

## PATRONAGE

- *Patron:* H.E. Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal
- *Special advisor:* Amadou Top, Observatoire sur les Systèmes d'Information, les Réseaux et les Inforoutes au Sénégal (OSIRIS)

## SPONSORS

- Government of Canada
- Government of the Republic of Senegal
- Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie

## ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

- *Presidency:* International Conference Volunteers
- Conference of ONGs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO)
- Civil Society Division of the World Summit on the Information Society Executive Secretariat
- International Association for Volunteer Effort
- Conseiller Technique Informatique – NTIC et Assistance Technique, Republic of Senegal

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- *Presidency:* Commission Nationale pour la Francophonie
- *Vice Presidency:* Conseil des Organisations Non-Gouvernementales d'Appui au Développement (CONGAD) et Assistance Technique, Primature, République du Sénégal
- Réseau Anaïs, Cameroon
- Direction Informatique, Republic of Senegal
- Internet Society (ISOC)
- Observatoire sur les Systèmes d'Information les Réseaux et les Inforoutes au Sénégal (OSIRIS)
- United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV)
- Peace Corps Volunteers, Digital Freedom Initiative
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

Participants included delegations from governments, civil society and the private sector of 25 countries, representatives of African and international organizations.

## PARTNERS

- Civil Society Division of the World Summit on the Information Society Executive Secretariat
- Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO)
- Coopération française
- Conseil des Organisations Non-Gouvernementales d'Appui au Développement (CONGAD)
- European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN)
- m.c. art design group
- Swiss Embassy in Dakar

## VOLUNTEER FAMILY

The aim of the "Volunteer Family" is to facilitate the participation of the volunteer sector in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). It is composed of the following organizations: ATD Quart Monde, European Volunteer Center (CEV), CIVICUS (World Alliance for Citizen Participation), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE), United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV), International Conference Volunteers (ICVolunteers), Fondation de Solidarité et du Volontariat de la Communauté de Valence (Spain).

## CONTACT

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## MESSAGE OF DAKAR

International Symposium on  
Volunteering and  
the Development of Human Capacity  
in the Information Society

23 – 25 October 2003  
Dakar, Senegal



*We, participants in the International Symposium on Volunteering, representing governments, civil society and the private sector, coming from 25 different countries, met in Dakar (Senegal), from 23 to 25 October 2003. We affirm that:*

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

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Volunteers should be integrated into teams of experts capable of setting up appropriate infrastructure. Since universities are a substantial source of volunteers, partnerships between universities and volunteer organizations should be enhanced.

Volunteers on disaster relief missions need to be equipped with mobile telephones. This would improve contact between volunteers engaged in rescue operations, as mobile telephones are an important asset in this type of situation and text messages (SMS) make it possible to rapidly contact potential additional volunteers.

A network of volunteers specialized in computer technology should be created. These "computer experts without borders" would offer their know-how to develop free access systems compatible with existing systems.

## **TRAINING**

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Training can be divided into two fundamental types: on-line training and on-site training. Both are important and need to be further developed.

Several different aspects must be taken into consideration when dealing with ICT training. Each actor, public, private or associative has a specific part to play. In this respect, it is necessary to identify the areas of intervention of volunteers and the groups toward which their action should be directed in priority, taking into account the essential role of volunteering as irreplaceable actor for the training of certain sectors of the population not being reached by government training institutions.

The skills of volunteers need to be reinforced, in order to enable them to train ICT users at all levels and in particular those not reached by the national education systems.

It is essential to guarantee the financial means necessary to support the activities of volunteers engaged in ICT training programs. This can be achieved through multilateral agreements for the channelling of resources.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF CONTENTS**

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Technical support can be provided by an outside consultant, but the content of the site needs to be maintained and updated by its owner. This is important, as it ensures the accuracy and reliability and reduces the risk of outdated information.

Since the volunteers represent added value for social, economic and cultural development, we recommend recognizing their contribution and supporting their actions in the elaboration of contents.

Because of its ease of acquisition and multiple functions, we recommend a broader dissemination of open software, with the intention of solving some of the problems related to contents updating.

## **PARTNERSHIP AND FINANCING**

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Partnerships as a means of financing are crucial in making information and knowledge available. An efficient partnership, based on equity and justice, as well as a financing scheme that takes into account the real needs of communities will make it possible to reduce the digital divide. In this respect, it is imperative to:

- Redefine roles and statutes (participative approach) of each actor in the partnership (governments, financing organizations, private sector, civil society (including the Volunteer Family);
- Appeal, through ICTs, for corporate volunteering and for a better recognition of the social responsibility, based on existing mechanisms;

- Define projects and programs at international, national and local levels, designed to address real needs and generate sustainable development;
- Capitalize on all experiences made through ICT projects in various countries, inventory funds already invested in ICTs, based on a participative approach.

## **INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK**

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As the Volunteer Family currently operates without any formal institution, there is a need to consider:

- The creation of such a body, federating several entities focusing on ICT volunteering. To this end, it is recommended to involve civil society, governments and the private sector;
- The creation of an African regional ICT volunteer network with national focal points, working at the international level. This could be part of a federation of digital volunteers working both in the North and the South;
- The creation of a network of young volunteers connected through the Internet and working for the protection of the environment;
- The creation of a digital solidarity fund.

*Adopted in Dakar, Senegal, on Saturday 25 October 2003 by the International Symposium on Volunteering and the Development of Human Capacities in the Information Society.*

*Presented in the Governmental Plenary of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) on 12 December 2003.*

Complete version available at:  
[www.worldwidevolunteers.org/isv2003](http://www.worldwidevolunteers.org/isv2003)