UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

REPORTS AND CONCLUSIONS

of the thematic meetings
organized by UNESCO in preparation of the second meeting
of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

"Freedom of Expression in Cyberspace"
(3-4 February 2005, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France)

**"Multilingualism for Cultural Diversity and
Participation of All in Cyberspace"**
(6-7 May 2005, Bamako, Mali)

"ICT for Capacity-Building: Critical Success Factors"
(11-13 May 2005, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France)

"Cultural Diversity in Knowledge Societies"
(17-19 May 2005, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation)

UNESCO, June 2005

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PREFACE

As UNESCO continued its preparations for Phase II of World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the Organization has focused on operationalizing its concept of "Knowledge Societies".

In addition to the variety of projects aimed at contributing to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action[1], UNESCO organized four events that were recognized as "thematic meetings" by the WSIS process.

The events were organized on the following themes:

- "Freedom of Expression in Cyberspace"
  3-4 February 2005, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France
- "Multilingualism for Cultural Diversity and Participation of All in Cyberspace"
  6-7 May 2005, Bamako, Mali
- "ICT for Capacity-Building: Critical Success Factors"
  11-13 May 2005, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France
- "Cultural Diversity in Knowledge Societies"
  17-19 May 2005, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation

The meetings aimed at identifying concrete actions to grasp the opportunities for development offered by ICT in education, sciences, culture and communication. The themes of the meetings corresponded to the areas included in the WSIS Plan of Action that are the most relevant to UNESCO.

The meetings resulted in recommendations for concrete activities in the areas, which they covered. In more generic terms, they resulted in the following:

- UNESCO's key principles for knowledge societies endorsed;
- Role of UNESCO as a facilitator of WSIS implementation mechanisms stressed;
- Potential role of UNESCO as a neutral platform in resolution processes recognized;
- Multi stakeholder approach to WSIS implementation activities fostered;
- Potential of ICTs to contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals stressed;
- Proposals for concrete actions in the areas of UNESCO's competence formulated;
- WSIS Action Plan items prioritized;
- Need to scale-up and focus on sustainability of ICT projects confirmed;
- Necessity of capacity-building in the use of ICTs in all areas highlighted;
- Need of enabling (legal) environments confirmed;
- Importance of localized approaches including community ownership highlighted.

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[1] c.f. UNESCO WSIS Action Director at http://www.unesco.org/wsisdirectory

"Freedom of Expression in Cyberspace"

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France
3-4 February 2005

INTRODUCTION

a)   Date and Place

1.   The International Conference on Freedom of Expression in Cyberspace was held in Paris, France, on 3-4 February 2005.

2.   The meeting was hosted by UNESCO and it was organized by the Division of Freedom of Expression, Democracy and Peace, Communication and Information Sector (CI/FED).

b)   Participants

3.   The meeting was attended by about 200 participants, representing journalists, publishers, other media professionals, academics, NGO and civil society activists as well as a large number of official representatives of Member States of UNESCO.

4.   The meeting was chaired by Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura, Assistant Director General for Communication and Information Abdul Waheed Khan (ADG/CI) and by Mogens Schmidt, Deputy Assistant Director General for Communication and Information (DADG/CI).

5.   The Rapporteur of the meeting was Mogens Schmidt, DADG/CI

6.   Panelists included the following experts:

Keynote Speakers

- Sandy Starr, Spiked Ltd, United Kingdom

- Helen Darbishire, Director, Freedom of Information & Expression Program, Open Society Justice Initiative, USA

- Miklos Haraszti, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Austria

- Gus Hosein, London School of Economics ; Privacy International, UK

  Panelists

- Sjoera Nas, Bits of Freedom, The Netherlands

- Agnes Callamard, Executive Director, Article 19, UK

- Roberto Saba, Executive Director, Association for Civil Rights, Argentina

- Jane Kirtley, Director, Silha Center for the Study of Media Ethics and Law, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Minnesota, USA

- Indrajit Banerjee, Secretary-General, Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), Singapore

- Geoffrey Robertson, Legal officer, Doughty Street Chambers, UK

- Youri Oulianosvky, ITAR-TASS Representative office in France; Russia

- Julien Pain, Reporters sans frontières, France

- Yaman Akdeniz, CyberLaw Research Unit, Centre For Criminal Justice Studies, University of Leeds, UK

- Ronald Koven, European Representative, World Press Freedom Committee

- Chris Kabwato, Director, HighWay Africa

c)   Objectives

7.   The meeting was organized as a thematic meeting for the preparation of the second phase of the World Summit of the Information Society. Its objectives were developed in relation to Paragraphs 4, 55 and 56-69 of the Declaration of Principles adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in December 2003 in Geneva, Switzerland, and aimed in particular at contributing to Paragraph 24 of the WSIS Action Plan dealing with freedom of expression in Cyberspace.

8.   In addition, the meeting aimed at further promoting, discussing and raising awareness of freedom of expression in Cyberspace in general and on the Internet in particular.

d)   Agenda

9.   The agenda of the meeting included the following items:

- Freedom of Expression on the Internet

- Between Security and Openness. Should There be Limits to Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Information

- Open Internet – Open Media

- Freedom of Expression, Codes and Creativity

CONTEXT

10.   The conference was organized based on the UNESCO mandate and firm belief that the free flow of information is a fundamental premise of democratic societies where individual freedom is respected and honoured. As embodied in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, freedom of expression and information must be promoted without exception; this also implies in new media. Freedom of expression is an individual right and the implementation of it is a precondition for a democratic society A corresponding recognition of freedom of expression has been expressed by the WSIS in the Declaration of Principles,

paragraphs 4, 55 and 56-59 and Action Plan, paragraph 24 adopted during the Summit of the first phase of the WSIS in Geneva, December 2003

11.   Furthermore, the conference took its departure from UNESCO's declaration of four principles that must be guiding the development of knowledge societies and that are direct consequences of the organisation's mandate, freedom of expression, universal access, cultural and linguistic diversity, and quality education for all.

