally-agreed development goals of the Millennium Declaration. By the Geneva decisions, we established a solid long-term link between the WSIS process, and other major United Nations conferences and summits. **We call upon** governments and all stakeholders to join together to implement the commitments set forth in the Geneva Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action. In this context, the outcomes of the recently concluded Summit meeting of the General Assembly on the review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration are of special relevance. 4. **We seek to reaffirm** the commitments made in Geneva and build on them in Tunis by focussing on Financial Mechanisms for bridging the digital divide, on Internet Governance and related issues, as well as on follow-up and implementation of the Geneva and Tunis decisions, as referenced in chapters two, three and four of [the operational part of this document/the operational document: Tunis agenda for action].
Key principles	**5. We reaffirm** our resolution in the quest to ensure that everyone can benefit from the opportunities that ICTs can offer, by recalling that governments, as well as private sector, civil society and the United Nations and other international organizations, should work together to: improve access to information and communication infrastructure and technologies as well as to information and knowledge; build capacity; increase confidence and security in the use of ICTs; create an enabling environment at all levels; develop and widen ICT applications; foster and

	respect cultural diversity; recognize the role of the media; address the ethical dimensions of the Information Society; and encourage international and regional cooperation. **We confirm** that these are the key principles for building an inclusive Information society, the elaboration of which is found in the Geneva Declaration of Principles.
Development orientation	**6.** **We recognise** that knowledge is vital to human existence and that strengthening diffusion and exchange of knowledge would contribute to economic, social and cultural development, and help all countries reach the internationally-agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. **7.** Furthermore, ICTs have made it possible for a vastly larger population than at any time in the past to join in sharing and expanding the base of human knowledge, and contributing to its further growth and application to education, health and science. ICTs have enormous potential to expand access to quality education, to boost literacy and universal primary education, and to facilitate the learning process itself and thus lay the groundwork for a fully-inclusive and open information and knowledge society. **8.** **We also recognize** that, [just as] the ICT revolution can have a tremendous positive impact as an instrument of sustainable development[, in the absence of an appropriate enabling environment at national and international levels, it could reinforce and increase existing social and economic divisions, widen the gap between rich and poor countries, between regions, and between individuals—including between men and women]. **9.** **We reaffirm our commitment** to removing all obstacles to bridging the digital divide, particularly those that hinder the full achievement of the economic and social development of countries and the welfare of their citizens, in particular, in developing countries. **Alternate 9.** We urge states to take steps to assist in overcoming obstacles to bridge the digital divide, particularly those that impede the full achievement of the economic and social development by the population of the affected countries and hinder the well-being of their population. **10.** **We shall strive unremittingly**, therefore, to promote universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to ICTs for people everywhere, to ensure that the benefits are more evenly distributed between and within societies, and to bridge the digital divide in order to create digital opportunities for all. **Alternate 10+11: We shall strive unremittingly**, therefore, to promote universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to ICTs for people everywhere, to ensure that the benefits of the Information Society are more evenly distributed among and within societies, and to bridge the digital divide in order to create digital opportunities for all. In so doing, we shall pay special attention to the roles and special needs of all countries and all segments of society and **we reaffirm** the commitments taken in this regard in the Geneva Declaration of Principles. **11.** To that end, **we shall pay special attention** to the roles and particular needs of all countries and all segments of society, and reaffirm the commitments taken in this regard in the Geneva Declaration. **Alternate 11A.** To that end **we shall pay special attention** to the role and particular needs of children, young people, women, marginalized and vulnerable groups of

society including migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees, unemployed and underprivileged people, minorities and nomadic people, people with disabilities, poor people, particularly those living in remote, rural and marginalized urban areas, indigenous peoples, people of developing countries, countries with economies in transition, Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States, Landlocked Developing Countries, Highly Indebted Poor Countries, countries and territories under occupation, and countries recovering from conflict or natural disasters.

Alternate 11B. To that end, **we shall pay special attention** to the role and particular needs of the youth, women and older people and to the special situation of indigenous peoples. **We also recognize** the role and special needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups of society including the disabled, migrants, internally displaced persons, refugees, underprivileged and poor people and of people of countries facing adverse economic situations, geographic isolation, occupation, conflicts or natural disasters.

