



Towards Knowledge Societies

for Peace and Sustainable Development

First WSIS+10 Review Event

Final Statement

25-27 February 2013, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

Information and Knowledge For All:
an expanded vision and
a renewed commitment



Introduction

Ten years ago, the representatives of the peoples of the world, assembled in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005 for the first and second phases of the World Summit on the Information Society adopted a common vision of the Information Society, identified its key principles and outlined the main challenges towards an Information Society for All based on shared Knowledge.

The decade since WSIS has seen very considerable progress towards the people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society. The multi-stakeholder approach and implementation at the international level proved to be a considerable asset in taking forward the WSIS themes and Action Lines. Still, major challenges lay ahead for counteracting the wide disparities in development and enabling entire groups and countries to benefit from universal access to information and knowledge.

Therefore, we participants in the First WSIS+10 Review event, assembled in Paris, France, from 25 to 27 February 2013,

Committed to the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other universally recognized legal instruments,

Recalling that the Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO affirms, "that the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern",

Convinced that the development of information and communication technologies (ICTs) contributes to peace and sustainable development,

state the following:

- Multistakeholder processes have become an essential and unique approach to engagement in addressing issues affecting the knowledge and information societies.
- The key to empowering people for sustainable development and peace is education - education that reaches out to all members of society, education that provides genuine lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- In the context of the constant expansion of the Internet and the potential of the emerging ICTs to facilitate interaction and to generate and acquire knowledge, it is important to protect and promote freedom of expression.
- Indigenous and traditional knowledge are fundamental in building pathways to develop innovative processes and strategies for locally-appropriate sustainable development. This knowledge is integral to a cultural complex that also encompasses language, systems of classification, resource use practices, social interactions, ritual and spirituality. These unique ways of knowing are important facets of the world's cultural diversity, and provide a foundation for comprehensive knowledge societies.
- Scientific knowledge is a key factor in the innovation process and in finding pathways to sustainable development which are respectful of the environment. Science is acknowledged as a common or public good that is to be shared universally.
- Knowledge societies should seek to ensure full respect for cultural diversity, and that everyone has the right to express themselves, to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice.

- Global ICT connectivity and affordability are experiencing positive trends, although two thirds of the world's population still lack access to Internet. Accessibility, though, remains an important challenge.
- The rapid diffusion of mobile communication, establishment of Internet exchange points (IXPs), the increased availability of multilingual content and Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), and the advent of new services and applications, including m-health, mobile transactions, e-Government, e-education, e-business and developmental services, which offer great potential for the development of the knowledge societies.
- Broadband related infrastructure and access is one of the key aspects in achieving the information and knowledge societies, bringing social and economic benefits.
- Significant efforts have been made in order to strengthen the establishment of the national ICT and Broadband strategies and policies.

The participants also invite all Stakeholders to:

- Respect freedom of expression, as defined in the Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, media pluralism, multilingualism, equal access to education, science and technology and artistic and cultural expressions remain essential for progress towards inclusive knowledge societies, and enhanced cultural diversity. Freedom of expression off-line applies on-line.
- Further promote universal access to information and knowledge with due respect for free flow of information.
- Pursue the goal of universal access to, and preservation of, information in order to build sustainable knowledge societies. In the quest for universal access to information and knowledge attention should be paid to infrastructure, accessibility to quality multilingual content and to application of knowledge, public access and building capacities of people to leverage information for sustainable development.
- Harness the potential of ICTs to help in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.
- Participants are also invited to recognize the importance of maintaining an open Internet based on open standards development processes, as key enablers for an inclusive knowledge and information societies.
- Promote and ensure the safety of online journalists, bloggers and human right activists.
- Protect privacy and foster dignity to which everyone is entitled in cyberspace.
- Acknowledge the importance of and renew their commitment to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF).
- Respect human diversity in all its forms, including cultural and linguistic diversity. The preservation of the richness and diversity of the universal heritage are concepts that are enshrined in many international normative texts and national constitutions and legislations.
- Develop measures and policies to safeguard endangered languages and promote multilingualism.
- Fully integrate gender equality perspectives in WSIS related strategies and facilitate their implementation. Efforts should go beyond techno-centric solutions towards advancing women's innovative and meaningful use of ICTs for their empowerment and development.
- Enhance the participation of youth, and their access to the benefits of the information revolution as key priorities.
- Continue focusing on the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized groups, including indigenous peoples and people with disabilities, to solve the problem of inaccessibility.
- Encourage international and interdisciplinary reflection and debate on the ethical challenges of emerging technologies and the information society.

- Support e-learning through a) the skills to effectively handle information that are reflective, creative and adept at problem solving to generate knowledge, b) transformative mechanisms that enable citizens to fully participate in knowledge societies and influence the decisions which affect their lives, c) the development of inclusive and open pedagogies and practices.
- Promote information and media literacy as indispensable individual skills to people in the increasing information flow.
- Facilitate the open access to scientific information in all parts of the world, especially in least developed countries.
- Encourage research and facilitate frameworks to favour open access to information and knowledge while respecting intellectual property rights.
- Continue exploring how the practices and philosophy of the Free Software and Open Source movements can be applied to other challenges of knowledge societies besides software.
- Take a holistic approach when fostering the information and knowledge societies. This will require attention to both the use and production of the variety of ICT goods and services. The ICT-producing sector should contribute to job creation, innovation and entrepreneurship as well as help to sustain ICT use throughout society. It is therefore important to create an enabling environment for the local ICT sector to grow and to attract investment.
- Make efforts to address the challenges in the availability, affordability, quality of access and use of broadband, in order to reduce the digital divide and possible risks of exclusion from the information society.
- Coordinate and cooperate in a multi-stakeholder and inclusive manner at regional and international level in order to ensure that the appropriate enabling environment is created for the further development the ICT ecosystem.
- Contribute to the upcoming work of the working group of the Chair of CSTD on enhanced cooperation.
- Take further steps to improve the availability of data related to measuring the 10 WSIS targets.
- Ensure that the lessons learned during the WSIS review processes inform, as appropriate, the formulation of development goals post 2015.
- Report on the WSIS implementation within the framework of the WSIS process, facilitating elaboration of the vision beyond 2015, to be based on up-to-date information, and identified achievements, gaps and challenges.

The Event offered a unique opportunity for all WSIS stakeholders to review progress made and lessons learned. The outcome of this Review Meeting will serve as an input into the discussions during the *WSIS Forum 2013* in Geneva in May as well as inform the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the designated system-wide focal point for follow up to the WSIS outcomes, when it meets at its 16th Session.

Inspired by the vibrant debate at this review meeting, and the strong support of the diverse participants, we pledge our renewed commitment to realising the full potential of knowledge societies for peace and sustainable development.