OPENING

12.   As was made clear by the Director General of UNESCO, **Koïchiro Matsuura** in his opening speech to the conference, the first and most fundamental of these is the principle of freedom of expression, which must apply not only to traditional media but also to new media, including those distributed via the Internet. The challenges of creating inclusive knowledge societies in which all have the chance to participate, be they in the developed or in the developing world, be they man or woman, old or young, rich or poor, is inseparable from ensuring freedom of expression in cyberspace. What kind of universality would it be if censorship were to rule the Internet and what would universal access mean if it were access to only some information, only some ideas, only some images, only some knowledge? Furthermore, how long can knowledge economies prosper or even function, especially in a competitive global environment, if they are starved of ideas and information, asked Mr. Matsuura, and continued, how can knowledge societies become or remain democratic if their citizens are misinformed or ill-informed? How can knowledge societies be secure if the bonds of social identity and belonging are broken by fear, distrust and mutual ignorance?

13.   In both industrialized and developing countries, new digital technologies have the potential to strengthen the institutions of representative democracy and civil society, to enable citizens to gather information and mobilize coalitions around policy issues, and to improve government efficiency and transparency through better communication with citizens.

14.   In cyberspace everybody can be a content provider; the Internet is a vast and in principle unlimited information and communication network and this potential must be realized. The Internet is fast and simple to use. It also reaches much beyond traditional news content and whole new "media outlets", the bloggers, have been developed. Probably it is exactly these features, together with the speed and the global character of the Internet that has made so many governments worry about granting all citizens full access to the whole World Wide Web.

DEBATES

15.   There is still far to go. In her presentation, **Agnes Callamard** drew attention to the fact that while North America holds 6% of the world population and 41% have on-line access to the Internet, less than 1% of the African population, which is 10% of the world's population, has the same. Furthermore, the 29 OECD states contain 97% of all Internet hosts, 92% of the market in production and consumption of IT hardware, software and services, and 86% of all Internet users. The digital divide is a reality and concerted and targeted efforts are needed to bridge it. All such efforts must however be put in the context of freedom of expression and universal access in order to seriously address global poverty, democratic governance and sustainable development.

16.   The conference agreed that with the rise of the Internet, the fundamental right to freedom of expression is challenged in new ways. The global net holds great potential as a resource for free distribution and reception of information and the creation of dialogue across borders and cultures; however, these qualities may sometimes be undercut by attempts to regulate both access and content. Tools for regulating cyberspace are increasing, as is the impact of the Internet. Even in democratic countries, violations of freedom of expression are growing, and the need to discuss how to prevent undesired side effects of new regulation techniques has become urgent. The press meets barriers on the Internet that would and should not be accepted in traditional media. Free media are essential in creating development and prosperity and in upholding democratic societies and should be hindered neither on a local nor on a global level. A great risk is posed by the institutionalization of constraint, especially in the formative stages of new social development. This is why deliberate restrictions imposed upon the free flow of information are so damaging. Short-term and short-sighted decisions today are perhaps compromising our capacity for effective decision-making tomorrow.

17.   Still, the Internet is through its very architecture a robust, flexible and very resourceful invention that allied with human ingenuity and creativity – and the human instinct for freedom – will prove to be very resilient and will develop in ways that were unimaginable just a few years ago. This is important to bear in mind when discussing the many challenges before us.

18.   The debate on freedom of expression as an absolute human right does not take place in a vacuum and there are legitimate discussions needed to nuance the very complex legal and practical wickerwork of cyberspace regulations and governance. How for example to assure the protection of Article 19 while respecting individual privacy, national laws and at the same time promoting cultural and linguistic diversity in the global network? How to establish special laws to block Internet sites which are considered to offer ways of obtaining information contrary to certain political, sexual, or moral standards or legislative acts that deal with security or confidentiality laws to protect personal data? How to address cyber crime in all its aspects? Another difficult challenge is the connection between the Internet and protection against terrorism. The balance between measures required for fighting terrorism and respect for fundamental human rights, especially the right to information, is indeed very difficult to find.

19.   The four panels set out to deal with these specific items in four panel discussions.

20.   In the introductory session on Freedom of Expression on the Internet, **Sandy Starr**, **Agnes Callamard** and **Sjoera Nas** dealt with elements related to the fact that the Internet provides great opportunities to facilitate the use of the freedom rights at low costs and without the obstacles of access and economic barriers common to traditional mass media in the interest of development of prosperity. Still, the Internet is not free of obstacles.

21.   **Sandy Starr** took his point of view in the libertarian tradition where freedom of expression is non-negotiable and absolute. He warned against many of the regulation and co-regulation initiatives being advocated as he found that enforcing rights leading to restrictions often came from good motives. He also warned against any legislation trying to oppose hate-speech as such legislation inevitably would create a grey zone that could be abused by those parties in society that wanted to curtail freedom of expression.

22.   **Sjoera Nas** listed a series of issues that legislators legitimately would have to deal with at the same time as they should respect all fundamental freedoms as laid out in the UDHR. She underlined that online freedom of expression starts with offline respect for human rights, including privacy and the right to a fair trial; she mentioned privacy issues, intellectual copyright issues to avoid piracy on the Internet, spam and RFID. She warned against the fact that many commercial parties, most notably Internet providers were de facto put in a position, often through co-regulation measures, that they should exercise legal assessments on the content they put on the net for third parties. To avoid the haphazardness this could imply she strongly advocated for a set of basic international rules to guide the responsibilities of commercial Internet providers. In this context, transparency is crucial and all ISPs should be obliged by law to publish their rules for notice and take-down as well as yearly statistics about the number of requests and the resulting actions.

23.   **Agnes Callamard** stressed the digital divide while pointing to the fact that the divide is not just about technology and thus cannot be addressed by technology solely. Indeed, she said, showering of developing countries with technological gifts might further increase their dependence on the technology and the providers of the industrialized countries. She underscored that freedom of expression is not just about expression but also comprises the right to seek and receive information from others, including the right to freely obtain and read newspapers, to listen to broadcasts, to surf the Internet and to participate in discussions in public and private as a listener. She stressed the right to access publicly held information (freedom of information). She advocated a right to communicate that included access to diverse and pluralistic media; equitable access to the means of communication as well as to the media; the right to use the language of one's choice; the right to participate in the public decision-making process; the right to access information, including from public bodies; the right to be free of undue restrictions on content; and privacy rights.

24.   The second panel, called <u>Between Security and Openness. Should there be Limits to Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Information?</u>, had interventions by **Helen Darbishire**, **Roberto Saba**, **Jane Kirtley**, and **Indrajit Banerjee** and asked the question whether there are any situations that legitimate limiting openness, such as security issues and the threat of terrorism and insecurity, at the expense of freedom of expression and freedom of information?