Further commitments	*We hereby undertake further commitments to …**
Resource mobilisation, including human resources	*We commit ourselves to mobilising resources, including human resources, to ….**
Participation and international cooperation	**12.** We are convinced that our goals can be accomplished through the involvement, cooperation and partnership of governments and all stakeholders and that international cooperation and solidarity at all levels are indispensable if the fruits of the Information Society are to be shared equitably by all.
Conclusion	**13.** Our efforts will not stop with the conclusion of the Summit. The emergence of the global Information Society to which we all contribute provides increasing opportunities for all our peoples and for the global community that were unimaginable only a few years ago. We must harness these opportunities. **14.** [**We strongly believe** that full and timely implementation of decisions we took in Geneva and in Tunis, the establishment of appropriate follow-up mechanisms thereto, and closely integrating this process in the overall strategy embodied in the Millennium Declaration—through openness, inclusiveness and transparency; promotion of co-operation among stakeholders; and flexibility—is the way to achieve this goal. **We therefore reaffirm our strong resolve** to develop and implement an effective and sustainable response to challenges and opportunities of building a truly global Information Society that benefits all our peoples.]

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* Note: *Text in italics indicates that additional contributions are required for drafting suggestions.*

Annex 2

11 January 2005

Operational part of the final document / Tunis Agenda for Action / Tunis Plan of implementation

Idea	Draft text	Sources
Chapter one	**From principles to action: A summit of sustainable solutions**	
General implementation strategies	1. **We recognise** that it is now time to move from principles to action, by encouraging stakeholders to take the Plan of Action one step further, identifying those areas in which progress has been made in implementing the commitments undertaken in Geneva, and by defining those areas where further efforts and resources are required.	G/OS
National e-strategies	2. **We acknowledge** the leading role of governments in implementing the WSIS Action Plan at the national level. **We encourage,** as appropriate, those governments that have not yet done so to elaborate comprehensive, forward looking and sustainable national e-strategies, as an integral part of national development plans, including poverty reduction strategies, in partnership with other stakeholders[, by 2008].	G
Regional and international implementation	3. **We value** regional and international integration efforts as a contribution to the development of the global Information Society, and strong cooperation within and among regions is indispensable. The regional dialogue should contribute to national capacity-building and to the development, as appropriate, of national e-strategies and, regional implementation strategies. South-South cooperation shall be enhanced in order to foster knowledge sharing.	G/OS
	4. Exchange of views and the sharing of effective practices are essential to implementing the Geneva decisions at the regional and international levels. To this end, efforts should be made to provide and share useful knowledge and know-how, related to the elaboration, monitoring and evaluation of national e-strategies and policies, as appropriate, in order to bridge the digital divide.	G/OS
International co-operation	5. **We reaffirm** that, through the cooperation and partnership of all stakeholders, it will be possible to succeed in our challenge of harnessing the potential of ICTs as a tool to achieve the development goals of the Millennium Declaration and thereby to continue improving the social welfare and development of all human beings.	G/OS
WSIS targets	6. **We are committed** to achieving the indicative targets, set out in the Plan of Action, that serve as global references for improving connectivity and access in the use of ICTs in promoting the objectives of the Plan of Action, to be achieved by 2015, and to using ICTs as a tool to achieve the development goals of the Millennium Declaration, by:	G
	a. mainstreaming and aligning national e-strategies across national	G/OS

	action plans, as appropriate, [with in-built time-bound measures/if possible, by 2008], aimed at achieving the development goals of the Millennium Declaration; b. designing and implementing enabling policies and a regulatory environment that is supportive of ICT entrepreneurship and that promotes investment and the mobilisation of domestic resources; c. building the ICT capacities of people and improving educational programmes to allow greater access to ICTs; d. promoting community volunteerism in the ICT4D sector; e. promoting public policies aimed at making/providing/ensuring affordable accessibility to hardware as well as software to populations living in developing regions, in particular in rural areas; f. improving access to the world's health knowledge, in areas as diverse as global cooperation in emergency response, to reaching health professionals and individual citizens to improve healthcare and quality of life; g. establishing monitoring and early-warning systems, using ICTs, to forecast and monitor the impact of natural and man-made disasters.	
Indicators	7. The Geneva Plan of Action identifies international performance evaluation and benchmarking, taking into account different national circumstances, as an important aspect of the follow-up and evaluation. **We applaud** the initiatives taken in this area, including by those key stakeholders involved in the statistical measurement of ICTs who have joined forces to create a global Partnership on "Measuring ICT for Development". We encourage national statistical offices to assist these efforts by providing data and technical support.	OS/G
Partnerships	8. **We recognize** that our goals can be accomplished through the involvement and cooperation of all Information Society stakeholders. **We encourage** continuing co-operation between and among stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of the Geneva and Tunis decisions, for instance through the promotion of Multi-stakeholder partnerships including Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), in a joint effort and dialogue with less developed countries, donors and actors in the ICT sector.	G/OS
Stocktaking	9. **We commit ourselves** to evaluate and follow-up progress in bridging the digital divide, taking into account different levels of development, so as to reach internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and to assess the effectiveness of investment and international cooperation efforts in building the Information Society. **We encourage** all WSIS stakeholders to continue to contribute new and updated information on their activities to the WSIS stocktaking database, which was launched in October 2004 by the WSIS-ES and will be maintained by ITU, so that it becomes a valuable tool, beyond the conclusion of the Tunis Phase of the Summit.	G/OS

