



**Declaration
of the World Summit
of Cities and Local Authorities
on the Information Society**

Lyon - 4th and 5th December 2003

Adopted in Lyon on December 5th 2003



1. We, mayors, presidents of regions and elected representatives of cities and local authorities throughout the world, associated with representatives of organisations from civil society and the private sector, meeting together in Lyon on December 4th and 5th 2003 for the first World Summit of Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society;

2. Express our satisfaction at the United Nations' initiative to convene the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in November 2003 and then in Tunis in 2005;

3. Use as reference the Helsinki Declaration for a Global Cities Dialogue on the Information Society (GCD), the final declaration made at the second World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities at Rio in May 2001, the works carried out by Telecities in preparing the "Charter of citizens' rights in the information society", Assemblies and councils of networks and international associations of cities (FMCU, IULA, Global Cities Dialogue in Riga in April 2003) and regions (ERISA, ELANET/CCR - EISCO 2003 Conference, IT4All Congress in Bilbao in February 2003), together with the work done at the continental conferences in preparation for the Lyon Summit that were held at Nouakchott (July 2003), Curitiba (October 2003) and Shanghai (October 2003);

4. Welcome the creation of the new world organisation United Cities and Local Governments in Paris in May 2004 that will be the united voice of local authorities around the world. United Cities and Local Government will promote the participation of local government in the development of a fair, equitable and inclusive Information Society.

5. Support the growing partnership between local governments and the United Nations, in particular work done by the local authorities with UN-HABITAT among others through the United Nations Advisory committee (UNACLA), and by the preparatory process for the Lyon summit encouraged by UNITAR;

6. Welcome the new mechanisms of participation set up by the actors of civil society (Plenary Assembly, International Bureau, etc.) that open the way for genuine involvement by them in international debate.

7. Are convinced that developments in information technologies significantly contribute towards transforming our societies, in both the North and the South and that they require continuous efforts in terms of monitoring and assessment, as well as in action taken by all local, national and international public authorities, in close co-operation with representatives of civil society and the private sector;

8. Observe that cities and regions are often at the forefront regarding the transformations brought about by information and communication technologies in areas as diverse as universal access, education and training, housing, culture sustainable economic development, water, sanitary conditions, social cohesion, etc.;

9. Take into account that half the world's population live in cities and urban areas, whereas the other half rely increasingly on cities for their economic survival and very existence;

10. **Are aware** of the fact that, by relying on the heritage and vitality of our cities and regions, we shall build a society of inclusive cities whose wealth is founded on their diversity, cultures and languages rather than a society of impersonal and uniform information;

11. **Are determined** to totally fulfill the role that befalls us in developing the information society, and are eager to provide new local and regional dynamism in the development of the information society, with the aim of improving the quality of life in our communities and answering the needs of our citizens; fellowcitizens as our objectiv

12. **Approve the following declaration, called the Lyon 2003 Declaration on the Information Society.**

I - Our principles

13. The freedom to communicate and equal access to knowledge constitute fundamental rights for all men and women.

14. The information era must lead to reinforcing all human rights and developing democracy, in compliance with the principles set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Charter, the UNESCO Constitution, the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights and the International Pact on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

15. The potentialities of information and communication technologies must contribute towards attaining the objectives expressed in the Millennium Declaration, especially concerning the eradication of poverty and hunger, instituting universal primary and secondary education, equality between the sexes, the reduction of infant mortality, the fight against major pandemics, while improving living conditions in the most disadvantaged urban areas, and furthering sustainable development.

16. Setting up the information society must benefit every citizen in our cities and regions and contribute towards developing democracy and good urban governance, respect cultural and linguistic diversity, dialogue between civilizations, as well as the pluralism of information and communications media.

II - Our commitments

In this context, we commit ourselves to:

17. **Reasserting basic human rights**, , especially those of expression, communication and access to knowledge, and ensuring that technological development contributes towards widening the scope of freedom, by guarding against any form of contradiction with the Declaration of Human Rights.

18. **Promoting** universal access to new technologies and avoiding increased social division.

