UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCEINTIFIC and CULTURAL ORGANISATION

Intersessional negotiation work
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Language suggestions concerning
the coordination of the
Implementation and Follow-Up process.

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These language suggestions are in the continuation of informal proposals made at the end of GFC7 and PrepCom3, and which has been further refined thanks to helpful discussions with many stakeholders. In a nutshell, it is proposed that the implementation and follow-up be conceived as natural continuation of the WSIS process, focusing on procedural, assessment and stocktaking issues, without re-negotiation of substantive issues.

Therefore the multi-stakeholder coordinating entity should be conceived as the continuation of the WSIS multi-stakeholder process, composed with a Governmental Bureau in Geneva, assisted by a Civil Society Bureau and a Business Bureau, while the ITU could continue to assume its leading managerial role, vis-à-vis the coordinating body, in the spirit of UN General Assembly Resolution 56/183 - 90th plenary meeting, 21December 2001:

The General Assembly, recognizing the urgent need to harness the potential of knowledge and technology for promoting the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration : .../... Invites the International Telecommunication Union to assume the leading managerial role in the executive secretariat of the Summit and its preparatory process;

*S*everal options have been suggested informally from the UN in New York : 1/ A new functional commission of ECOSOC, 2/ An existing commission of ECOSOC, 3/ The

general assembly and/or ECOSOC assumes direct responsability of the follow-up. It is clear that our proposition is not inconsistent with the third option, since a Governmental Bureau is a representation of the General Assembly. It is also interesting to underline that a new ECOSOC commission is a new operational body and it is clear from current texts that the notion of a new operational body does not reach consensus. The use of an existing ECOSCO commission such as Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) has been proposed by the delegation of Chile. However when one examines the mandate of this Commission :

The Commission was established to provide the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council with high-level advice on relevant issues through analysis and appropriate policy recommendations or options in order to enable those organs to guide the future work of the United Nations, develop common policies and agree on appropriate actions. In this context, the Commission acts as a forum for: -the examination of science and technology questions and their implications for development; -the advancement of understanding on science and technology policies, particularly in respect of developing countries and; -the formulation of recommendations and guidelines on science and technology matters within the United Nations system. It appears that the mandate of this commission is not all appropriate to deal with the issues of the WSIS. It has been proposed to redefine the mission of the CSTD so that it becomes an operational body able to coordinated the WSIS Follow-Up. These redefinition tactics are raising many questions. Firstly, it might appear as a relatively gross subterfuge in order to create *de facto* a new operational unit, while abiding to the letter, but not to the spirit, of some instructions given by a few capitals. Secondly, it not all obvious that ECOSOC, and the Science & Technology community would agree to *de facto* delete the CSTD whose current mandate appears quite essential on its own.

The UNESCO resolution (room document 4), whose draft is part of the UNESCO document 33C/41, has been adopted during the UNESCO 33rd General Conference on Wednesday 12 October 2005, by the Commission V. Since this resolution is a representation of the will of governements, after a formal vote, it must be therefore taken into account very seriously by the PrepCom process that should not be inconsistent with it. According to the draft oral report of the rapporteur of Commission V (17 October 2005), the paragraph 22.6 related to Internet Governance was deleted. Concerning the paragraph 22.8 and concerning the paragraph 22.8 "*endorsing the Director-General's approach to the implementation of and follow-up to the WSIS outcomes*", *some countries were not satisfied with this formulation feeling that it could imply agreement before the outcomes of the Summit were known. After extensive discussions, the Chair called for a vote, and the original wording in this section of the DR was adopted (57 in favor, 6 against and 5 abstentions). There was also extensive debate about the timing of reporting outcomes, with some feeling that the 34th Session of the General Conference is too far away. Mr Khan agreed that*

the Tunis Outcomes and the tasks assigned to UNESCO could be reported to the April 2006 session of the Executive Board and that a more comprehensive implementation progress report would be prepared for the next General Conference in 2007.

Concerning the resolution itself, it is interesting to notice governments have agreed to :

Endorse the Director-General's approach to the implementation of and follow-up to the WSIS outcomes, stressing in particular: (a) UNESCO's mandate and competence to act as a facilitator for the implementation of the Action Lines: "Access to information and knowledge"; "Capacity-building"; "E-learning and e-science (under `ICT applications')"; "Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content"; "Media", and "Ethical dimensions of the information society"; UNESCO's and ITU's prominent roles in the coordination of the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action, both at the Action Line level, and as needed in any overarching coordination mechanism or process and/or at the United Nations inter-agency level;

From the analysis of this decision by Governments, it appears that the concept of facilitators along specific Action Lines has been retained, and Goverments agree on a joint cooperation of ITU and UNESCO concerning the coordination process. Furthermore, it has come to our knowledge that ITU has reached a cooperation agreement with UNESCO and was welcoming the assistance of UNESCO. Therefore our proposition has been modified to reflect this most constructive evolution, and it is thus proposed that the executive Secretariat of the coordinating entity be operated jointly by ITU and UNESCO. It is possible that UNDP could be also welcome to join the Secretariat.

Since the follow-up is a process issue, it appears both logical and legally consistent that the multi-stakeholder body be constituted by a gouvernemental bureau, assisted in an effective advisory capacity by the Civil Society Bureau and the Business Bureau (CCBI). completed by a representative of each United Nation specialized agencies and programs. ITU and UNESCO might therefore be present as such, not withstanding their different roles in the executive secretariat.

Another great practical advantage is that we are relying on known existing entities that have become acquainted to each other, and that are familiar to the WSIS process.