Implementation of the Geneva and Tunis Plans of Action	10. In order to assure the sustainability of the WSIS process after the completion of its Tunis phase, **we agree to establish an implementation mechanism for the Geneva and Tunis Plans of Action**, based upon co-operation among governments and all stakeholders, with the overarching goal of helping countries and societies to achieve the development goals of the Millennium Declaration. To that end, for each Action Line in the Geneva and Tunis Plans of Action (as identified in the Annex), a team of stakeholders will work together to promote implementation. **We request the UN Secretary-General** to nominate, from among existing UN bodies or specialised agencies, those that will [moderate/coordinate] the work of each team, based on respect for their mandates and leveraging on their expertise, and within their existing resources.	G/OS
	11. The [moderator/coordinator] of each team identified in the Annex should periodically prepare a report on the implementation of the Geneva and Tunis Plans of Action based upon the information provided by, and the outputs from collaboration among, stakeholders, focussing particular attention on the progress towards achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals of the Millennium Declaration, and submit it to [a defined coordination body]. The [head of a defined coordination body] will submit regular reports to the UN General Assembly, following its existing rules of procedure. [Options for a defined coordination body (with participation of representatives of all stakeholders): • ITU/WSIS-ES; • "existing UN division" (within UN DESA) for following-up major UN conferences; • Newly-created UN Inter-agency task force, HLSOC-type, (supported by a 2-3 person secretariat); • Newly-created UN ICT Task Force-type forum (supported by 2-3 person secretariat); •]	G/OS
Chapter two+	**Financial mechanisms [for meeting the challenges of ICT for development]**	
TFFM mandate	12. We thank the UN Secretary-General for his efforts in creating the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms (TFFM) and we commend them on their report. 13. [*Mandate of the TFFM*]	G/OS
Scale of the	14. We recognise the existence of the digital divide and the	TFFM

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+ *Note: The text of chapter two is provisional, due to time limitations on the work of the Group of Friends of the Chair, and is subject to further revision ahead of PrepCom-2.*

problem		dilemma that this poses for many countries, which are forced to choose between many competing demands for development funds. We recognise the scale of the problem in bridging the digital divide, which will require huge investments in ICT infrastructure and services, and capacity building, over many years to come.	Back-ground
	15.	We agree that the financing of ICT for development needs to be placed in the context of the growing importance of the role assigned to ICTs, not only as a medium of communication, but also as a development enabler, and a tool for the achievement of the development goals of the Millennium Declaration.	Findings 2, 4
Effectiveness of existing financial mechanisms	16.	In the past, financing of ICTs in developing regions has been closely related to the business cycles of the ICT industry. A significant influx of financial resources in the ICT sector, as well as governmental mobilization, in many developing countries has had visible results: in less than 15 years, more than a billion people have gained access to telephones (fixed and mobile), and sometimes to computers, the Internet and other means of sharing information.	TFFM Findings 1, 6/G
	17.	We note that this investment has had the greatest development impact where ICT markets have been opened and private sector participation has been encouraged and where governments were aware of the importance of public policies aimed at bridging the digital divide.	Findings 3/G
	18.	We recognise that attracting investment in ICTs has depended crucially upon a supportive enabling environment for business and an ICT policy and regulatory environment that encompasses [open entry,] fair competition and market-friendly regulation.	Findings 3-5/G
	19.	We note that the vast majority of financing of ICT infrastructure and services has come from the private sector and that North-South flows are increasingly being augmented by South-South co-operation and domestic financing.	Findings 5-7/G
	20.	Multilateral and bilateral public donors are redirecting public resources to policy reforms and other development needs, including the mainstreaming of ICTs in the development sectors. We note that this reflects the growing importance of private sector investment in infrastructure. Nevertheless, we encourage multilateral and bilateral public donors to consider also providing more financial support for regions in need.	Findings 7, 8, 9, 12/G
Improvements and innovations of existing financing mechanisms	21.	Although there are many different funding mechanisms for ICTs for Development, we note that there is sometimes a mismatch between needs and available funding.	TFFM Findings 6-11/OS
	22.	We recognize that there are a number of areas where the current approaches to ICT for Development financing have devoted insufficient attention to date. These include:	C1

