

Note to the Secretary-General

**Report of the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms for Information and
Communication Technology for Development**

I am pleased to submit herewith the Report of the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms for Information and Communication Technology for Development, for onward transmission to H. E. Mr Janis Karklins, President of the Preparatory Committee and by copy to Mr Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of the World Summit on the Information Society.

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Plan of Action, at its first phase in Geneva in December 2003, requested that the Secretary-General establish a task force to review the adequacy of existing financial mechanisms in meeting the challenges of information and communication technologies for development. The Task Force was requested to present its report by end of December 2004 for consideration to the second phase of the Summit. You requested me to lead the Task Force in collaboration with the World Bank, UN DESA and other key partners such as the OECD. Members of the Task Force were drawn from developing and industrialized countries government, private sector and civil society representatives and experts with competency in finance, development and ICT.

Over the course of the past several months, the Task Force has conducted extensive consultations, research and reviews of information surrounding the role and effectiveness of financial mechanisms to support ICT for development. Within the short time frame at its disposal, the Task Force saw its role as focused on providing an outline of trends, an analysis of the existing mechanisms and an identification of gaps and promising practices which could be used to facilitate a broader set of consultations in the context of the WSIS process. The data, analysis, and findings presented in the Report represent the Task Force's best understanding of the broad and constantly changing scope of the ICT sector and the use of ICT in the developing world from a financing and development perspective.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge with appreciation contributions made by members of the Task Force and the Expert Group as well as the generous financial support we received from the Government of Japan to support the work of the Task force. Finally, I would like to thank you warmly for entrusting us with this important task.

Mark Malloch Brown (*signed*)
22 December 2004