It must be underlined that such a multi-bureau coordinating entity is not an operational body *per se*. The operational bodies are the UN specialized agencies that have been selected to implement and facilitate Action Lines and Cross-Cutting Themes (see below concerning Themes) as well as all other entities that are willing to implement the WSIS recommendations.

For all practical purposes, the tasks of the proposed multi-stakeholder coordinating body could be tentatively envisionned according to the following approach : The executive secretariat collects, within a inclusive bottom-up process, with inputs from all stakeholders, information updates concerning the WSIS

implementation by all operational units, most notably from the UN system, but also from all stakeholders, whether from governements (who never ceased to underline their leading roles), other International Organizations, Business sector or Civil Society. In order to manage this process, it appears required that all reporting operational units adopt an itemized implementation of the WSIS Geneva and Tunis plan of action in order to keep the coordination process at the procedural level. For example, if the coordinating body notice that for a specific recommendation, there are 5 UN agencies involved, 10 other intergovermental agencies, 40 governments, and 500 entities from the Business sector or Civil Society, it has to be sure that a proper coordination is been made between facilators and other stakeholders concerning the implementation of this specific recommendation and put all operational entities in contact. Conversely, if it appears that there is no operational entity taking care of a specific recommendation, the coordinating body should request the executive secretariat to contact the relevant facilitators so that action is taken and so that a call is made, by the facilitators, to all entities in the related field of competence. It could be envisionned that the coordinating body, could meet once every two months in Geneva. For governements, this would be a low cost operation since the Governemental Bureau can be easily staffed by their permanent missions in Geneva. The Civil Society Bureau would welcome support from the Secretariat and/or make use of teleconferencing tools.

Another good point is that our proposal falls in line with the call for the Reform of the UN system as it is hoped that a lean but yet efficient and flexible coordination process should contribute to avoid the much criticized UN bureaucratic inefficiencies and to avoid a waste of the scarce existing ressources within the UN system. It would quite contradictory for some states to advocate "laissez-faire" because of the fear of creating yet another operational bureaucracy, while at the same time complaining about the current UN bureaucratic inefficiencies, and yet doing nothing that would prevent those inefficiencies to continue as "business as usual".

Also in the spirit of the UN reform, it must be also underlined that the recognition of the role of the Civil Society Bureau within the WSIS process has been acknowledged as a major step forward in the Cardoso report.

Therefore the following language is suggested :

27. **We attach great importance** *to a coordinated multi-stakeholder implementation and follow-up at the international level, which would help to avoid duplication as well as omission of activities. organized along the Action Lines of Geneva Plan of Action, completed by Cross-Cutting themes, and facilitated by UN agencies (as outlined in the Annex). To achieve such a coordination, an overall coordination entity is formed that is composed from a governmental bureau in Geneva, assisted by, a civil society bureau, a business bureau, as well as representatives of all UN specialized agencies and programs. We*

request the UN Secretary-General to nominate a chair of the overall coordination body. The coordination body shall be not conceived as an operational body, but as a facilitator between various existing operational bodies in the UN system and elsewhere as needed. The overall coordination body submits regular reports to the UN General Assembly, following its existing rules of procedure and in the spirit of 57/270, reports to, and coordinates with ECOSOC concerning the cooperation with other UN Summits follow-up. ITU and UNESCO assume jointly the leading managerial role in the executive secretariat of the coordinating body and the follow-up process of the WSIS.

27a The number of members of the Governmental bureau is xxx, the number of members of the Civil Society Bureau and the Business Bureau shall not exceed this number, respectively.

This language proposition concerning the coordination of the implementation and the follow-up must be completed by our other language suggestion concerning an itemized implementation of the WSIS recommendations, otherwise the task of the coordinating body would be impossible and inefficient for all practical purposes.

Late Remark

We are quite concerned that the last proposals made today by the delegations from Iran, Egypt and the European Union that do not seem to be coherent with the positions that have been adopted by Governements at the 33rd General Conference of UNESCO on Wednesday 12 October 2005. Such incoherence, if it does persist, is a bad omen for the coherence of the implementation and follow-up process. It must be understood that this incoherence is structural because the various ministers and governemental departments are expressing different views as a representation of the will of their states in the various governing bodies of the UN specialized agencies and programs. The incoherence stems from the fact that the views of various ministries in the same governement are not coherent. The incoherence is further amplified in the case of large union or federation of states.

Therefore, it reinforces our proposal of a governemental bureau, with multi-stakeholder inputs, that only shall have the political authority to settle incoherent governement positions that could be adopted by the various governing bodies of UN specialized agencies and programs.

[**Annex**

          Action Line   **Moderators/facilitators**

C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development	ECOSOC/UN Regional Commissions/ITU
C2. Information and communication infrastructure	ITU
C3. Access to information and knowledge	ITU/UNESCO
C4. Capacity building	UNDP/UNESCO/ITU
C5. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs	ITU
C6. Enabling environment	ITU/UNDP
C7. ICT Applications	
• E-government	UNDP/ITU
• E-business	WTO/UNCTAD/ITU/UPU
• E-learning	UNESCO/ITU
• E-health	WHO/ITU
• E-employment	ILO/ITU
• E-environment	WHO/WMO/UNEP/UN-Habitat/ITU
• E-agriculture	FAO/ITU
• E-science	UNESCO/ITU
C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content	UNESCO
C9. Media	UNESCO
C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society	UNESCO/ECOSOC
C11. International and regional cooperation	UN REGIONAL COMMISSIONS/ UNDP/ITU/UNESCO/ECOSOC

Cross Cutting Themes	**Moderators/facilitators**
T1. Financial Mechanisms	World Bank / UNDP
T2 Multi-stakeholder partnerships	ITU / UNDP/ UNESCO

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