25.   **Helen Darbishire** also stressed the human rights base for all legal frameworks necessary to regulate the Internet. She pointed to the dangerous trend after September 11 where several traditional democracies had compromised the freedom of expression. She underlined that it is the obligation of governments to both defend freedom of expression and to protect the exercise of this right by all individuals. Much greater efforts must be made in focussing on defining and strengthening governmental obligations with regard to this right. Equally important is to ensure the legal underpinning of the commercial dimensions of cyberspace. Internet providers, for instance, should not be empowered to make decisions amounting to censorship, outside any due process, transparency, and legal framework. The current practice is unaccountable and seriously compromises self- and co-regulation systems. She elaborated further on freedom of information acts and announced a global campaign for ensuring citizens' access to publicly held information.

26.   **Roberto Saba** explained how the freedom of information acts had been passed in Argentina and how these acts also comprised online material. He understood access as a non-negotiable human right that should be protected and referred to several decisions of the Inter-American Court.

27.   **Jane Kirtley** also took her departure in the changes to fundamental freedoms in the US after 9/11. One would expect that information in digital form would be easier to achieve but that was not the case in the US as Congress had passed limiting amendments to the Freedom of Information Act. She appealed to governments to disclose public interest information to ensure a working participatory democracy.

28.   **Indrajit Banerjee** explained how many countries in Asia were still keeping media un-free; particularly Internet media and how it was still basically governments that were censuring access to the Internet for ordinary citizens. He acknowledged the need for regulation and control when it came to issues of national security but warned against using this as a pretext to exercise even stronger censorship on the media. It was the overall feeling that when needed special national legislation and international police considerations that put restrictions on freedom of expression must be made public so that the authorities can be held accountable.

29.   The speakers in the third panel, <u>Open Media - Open Internet</u>, were **Miklos Haraszti**, **Geoffrey Robertson**, **Yuri Oulianovsky**, and **Julien Pain**. They concentrated on news and information media and agreed that free media have imperative significance for democratic societies, ensuring an informed public and facilitating the free flow of information. Freedom of the press is an application of the individual human rights principle of freedom of expression and has a long history. It is however still far from being implemented all over the world.

30.   **Miklos Haraszti** gave examples of how, both in traditional and new media, journalists are meeting major challenges when trying to uphold the right to press freedom, particularly on the increasingly important platform of the Internet. He gave a comprehensive overview of the historic developments in Central and Eastern Europe and concluded that in spite of the many obstacles still existing to fully fledged freedom of the press, huge progress has been made. Earlier, the media were state owned and governments exercised strict control. Today, many media outlets were privately owned and most of these functioned professionally according to reasonable professional standards. More so, there was a beginning understanding of what public service media really implies, also when it comes to ensure freedom of expression in cyberspace. Media are not just commercial outlets and should not be treated like that by their proprietors; media are first of all important channels for the democratic debate.

31.   **Geoffrey Robertson**, who is one of the world's leading experts in media legislation, gave some concrete examples of the new legal challenges, the Internet has raised for mass media, especially for internationally oriented media. There were still many attempts to restrict information by simply trying to shut off access the same way as before crows were kept by shutting the gate; but in today's high-tech globalized media environment this would have no lasting effect. He also discussed the country-of-origin legal issue that is still not clarified and he strongly advocated that any legal process against Internet media should be established in the country where the content originated. He also warned against establishing just one set of laws and one regulatory framework for both the media's use of Internet and private individual usage. It is essential that Internet media are granted the same freedoms as print and broadcast media. Likewise, it is important to differentiate limits on freedom of expression of private information and access to public information. The Internet actually provides for cheap and speedy rebuttal procedures. He found the online right to reply a reasonable way forward, also because of the high libel costs.

32.   **Youri Oulianovsky** gave an overview of the challenges that traditional news agencies have had to comply with when developing into Internet based media. Internet operations were much cheaper and faster but the risk in the Internet press agencies was that traditional validation of sources was discharged in order to keep up with the speed. He also explained how the 24-hours a day dead-lines were detrimental to the quality of journalism. He warned against unprofessional so-called media outlets on the Internet and many of the news bloggers that did not provide seriously vetted information. He also informed about the fast leap forward in Internet usage in Russia. He showed understanding for governments wanting to exclude certain sites from the net, like in Russia sites that were promoting separatist Chechen interests and in France, sites that were promoting Nazism.

33.   **Julien Pain** was very critical towards the Russian attempts to cut off access to Chechen Internet sites and he described how similar censorship manoeuvres were being put to work in many countries all over the world. He particularly mentioned Tunis as he found it regrettable that the host country for the second phase of the WSIS did not allow for full freedom of expression on the Internet. He encouraged all press freedom institutions and UNESCO to be steadfast in defending the principle of freedom of expression. He also wanted freedom of the press to comprise the new generation of bloggers. As it was now, they were very exposed to violations from the side of censuring governments. Despite the problem some of them had living up to established professional standards for good journalism, they should be protected like any journalist from Le Monde or The Financial Times.

34.   Finally, the last session, called <u>Freedom of Expression, Codes and Creativity</u>**,** looked at the Internet's decentralized structure, which provides a unique platform for every kind of user to contribute to the production of content and to make use of their right to freedom of expression and which should be safeguarded in any Internet governance system. The four speakers, **Gus Hosein**, **Yaman Akdeniz**, **Chris Kabwato**, and **Ronald Koven** all warned against using the term "harmful content" as an excuse for new regulation of content, not least because it will be extremely difficult to establish solid definitions hereof.

35.   **Gus Hosein** also drew attention to the fact "harmful content" is something quite different than "illegal content", which is clearly defined by national and/ or international legislation and against which stake holders need to take appropriate measures. Still, he argued, it was much more important to make efforts to foster creativity on the Internet and to stimulate and promote local content production. Hosein focussed on the paradox of the Internet: never before has the world seen such a powerful information and communication mechanism that was cheap and easy to use and that had a huge potential in the fight against poverty, but at the same time, many governments, including those of the developing countries, concentrated their efforts on restricting and regulating this mechanism with the result that its potential could not be realized. He especially identified two areas that gave reason for concern: the weakening of legal protections of both freedom of expression and – at the other end of the scale – the right to privacy; the surveillance chill reaching from mobile phone tracking to Internet cookies and public cameras. The real challenge is to fully exploit the potential of the Internet while not compromising civil liberties.