	a. ICT capacity-building programmes, materials, tools, educational funding and specialized training initiatives;	C2.1
	b. Communications access and connectivity for ICT services in remote rural areas, small island developing states and other locations presenting unique technological and market challenges;	C2.2
	c. Regional backbone infrastructure to link networks across borders in economically-disadvantaged regions;	C2.3
	d. Broadband capacity to Internet access at affordable prices;	
	e. Coordinated assistance for small countries;	C2.4
	f. ICT applications and content aimed at customers, communities and local institutions in the developing world.	C2.5 C2.6
	23. Although central responsibility for coordination rests with national governments, we recommend that greater cross-sectoral and cross-institutional coordination on financing programmes should be undertaken, both on the part of donors and recipients. This should include also coordination between donor governments and business entities.	C3 C3.1/G
	24. Accordingly, we recommend improvements and innovations in existing financing mechanisms, including:	C3
	a. Enhancing regional cooperation and creating multi-stakeholder partnerships; especially for trans-national infrastructure backbones;	C3.1+2
	b. Coordinating programmes among governments and major financial players to mitigate investment risks and transaction costs for operators entering less attractive rural and low income market segments;	C3.2
	c. Creating policy and regulatory incentives and more open access policies;	C1A1+2
	d. Identification and acknowledgement of the key role of ICTs in national poverty reduction strategies, and their elaboration in conjunction with e-strategies ;	C1T1+2
	e. Developing institutional and implementation capacity to support the use of national universal service/access funds, and further study of these mechanisms;	Findings 10;C1A2, C2
	f. Ensuring the relevance to developing countries of the information applications, services and local content delivered by ICTs;	Findings 13; C3.4
	g. Supporting the "scaling-up" of ICT-based pilot programmes;	
	h. Using ICTs in government as a catalyst for implementation of successful e-strategies;	Findings 14
	i. [Enabling tax, tariff, import, and business regulation policies designed to reduce risks and financial burdens for, and provide incentives to, ICT investors, start-up firms, and domestic financial resources;]	Findings 15 C1T4
	j. Helping to accelerate the development of domestic financial instruments including by supporting local microfinance instruments, ICT small business incubators, public credit instruments, digital solidarity and other innovations;	C3.3
	k. Building human resource and institutional capacity (knowledge) at every level for achieving Information Society objectives, especially in the public sector;	Findings

	l. Encouraging business sector entities to help jump-start wider demand for ICT services by supporting local producers, programmers, artists and small businesses in the applications and content fields.	16, 17; Findings 13; C3.4
Digital Solidarity Fund	*25.*	C3
Chapter three	**Internet governance [/ Internet-related public policy]**	
	[to be discussed following release of the final report of the WGIG]	
Chapter four	**The way ahead**	
Follow-up mechanism for WSIS	26. To build an Information Society will require unremitting effort. **We thus commit ourselves** to keep fully engaged, nationally, regionally and internationally, to ensure sustainable follow-up to the implementation of agreements and commitments reached during WSIS process and its Geneva and Tunis summits. Taking into account the multifaceted nature of building the Information Society, effective cooperation among all stakeholders is needed, based on respect for their mandates and leveraging on their expertise.	G
	27. [**We agree** that the follow-up to Internet governance should be separated from the other issues and organized as outlined in Chapter Three.]	G
	28. **We request the Secretary-General of the Summit** to report to the General Assembly of the United Nations on its outcome.	G
	29. **We request the Secretary-General of the United Nations** to provide—with the collaboration of all stakeholders, and fully utilizing the existing coordination mechanisms within or related to the United Nations—sustained follow-up within the United Nations system to the agreements and commitments reached at WSIS and to ensure effective secretariat support. The Secretary-General of the United Nations is further requested to submit a periodic report to the General Assembly of the United Nations on those follow-up efforts.	G

Annex

[Moderator/Coordinator]

Action Lines

C1. The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for Development	--
C2. Information and communication infrastructure	--
C3. Access to information and knowledge	--
C4. Capacity building	--
C5. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs	--
C6. Enabling environment	--
C7. ICT applications	--

- E-government
- E-business
- E-learning
- E-health
- E-employment
- E-environment
- E-agriculture
- E-science

C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content	--
C9. Media	--
C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society	--
C11. International and regional cooperation	--
B. Objectives, goals and targets	--
D. Digital Solidarity	--
E. Follow-up and evaluation	--

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