19. **Contributing** by mobilizing these technologies to reduce inequalities and discrimination between men and women, especially in the workplace.

20. **Using** the New Information and Communication tools to respond in particular to the needs of the most vulnerable inhabitants of our cities, such as the handicapped, the chronically poor, the elderly, etc.

21. **Taking advantage** of information technologies to permit indigenous peoples to protect and enrich their cultural heritage.

22. **Promoting** total transparency in the management of local and regional affairs through the civic use of new information and communication technologies.

23. **Using** these new tools to promote decentralization processes, local self-government and diversity while avoiding the standardization of services and initiatives driven by technical imperatives. National programmes must not be implemented to the detriment of local needs and diversity..

24. **Developing**, between cities and regions in industrialised countries and developing countries, ambitious decentralised co-operation programmes to significantly reduce social, economic and environmental inequalities, by making the best possible use of information and communication technologies.

25. **Increasing** the collaboration of cities and regions with the United Nations system in every area where efforts made by the United Nations can contribute towards developing a more united information society.

26. **Sharing** the vision of an Information Society that promotes community participation that relies on civil society and encourages innovative democratization processes and increased political participation of all men and women.

27. **Providing access** in our territories to new information and communication technologies that is as egalitarian as possible, by paying special attention to the most isolated areas, in particular to rural areas, as well as to districts and territories where the most disadvantaged populations live. Whenever the market does not allow universal access to essential services, local communities may include general interest clauses in negotiations with operators.

28. **Taking on**, if necessary, direct responsibility for developing communication networks and promoting local and community initiatives to set up public facilities.

29. **Making** education and training a priority consideration in our policies by contributing towards material and human investment, by supporting teacher training, the maintenance of equipment and networks and supporting the production of adapted educational software, etc.

30. **Providing** training to local government officials and representatives in the use and potential impact of information technologies to satisfy community needs for good governance and essential public services.

31. **Developing** assisted public access to meet training needs, particularly by supporting public, associative and community structures that meet the criteria of service in the public interest.

32. **Facilitating** access to and the diffusion of information in the public domain, particularly in public libraries, in heritage, cultural, architectural, tourist and other services under the responsibility of local communities.

33. **Promoting** the on-lining of contents in several languages, including in particular local languages so as to contribute to our world's linguistic and cultural diversity.

34. **Developing** on-line administration to promote access to administrative and general interest services for all citizens and contribute to the transparency, efficiency and development of legislation. These developments must be accompanied by systematically informing citizens of their rights, especially those concerning information and communication.

35. **Privileging**, whenever possible, the use and development of free software in the investments made by our cities and regions, so that these investments can be used by other local authorities.

36. **Contributing towards the development of innovation** and setting up innovative enterprises in the field of information and communication technologies, by associating local authorities, established companies, research centres and universities, and in particular encouraging small and medium sized businesses to use broadband networks and profit from these technologies.

37. **Encourage** the use of tools that encourage community expression and participatory democracy.

38. **Developing** conditions on local and regional levels that permit the representatives of civil society and the private sector to become associated with decision-making related to the local and regional development of the information society.

39. **Involving** traditional media – community and local radio stations and television channels – in opening up new areas of expression together with community and democratic participation.

40. **Supporting** local initiatives that permit communicating other forms of knowledge and learning and developing artistic creation among local actors.

41. **Favouring** networking the experiences of different local actors to facilitate training, dissemination, and development in applications and contents.

42. **Exchanging** the experiences and best practices implemented in our cities in service provision and new democratic processes.

43. **Increasing** co-operation programmes between cities and local authorities throughout the world in order to encourage development and bridge the digital divide that separates the information rich from the information poor.

44. **Inviting** cities and local authorities to actively commit themselves to the Digital Solidarity Fund, in order to permit developing countries to participate fully in the information society.

45. **Taking** all necessary measures to ensure the circulation of the principles contained in this declaration and the implementation of the action plan adopted at Lyon.

46. **Express** these orientations in an action plan formulated by the executive secretariat during the follow-up process of the Lyon Summit and which will be proposed at the Constitutive Congress of "United Cities and Local Governments" at Paris in May 2003.