36.   **Chris Kabwato** spoke from the point of view of the developing countries and he agreed strongly with Mr. Hosein in the identification of the potential of the Internet for creating knowledge societies and for giving voice to indigenous societies. He warned governments of developing countries of giving in to the "contrary spirit" dominated by the fears of the net: fear of technology and fear of free and public debate in the public sphere. On the contrary, one should encourage the development of technical standards for digitally processing local or

international languages on the Internet. He commended UNESCO for the Organisation's firm stand for freedom of expression during the WSIS process and for its assistance in adopting the Marrakech Declaration, which he quoted extensively. He also described how Internet creativity and cultural diversity must find a new and internationally accepted interface with existing intellectual property rights agreements by balancing the moral and economic interests of the creators on the one hand and the provision of access to the socio-economic and cultural benefits of such creativity world-wide on the other hand. Finally, he promoted open source and free software, as it was not only cheaper for developing countries but also did not create the same degree of expert dependence as proprietary software. Journalists, knowledge workers, artists and teachers want the space, freedom and platform to share their stories, ideas and experiences, he said, and the Internet can be such a space and platform if it can be freed from the increasing usurpation of corporate interests and the increasing regulations and restrictions by anxious governments.

37. **Yaman Akdeniz** also underlined the decisive distinction between illegal and harmful content and warned against assigning any legal status to the latter. Illegal content is criminalized by national laws while what is defined as harmful content is considered as offensive or disgusting by some people, but is generally not criminalized by national laws. Child pornography, for instance, falls under the illegal content category while adult pornography, in those countries where it is not forbidden by law, falls under the harmful content category. He listed the various responses to both illegal and harmful content: first of all, government regulation, and secondly, self- and co-regulation. The government regulation includes laws at the national level, directives and regulations at the supra-national level (European Union or conventions of the Council of Europe, for example) and UN-level. Self and co-regulation comprises measures such as development of hotlines, codes of conduct, filtering software and rating systems. Although self and co-regulation can provide less costly, more flexible and often more effective alternatives to prescriptive government legislation, there are a number of problems connected to their functioning. Firstly, they do not apply to all organisations or enterprises; secondly, only a very limited range of sanctions is available in case of breach of rules; and finally, one may question the accountability and impartiality of self-regulatory bodies. For filtering software the problems are even bigger. Most often, the filters cause massive over-blocking leading to both wished and not-wished censorship. A credible self and co-regulation system can only work if it is based upon respect for fundamental human rights such as freedom of expression and privacy and has a strong external consultation and involvement with all relevant stakeholders in the design and operation of the scheme; furthermore the scheme must be based upon clear and intelligible statements of principles and measurable standards, which address real consumer and user concerns.

38. **Ronald Koven** warned against all kind of regulation of the flow of information. He mentioned that codes of conduct and co-regulation measures might be established with the best intentions but that they in the real world often turned against the fundamental freedoms. He also questioned whether keep inter-governmental bodies such as the Council of Europe labelled as self-regulation was in reality different from restrictions inflicted on freedom of expression and freedom of the press. He had no confidence in enforcing journalistic standards and ethics through legislation. Ethics are by definition freely adopted by a category of persons. Once they are embodied in laws, rules or regulations, they can no longer be described as ethics and they become part of a legal system that the group of practitioners no longer has the freedom to interpret and apply for itself. He commended UNESCO for having been firm on stating that ethical standards is something which is completely up to the various

groups of professionals to define and develop. He strongly advocated the view that there is no need for any special legislation for the Internet media. There are in fact, he said, a number of existing constraints on freedom of expression in the offline world, such as copyright and other intellectual property arrangements, libel and defamation laws, laws against fraud and other criminal activities, like the sexual abuse of children. Such existing laws in legally developed jurisdictions need only to be adapted and applied to cyberspace. He agreed with Geoffrey Robertson on which jurisdiction should get to try offences: it should normally be in the country where the alleged offence is first published, in keeping with the position that press freedom groups and the lawyers who work in this field have generally favoured. Finally, he warned strongly against introducing new systems for Internet governance that would impede on freedom of expression and the free flow of information.

CLOSURE

39.   Being an experts' meeting, no official Declaration was adopted by the participants, but there was a strong endorsement of the four principles that lay the base for UNESCO's concept of knowledge societies and for assigning to Internet media the same freedoms as print and broadcast media have. The conference was also in agreement to warn against looking at possible necessary Internet regulation as a question of balancing different human rights against each other. Like the rule of law, the Internet should be based upon full human rights, and it is the responsibility of all states to respect and defend these rights when it comes to their application for cyberspace. This message should be clearly included in any new declaration from the countries participating in the WSIS process. Finally, the participants encouraged the development of guidelines that could ensure legal underpinning of commercial Internet enterprises, in particular Internet service providers, and to examine how international legal systems that did not infringe on freedom of expression could be established to minimize spam.

40.   The meeting was concluded by the Assistant Director General for Communication and Information, **Abdul Waheed Khan**, who expressed UNESCO's gratitude to the speakers and the participants and promised that the Organization would continue along the route that had been laid out and that was commended by the conference. It is part of UNESCO's mandate to provide a platform for open discussion and to promote the free flow of ideas, he said, and went on that this is exactly what has been happening over the last two days. The debate has contributed to clarify some of the complex challenges that the international community has to address in order to ensure that free, open and inclusive knowledge societies may flourish, grounded upon the universal principle of freedom of expression. He strongly underlined that the Internet media, as traditional media which still plays maybe the most important role in the developing world, first of all could play an important role in fighting poverty and encouraging human creativity by contributing to the development of democratic knowledge societies. Along this line, community radio and community multimedia centres must receive greater attention and focus as crucially important communication and information tool in developing communities, bringing them together.

"Multilingualism for Cultural Diversity and Participation of All in Cyberspace"

Bamako, Mali
6-7 May 2005

REPORT

a)   Date and Place

1.   The Conference "Multilingualism for Cultural Diversity and Participation of All in Cyberspace" was held in Bamako, Mali, from 6 to 7 May 2005. The Conference was recognized as one of the thematic meetings of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

2.   The meeting was organized by UNESCO, together with the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) and the Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie (AIF), in cooperation with the Government of Mali. The meeting had a number of sponsors, including Microsoft.

b)   Objectives

3.   The meeting was organized in the context of Chapters 8 "Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content" of the "Declaration of Principles" and the "Plan of Action" respectively, adopted by WSIS in December 2003 in Geneva, Switzerland.

c)   Participants

4.   The meeting had strong African participation as well as key international experts. It was attended by more than 130 participants, including 29 panelists, from over 25 countries. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: UNESCO, ECA, ESCWA, and the Agence intergouvernementale de la francophonie.

d)   Structure of work

5.   The Conference was structured into two main themes, namely "Investing in diverse and inclusive knowledge societies: policies, standards and indicators" (Theme 1), and "Global experiences in building a multilingual cyberspace" (Theme 2).

