

## **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

ITU/01/2005

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies presents its compliments to the International Telecommunication Union, and has the honour to thank the ITU for its invitation to offer proposals with respect to the Tunis Commitment (WSIS-II/PC-3/DOC/8-E) relative to the Tunis Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society. The International Federation further has the honour to offer its proposals in the attachment to this Note.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the International Telecommunication Union the assurances of its highest consideration

Geneva, 12 September 2005

Enclosure mentioned.

<p><b>World Summit on the Information Society Proposals from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in relation to the draft Tunis Commitment</b></p>
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**Re: Development orientation**

Under 11<sup>th</sup> dot: Suggest add “without discrimination” and “We also recognise the special needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups of society facing adverse and harsh living conditions, inter alia, man-made and natural disasters.”.

To read in full the dot: “To that end, we shall pay special attention to the roles and particular needs of all countries and all segments of society **without discrimination**, and reaffirm the commitments taken in this regard in the Geneva Declaration. **We also recognise the special needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups of society facing adverse and harsh living conditions, inter alia, man-made and natural disasters.**”

***Rationale:** Red Cross Red Crescent experience shows that information is much in need in extremely difficult living conditions. Information given can assist people to evaluate the situation, locate themselves and help them come to terms with their experiences. It can also mitigate the worst effects of the situation and contribute to their psychosocial wellbeing.*

**Re: Further commitments**

Suggest add two dots after “*We hereby undertake further commitments to ...*”:

1. **“advance in information technology, together with capacity building in communication and information dissemination, to make the development people-centred.”**

***Rationale:** Advance in information technology provides exciting opportunities. However, ICT development alone is not enough. We must promote capacity building, including training and education, to extend the benefits of information and communication technologies.*

2. **“with participation of the community, develop an early warning system and information sharing network, build awareness to reduce the risk and suffering, and to increase the community resilience to all hazards.”**

***Rationale:** Participation of the community is essential for needs assessment and development planning. In addition, building awareness from the bottom up is as valuable as transmitting information from the top down. Only with community’s participation, we can build an all-inclusive Information Society and to achieve Millennium Development Goals.*

**Re: Resource mobilisation, including human resources**

After “*We commit ourselves to mobilising resources, including human resources, to ...*” Add:

**“support capacity building in ICT and communication areas, recognising information as a form of disaster response in its own right and is a powerful means linking preparedness, relief toward development”**

***Rationale:** The donor community needs to list ICT and related capacity building at top of the agenda for international development.*

<p><b>World Summit on the Information Society Proposals from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in relation to the draft Tunis Agenda for Action</b></p>
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**Re: WSIS targets**

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Under dot d: Add “through legislation, recognising that volunteer network represents a powerful driving force in building an enabling environment for effective communication and information sharing,”

To read in full the dot: “promoting community volunteerism in the ICT4D sector **through legislation, recognising that volunteer network represents a powerful driving force in building an enabling environment for effective communication and information sharing**”

***Rationale:** Volunteers play an extremely important role in awareness raising, information dissemination and in the development of their society. This seems the best place to make a reference to the contribution of volunteers, which in Red Cross Red Crescent experience is a critical determinant.*

Add one more dot at the end:

**“h. In line with the Hyogo Framework for Action, using information and communication technology, along with knowledge and education, to strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response and to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.”**

***Rationale:** We need to make cross reference with the outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction as the importance of the transfer of knowledge, technology and expertise to enhance capacity building for disaster risk reduction is stated in the Hyogo Framework for Action.*