III - Our recommendations for following-up the LYON summit

47.. We, mayors, presidents of regions and elected representatives of cities and local authorities, associated with representatives of civil society and private sector organisations involved in local and regional development, gathered together in Lyon on December 4th and 5th 2003 for the first World Summit of Cities and Local authorities on the Information Society

Request:

48. **That the Lyon Declaration** be attached to the Declaration of the Geneva WISI;

49. **That the first Congress of "United Cities and Local Governments"** adopts and takes all appropriate measures to implement this Declaration and the action plan that shall be formulated from now until the Congress.

50. **That the preparation of the second phase of the WSIS** after the Geneva Summit officially associates local authorities in implementing the Geneva action plan;

51. **The Secretary General of the United Nations** to take account of the role played by cities and regions in implementing the Millennium Declaration and especially in developing an information society that is more united and more concerned by the desires of the community;

52. **The Secretary General of the United Nations** to give representatives of cities and regions a specific voice in the decision-making processes of institutions that contribute towards developing the information society;

53 - **The Secretariat General of the United Nations** should reinforce the role of the United Nations Advisory Committee on Local Authorities - UNACLA, in order to promote the Information and Communication Society in the framework of a world campaign for good governance coordinated by UN-HABITAT and to make the voices of cities heard by the institutions that contribute to the development of the information society.

54. **The national governments** that have gathered together in the framework of the WSIS to take account of the specificity, the role and the responsibilities of municipalities and local governments as formulated in this declaration, when drawing up and implementing national programmes for the information society;

55. **National governments** to set up legislative frameworks that facilitate actions taken by local authorities regarding the information society, in conformity with the principle of subsidiarity;

56. **National governments** and the international community to support programmes and actions intended to increase the capacity of local governments to face the numerous challenges posed by making the Information Society a reality;

57. **National governments** to promote the development of infrastructures in partnership with local authorities, with particular attention being given to disadvantaged areas.

58. **Actors in international, bilateral and multilateral cooperation**, especially the ITU, UNESCO, UN Habitat and UNITAR to establish concrete relations with cities and regions in order to implement those parts of the action plan that fall under their respective responsibilities;

59. **The national governments, municipalities and local governments of developed countries**, to increase their contributions to international development via decentralised development and multi-actor partnerships (public authorities, civil society and the private sector), particularly in education and access to the information society for all;

60 **Companies in the private sector** to take account of cities' and regions' specific requirements and to actively embark on concrete projects for developing the information society at local and regional levels;

61. **Local actors in non-profit making activities and companies** in the private sector to co-operate with local and regional authorities in decentralised development projects intended to reduce the digital divide;

62. **That the mechanisms for monitoring and implementing the Geneva and Lyon Declarations and Action Plans**, as well as the preparatory process of the second phase of the WISI at Tunis ensure coherence between, on the one hand, the principles formulated in these declarations and action plans and, on the other, the decisions taken by other international organisations, such as the WIPO and WTO, whenever these decisions concern the information society;

63. **We, mayors, presidents of regions and elected representatives of cities and local authorities, associated with representatives of civil society and private sector organisations involved in local and regional development, who have met together in Lyon on December 4th and 5th 2003 for the first World Summit of Cities and Local authorities on the Information Society**

64. **Invite** the parties concerned by the preparatory process of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society to be held at Tunis from 15 to 18 November 2005 to take account of the conclusions and recommendations of the Lyon Summit.

65. **Thank** the City and Urban Community of Lyon for organising this first summit of cities and local authorities on the information society; the City of Geneva for receiving the delegation of cities and local authorities and allowing them to present the conclusions and recommendations of the Lyon Summit to all the participants of the Geneva Summit; UNITAR and UN-HABITAT for contributing towards the expression of local authorities at the WSIS; the Rhone General Council and the Rhone Alpes Region and the world network of regions IT4all, for their support at the Lyon Summit.

The Executive Secretariat of the Lyon Summit (the Cities of Lyon and Geneva, CAMVAL, FMCU, IULA, Global Cities Dialogue, Telecities, etc.)

Lyon, December 5th 2003