6.   The context was set by the Opening Session, where number of high level speakers contributed perspectives: Ousmane Issoufou Maiga, Prime Minister of Mali, Koïchiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO, Adama Samassékou, President of Acalan, Pietro Sicuro (AIF) and Abdul Waheed Khan, Assistant Director General for Communication and Information, UNESCO. The keynote address was delivered by Neville Alexander, Director of Project PRAESA, Professor, University of Cape Town, South Africa.

7.   The three sessions under Theme 1 addressed the issues of "Status of language policies worldwide", "Standards for multilingualism in cyberspace", and "Measuring and monitoring language diversity". The three sessions under Theme 2 addressed the issues of "Local content development", "Technology solutions for multilingualism in cyberspace", and "Promotion of local and cross language flows.

8.   The draft conclusions of the conference were presented in final wrap-up session entitled "Future initiatives to promote multilingualism in cyberspace". It was agreed to post these conclusions online to provide an opportunity for participants to consider the full text (incorporating their suggestions from the wrap up session). It is hoped that many of the participants will continue their interest and contribute to the online Community of Practices on Multilingualism.

CONCLUSIONS

The need for a multilingual cyberspace

"Every language is an archive, a library, and a repository of knowledge."

"Denial to access information in one's mother tongue is equivalent to the denial of a human right."

"It is counterintuitive to believe that a nation can produce in an optimal way if its people are forced to work a foreign language".

"Multilingualism is a political imperative to democratize our societies, so that everyone can make a contribution"

"No one can participate in responsible decision-making unless they are in command of his/her own language."

"In terms of pedagogy, how do children learn best? In their mother tongue."

**"Language is about creativity, spontaneity and self-esteem – it is about identity."* [2]*

9.   Languages are expressions of individual and collective identities. They are essential to all forms of communication. The capacity to utilize and modify the environment, to dialogue and to establish contact is strongly dependent on linguistic capacities. Languages and their diversity are crucial for the perpetuation of the human species. They are essential to social and economic development. And they are key to democracy as no person can truly participate in democratic decision-making processes in a language that is not his or her own.

10.   The world leaders' meeting at the World Summit of the Information Society in Geneva, in December 2003, recognized that the Information Society should be founded on, and stimulate respect for, cultural identity, cultural and linguistic diversity, traditions and religions, and foster dialogue among cultures and civilizations. They stressed that the creation, dissemination and preservation of content in diverse languages and formats must be accorded high priority in building an inclusive Information Society; the production of and accessibility to all content—educational, scientific, cultural or recreational—in diverse languages and formats, is essential for development.

11.   Indeed, language diversity is at risk worldwide. The situation is particularly dire in Africa, where more than 90% of the presently ca 2,000 languages (representing one third of

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[2] Some of key ideas highlighted during the opening of the conference, including Professor Neville Alexander's keynote address.

the world's languages), are at risk of disappearing in the next fifty years. In addition, the use of African languages on the Internet and their presence in web content is extremely weak.

12. The meeting "Multilingualism for Cultural Diversity and Participation of All in Cyberspace" (Bamako, Mali 6-7 May 2005) was intended to identify essential steps to ensure that a language that is not yet represented on the Internet can have a presence in cyberspace.

13. The following proposals emerged from the presentations of the panelists during the meeting.

Frameworks for establishing a multilingual cyberspace

Policy implementation

14. There is a need for written national language policies that must include plans for implementing concrete actions. National language policies should address the following issues:

  a) Promoting mother tongue based bilingual education for children and extending mother tongue use as far as possible through the tertiary level;

  b) Recognizing the interdependence between literacy and the effective use of technology to ensure the presence of endangered and lesser-used languages in cyberspace;

  c) Promoting the creation of an environment enabling content development, including: measures for the private sector to foster creative content industries and encouraging individual users to create content; setting priorities for digitization projects;

  d) Ensuring that the needs of rural and poor communities are reflected in languages policies;

  e) Anticipating user needs in deciding on technical infrastructure, for example promoting the use of broadband solutions;

  f) Promoting interoperability and open standards to increase the potential of access for all to cyberspace;

  g) Fostering research on, and investment in, terminology development, particularly for endangered and lesser spoken languages, for example through the preparation of dictionaries, thesauri, and other means to expand and modernize the languages to make them relevant and searchable in an online environment;

  h) Protecting minority languages, for example through supporting encoding initiatives and examining the extend to which IPR exemptions or other mechanisms could advance the presence of minority languages in cyberspace;

  i) Promoting research aimed at policy makers to illustrate the interconnection between language diversity and economic development;

  j) Fostering research and development in human and computer languages technologies for example in the area of key board development;

k) Mainstreaming the promotion of African languages in national information and communication infrastructure policies and plans;

l) Focusing on capacity-building of youth in local languages as they are the technology users of the future and can often set and drive trends;

m) Enumerating the benefits of investing in education and tools for multilingualism; identifying and publishing examples to demonstrate how policies on multilingualism can be implemented in a way that is cost effective and where the benefits outweigh costs;

n) Working at the local, national and regional levels.

15.   The following stakeholders should be included in the establishing of national and cross national language policies:

a) Governments,

b) National and regional languages institutions/academies,

c) International and regional intergovernmental organizations,

d) Academia,

e) Non-governmental organizations,

f) Local communities,

g) Private sector.

16.   The role of libraries and archives to sustain linguistic diversity should be fostered, for example through promoting reading and making content in local languages available, both in analogue and in digitized form.

17.   The role of the media, particularly local and community radios and emerging web media, should be strengthened to foster language diversity, especially using endangered and lesser spoken languages, particularly those with predominantly oral traditions. Although the meeting focused on "cyberspace", it was noted that the media has a vital role to play, whether in localizing terminology or in building capacities that are relevant to the ability to participate in the digital world.

18.   The following actions are proposed for implementation by international actors:

a) Developing an inventory of issues in this field to facilitate assigning responsibilities for actions;

b) Preparing guidelines to assist policy-makers to address Internet related issues in national languages policies;

c) Supporting research and development in language technologies and encouraging fora to share information on the means of adapting solutions including hardware and software solutions, search engines, automated dictionaries, translation tools, etc.;

d) Creating and supporting networks of universities, national academies, research and development institutions working in the area of language development to federate action and share know-how and practices;

e) Federating existing language observatory projects;

f) Establishing communities of practices relevant to multilingualism;

g) Supporting the call to establish a sustainable funding mechanism for projects to complete encoding of scripts.

Standards and technical solutions

19. Standards are crucial to create, access, disseminate and preserve multilingual content in cyberspace, particularly in endangered and lesser-spoken languages. There is a need for standard-setting in many areas. The following issues were identified as being the most essential:

a) Fostering the development of language standards, including standards for scripts, orthography and grammar;

b) Fostering capacity-building for communities with endangered and lesser-spoken languages to participate in international standard-setting mechanisms with specific provision for representatives from developing countries;

c) Fostering standards in the area of web accessibility, taking particular account of endangered and lesser-spoken languages;

d) Federating the main actors for standard-setting, such as international standard bodies, consortia, research institutions, such as the Academia Research Network, private sector initiatives, etc.;

e) Establishing mechanisms for resolution of problems related to key principles of standard setting, character variants and other evolving systems;

f) Establishing an inventory of issues that need standardization, with particular attention to the needs of endangered and lesser-spoken languages;

g) Providing incentives to academic network initiatives;

h) Accelerating the work on, and awareness of the need for standards for, the semantic interoperability of metadata;

i) Mobilizing international partnerships to develop funding and support mechanisms to support the establishment of UNICODE scripts, in particularly for endangered and lesser-spoken languages;

j) Supporting initiatives for Internationalized Domain Names in African languages;

k) Developing localized version of interfaces including engaging with local communities in the development process;

l) Developing criteria for eligibility for translation and localization of interfaces and software other than "official" or "national" languages;

m) Promoting low cost and open source software solutions to support localization and ensure the presence of economically disadvantaged languages, including by encouraging governments to support financially these approaches and information exchange and by promoting the use of standards.

Monitoring progress

20. Measuring and monitoring multilingualism in cyberspace are crucial for the development of language policies and analyzing their impacts. However, the present statistical services, including data collection and analysis, are insufficient. The following issues were identified as being the most urgent to be addressed:

a) Establishing a coherent and internationally comparable system of indicators on languages on the Internet (presence of languages, user behaviors, content availability, information flows, etc.);

b) Adapting indicator sets that are being used for monitoring endangered languages in the non-digital world to the Internet, including *mutatis mutandis* the following issues: intergenerational languages transmission; shifts in domains of language use; governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies; quality of literature on languages; numbers of speakers; amount of material which is produced about the languages, etc.;

c) Strengthening the network of main actors in data collection and analysis, including working with the national offices responsible for data collection, and the partnership established by UNCTAD, ITU, UNESCO, OECD and others on Measuring the Information Society;

d) Establishing platforms for collaboration between statistical and language institutions and supporting the establishment of observatories;

e) Establishing regional and national centres with expertise in data collection and analysis including collaborative networks of universities and research institutions;

f) Building statistical capacities at country level including training in culturally sensitive approaches to data collection and analysis;

g) Fostering research and development in the area of measurement, for example for identifying machine-based data collection and analysis methodologies related to languages presence on the Internet;

h) Addressing the issue of visualization of cyberspace (invisible part of cyberspace).

21. UNESCO is requested to examine the possibilities of coordinating the development of indicators that reflect the use of languages on the Internet and address the following:

a) Frequency of languages in the views of websites pages and scripts;

    b) Progress towards universal access to the Internet including overcoming infrastructure and skills barriers such as electricity and information literacy;

    c) Preservation and promotion of languages and scripts;

    d) Diversity in the interactive use of languages on the Internet through e-mail and on-line fora.

22.   UNESCO is also requested to promote the importance of the above indicators to the WSIS meeting in Tunis, in November 2005 and to the partnership of UNCTAD, ITU, UNESCO, OECD and others on Measuring the Information Society.

Content

23.   Local content is crucial to foster a multilingual cyberspace and to ensure that members of all communities can share in the benefits of cyberspace. Actions should include:

    a) Creating content that is relevant to local communities and in their own languages; factor in population and gender characteristics to increase relevance and impact;

    b) Providing conditions that are conducive to create local content, such as literacy in local languages, appropriate hardware and software, localized standards, skills to create content;

    c) Providing conditions to facilitate the creation of inventories on the situation of each component of the cycle that ensures the presence of local content in cyberspace (digital local content, software, encoding, scripts, number of languages and number of speakers);

    d) Providing infrastructure that caters to the content needs of users, for example by providing broadband solutions that allow for communities to provide and access oral and visual content;

    e) Providing users with choices to access content, including choice of language, means of access (text, voice, image, etc.) and tools (handheld, radio, CD ROM, etc).

International collaboration and partnerships

24.   International cooperation is crucial to create a multilingual cyberspace. This should include:

    a) Establishing processes and platforms to bring stakeholders together to resolve the scripts, language, technological and policy issues inherent in implementing a multilingual cyberspace;

    b) Establishing a mechanism or process to deal with multilingualism and cultural diversity issues in cyberspace in Internet Governance; advocating as far as possible a policy of openness in regard to the Internet;

    c) Establishing partnerships between international organizations and the private sector within the framework of the Global Compact initiative.

d) Encouraging the "federation" of the initiatives including relevant regional activities in Africa;

e) Advocating the elegibility of African language projects for the Digital Solidarity and other such funds;

f) Working at all levels, from local to regional, and engaging with key agencies proximate to the countries in need;

g) Finding facilitators – there are many overlapping but contradictory developments in the field of multilingualism, making it extremely important to encourage facilitators to improve co-ordination of efforts and find resolution;

h) Understanding that the issue of multilingualism is deeply sociological rather than technological; it has an interdependency with other initiatives, such as Education for All (which should reinforce the importance of receiving education in mother tongue) and intercultural dialogue;

i) Considering the appropriateness of political instruments, such as an African Charter for regional and minority languages, as a means of encouraging countries and promoting awareness of and planning on addressing the need for multilingualism;

j) Continuing bringing experts together to encourage the exchange of know-how and solutions; promoting collaborative efforts, neutral platforms and facilitation work to build a multilingual cyberspace.

"ICT for Capacity Building: Critical Success Factors"

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France
11-13 May 2005

REPORT

a)   Date, place and organizers

1.   The Conference "ICT for Capacity Building: Critical Success Factors" was held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France, from 11 to 13 May 2005. The Conference was recognized as one of the "thematic meetings" of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

2.   The Conference was organized by UNESCO and the Club of Rome in relation to Chapters 4 "Capacity building" of the "Declaration of Principles" and the "Plan of Action" respectively, adopted by WSIS in December 2003 in Geneva, Switzerland, and aimed in particular at contributing to the Chapter 4, paragraph 11 of the WSIS Action Plan stating that "*Everyone should have the necessary skills to benefit fully from the Information Society. Therefore capacity building and ICT literacy are essential. ICTs can contribute to achieving universal education worldwide, through delivery of education and training of teachers, and offering improved conditions for lifelong learning, encompassing people that are outside the formal education process, and improving professional skills*".

3.   The Conference was held under the patronage of leaders and decision-makers from governments, international organizations, private sector and civil society.

b)   Purpose of the Conference

4.   The Conference aimed at discussing the use of information and communication technology (ICT), including satellites, for capacity-building, and its key strategic role for achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and for building knowledge societies. Its main focus was on new delivery methods of formal learning and other skills development. It gave particular attention to the special needs of marginalized groups in areas that are un-reached by the traditional education systems but could be given access to new forms of education delivery through satellite technologies.

5.   The purpose of the Conference was to:

- Identify prerequisites and success factors for capacity-building using ICT;

- Collect and disseminate testimonies and case studies from around the world on how to make a quantitative leap in development by using ICT;

- Give IT industry a platform to present technology that is both appropriate to the development environment and meet the needs of emerging markets.

c)   Participants

6.   The meeting was attended by more than 320 participants from over 70 countries. Links were established via satellite facilities to twelve centres affiliated with the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) in Africa (Senegal, South Africa and Tanzania),

Asia (Afghanistan, China and India), Arab Region (Egypt, Jordan and Kuwait) and Latin America (Argentina, Brazil and Mexico). Entirely web-cast, the Conference brought together local leaders, community educators in learning, members of Permanent Delegations of Member States to UNESCO, and representatives of IGOs, NGOs and the private sector.

d)   Structure of the conference

7.   Valdas Adamkus, President of Lithuania, Janis Karklins, President of the World Summit on the Information Society Preparatory Committee, Raoul Weiler, President of the Brussels/European Union Chapter of the Club of Rome, and Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO addressed the Opening Ceremony.

8.   Four strategic sessions on "Policy-making and critical success factors", "Technology partnerships for life-long learning in developing countries", "Sustainable solutions for capacity-building" and "Low cost technology solutions for capacity-building" alternated with the presentation of case studies live from Latin America, Arab States, Africa and Asia.

9.   During the strategic sessions, development experts, academics, and representatives from industry, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations evaluated the impact of the current investment in ICT projects, debating the key issues of sustainability, impact monitoring and evaluation, infrastructure solutions, human capabilities, appropriation of technologies and content by local communities, and the social dynamics of these projects.

10.   The conclusions of the conference were presented in final wrap-up session by Elizabeth Longworth, Director of UNESCO's Information Society Division,

11.   Prince El Hassan bin Talal, Jordan, President of the Club of Rome (via video-recording), Raoul Weiler, President of the Brussels/European Union Chapter of the Club of Rome, and Abdul Waheed Khan, Assistant-Director General for Communication and Information, UNESCO addressed the closing ceremony of the Conference.

CONCLUSIONS

"We need to redesign learning around what is effective rather what is convenient"

"It's not just about knowledge, but it is about building communication spaces"

"Vocational skills have a new value in ICT world"

"We don't have 109 years to train people on prevention of HIV/AIDS"

"Content is no longer king – community is sovereign"

"What matters are people and communities, process, not the products"

a)   Context

12.   Capacity-building today is subject to a variety of developments which can be summarized by new literacies, new pedagogical paradigms, new forms of knowledge with an strong emphasis on the education of teachers as knowledge transmitters and the need to "un-learn":

- New literacies include technology literacy, information literacy and media literacy and new forms of learning paths, particularly of younger generations and their new forms of memory organization and information management, largely driven by new technologies;

- The new pedagogical paradigms are characterized by the phenomenon that learning is a constructive process that increasingly takes place in non-formal institutions and in a dialogue. New flexible learning environments emerge which largely cooperate with ICT and media institutions while keeping educational autonomy;

- Knowledge is increasingly transdisciplinary and contextual, and needs to be created through application ('learning by doing'), thereby reflecting local/regional realities;.

- These developments result in an increased emphasis on teacher education, which is conducive to improving the status of teachers and strengthening professional education.

- The new environment requires attitudes of "un-learning" including de-activating obsolete practices and authoritarian approaches, which believe in absolute certainties.

b)   Critical Success Factors

13.   Within this overall context, the Conference identified twelve factors that are critical for the success of projects in the area of ICT and capacity-building:

I.   Clear vision:

Projects should take a humanistic approach, focusing on people rather than on technology.

II.   Holistic and integrated approach:

Projects should be aligned with national and regional policy objectives to optimize benefits. They should also take advantage of economies of scale of sufficient consequence to lower the costs of services and technologies (e.g. bulk buy of bandwidth, consortia approaches to similar initiatives, learning objects repositories, one platform combining applications to share capacities, education, public services, entertainment and business) while responding to the specific needs of local communities.

III.   Local ownership and community participation:

Projects must involve local communities to get their commitment, build local entrepreneurship and enhance local know-how such as on crafts. Volunteers and NGO

community should also be involved in projects to bring their expertise in delivery of practical activities and local knowledge and networks.

IV.   Develop not only skills but state of mind and attitude:

Projects must create a dynamism among all actors involved to develop imagination, motivation and the desire to be productive, and to build a "culture of innovation" based on the familiar and friendly use of technology. The role of inspiring youth is essential in building this cultural identity.

V.   Government support:

Governments must be prepared to think innovatively (e.g. broadband models, solar energy, wireless, PDAs, mixed technologies), and identify as principal priorities the development of basic infrastructure requirements such as energy supply and telecommunications using bundling demand models (e.g. satellite platforms) to be used for multiple applications and services.

VI.   Multi-stakeholder partnerships:

Multi stakeholder partnerships based on trust and a shared vision are essential to create impact and to build scale so that knowledge can be leveraged across the world. Networks should be built around the projects with active participation of private sector for support and input into the reform process.

VII.   Flexibility to enable innovative solutions:

Flexibility and innovation require changes in attitudinal approaches and state of mind in order to able to meet the different levels of sophistication of the users.

VIII. The need of the appropriate technology environment

Innovative solutions need flexibility in the choice of technology and an open regulatory environment (e.g. open standards, facilitating access to licenses and mixed technology approaches). Technology solutions should be easy to deploy and maintain, and be upgraded continuously to develop skills and abilities to make use of more sophisticated technologies.

IX.   Localization:

Projects must be adapted to local communities and contextualized taking account of local competencies (e.g. in terms of language), curricula and content should be localized.

X.   Development of human capacities:

Project methodology and approach should be geared towards building capacity, specifically with the partner organizations aimed at promoting local knowledge and skills transfer. In this way a project should:

- Adopt continuous approach of the acquisition of skills where people are training themselves;

- Train educators, including teachers;
- Pay special attention to inclusive policies involving women, youth and marginalized groups;
- Ensure training in policy advocacy and coordination expertise;
- Pay special attention to transfer experience and knowledge to young people; and
- Understand the power of networks and identify within the community "change agents" that can help implement the project, provide special training, support teachers, and become a most reliable support of most powerful influence.

XI. Involvement of women:

The involvement of women is essential for building trust in projects. Educating a woman is also educating her family and the families to come.

XII. Sustainability:

Projects must become integrated in the life of community to be sustainable. That means that projects should:

- Identify key stakeholders in the community and ensure that they are involved in the project as a way of ensuring economic sustainability;
- Deliver recognizable value and prove itself;
- Work with a core group which multiplies;
- Ensure local counterpart teams so that the knowledge and skills stay behind after the IGOs leave; and
- Offer bundling services and become a hub for a range of community activities;
- Have a high quality project management.

XIII. Monitoring and evaluation:

Projects should include monitoring and evaluation mechanisms by identifying intermediary and final outcomes that can be measured continuously even using ICT-based tools.

"Cultural Diversity in Knowledge Societies"

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation
17-19 May 2005

REPORT

1.   This Meeting took place in the context of a broader Conference on the WSIS themes, organised by the Russian Federation.

2.   The Meeting on cultural diversity focused on the use of ICT to address issues of local content, linguistic diversity, digital heritage, creative arts and mobile technologies. It identified some of the natural allies and synergies of cultural diversity in cyberspace from a broad lateral perspective.

3.   The main issue on promoting cultural diversity in cyberspace that emerged from the deliberations was translating the sophisticated visions of the potential of ICT for cultural diversity into policy recommendations and realistic and implementable actions that can undertaken by most countries and communities.

4.   The debate on the vital role of Local Content development underlined the significance of cultural identity and memory in building inclusive knowledge societies; it emphasised the need to repatriate to/or to revive local knowledge in both local and wider communities. Clearly there is a need to implement interdisciplinary and multipartner stakeholder approaches that will ensure the sustainability of projects on living memory archives and emerging ICT-driven cultural industries in developing countries.

5.   The session on Linguistic Diversity revealed the importance of addressing the subject from the point of view of professional actors and, subsequently, to distinguish between translators and localizers. The mapping of professions at the interface between content providers and consumers was identified as the first crucial step. These professions enable the market to play a positive role in the defence of linguistic diversity. A second step could be to work towards interfaces and structured spaces, particularly for content and also to integrate local languages in domain names. Structuring is crucial to make it possible to have a presence on the Net and to search and retrieve information.

6.   The session on Digital Heritage and museums, and the following one on Digital Libraries, stressed the evolution of the debate from issues of access, to intellectual property, privacy, languages and, today, to emphasise the objective of citizen participation. However, barriers still result from segmented professional heritage communities impeding the development of a global heritage community. There are many practical actions that can be taken, such as the use of networks for sharing resources and building transectorial competencies, or such as the development of national standards and easy-to-use international data standards for the presentation of digital heritage.

7.   When speaking of the role of heritage in cyberspace, it is necessary to distinguish between issues of being present on the Internet by contributing content, and the issue of gaining access. Countries must therefore support regional federative initiatives and professional networks which could ensure the sustainability of access that also reflects regional heritage values.

8.   This was illustrated by Africom, the pan-continental museum network, and by the European Union programme on quality content. Both sessions, as well as the following ones on Digital Art and the role of mobile technologies, addressed the question of the respective role of providers and users which should lead to the notion of personalized and goal-oriented user/information interaction.

9.   The session on the DigiArt project provided examples of bottom-up, grassroots partnerships linking networks to national and global networks, where modeling and adoption of common standards result from spontaneous social consensus. The achievements of projects initiated by content creators in cyberspace demonstrated the social value of virtual communities that are centred on users' needs, and that interact with creative and educational dimensions.

10.   Finally, it was stressed unanimously that cultural diversity in knowledge societies (a political question) calls for the pro-active involvement of international and national organisations already engaged in promoting of cultural diversity.

CONCLUSIONS

11.   The first recommendation and conclusion drawn from the deliberations encouraged the emergence of a strong cultural paradigm in cyberspace through:

- Making conscious efforts at national levels to identify cultures and languages at risk and to use technology to revive and repatriate community memories and legacy of cultural knowledge;

- Creating culturally-oriented top-level domains (names), following the example of dotMuseum and the applicability of corresponding domains to other major cultural heritage repositories such as archives and libraries;

- Revisiting the notion of digital libraries and seeing these as dynamic universal knowledge environments;

- Developing standards and structuring content to facilitate sharing of and access to cultural heritage; and

- Encouraging cooperative efforts for digitization programmes linking preservation and universal, user-centered access to multilingual cultural knowledge.

12.   The second recommendation and conclusion is to urge cultural professionals, societal and political actors engaged in promoting cultural diversity, to develop partnerships for action. The objectives of these partnerships should be to:

- Establish prioritised common objectives and methodologies;

- Encourage research and monitoring tools centered in users needs;

- Promote the development of virtual communities and networks that contribute to the generation of new knowledge through interactive dialogue;

- Develop national measures to implement the E-charter on preservation of digital heritage to address the inherent instability of "born digital" content; and

- Encourage the development of sustainable business plans for e-creative industries in developing countries.