

## **SECOND PHASE OF WSIS, 16-18 NOVEMBER, TUNIS**

### **Report of the Conferences and the campaign on volunteering and ICTs**

Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the World Summit on the Information Society Volunteer Family, I am honored to speak before this prominent assembly in order to, on one hand, provide a synthesis of the various reports of workshops and conferences of the WSIS Volunteer Family between 2004 and 2005, and, on the other hand, some thoughts regarding our participation in the process.

Since 2002, the volunteer sector has had the occasion, thanks to the multi-stakeholder approach of this Summit, to actively contribute to it, mainly by participating in the elaboration of its texts, by mobilizing volunteers and by developing projects linked to volunteering and the information society.

I would like to recall here, that volunteers, if all put into one nation, would represent the 5th most powerful economy of the world. However, volunteers often operate in the shade and are generally little represented in important decision-making processes.

As recognized during the first phase of the WSIS, I would also like to recall that volunteers have actively participated in the creation of what we call today the information society. They wrote some of the first Internet protocols, are at the origin of many application of open source and free software and, last but not least, participate as trainers and disseminators of information for a society of shared knowledge characterized by inclusiveness, solidarity and consensus, which we are building. Volunteers also contribute to cultural and linguistic diversity in cyberspace.

If the WSIS Volunteer Family has been very happy to be fully associated in this multi-stakeholder process of the Summit, we have, at a number of occasions, seen that volunteering is not understood well enough and supported by governments and other actors of the international arena. We wish therefore to see a better understanding of a sector which has a significant impact on social and human development in this world, in general, and in the information society, in particular, for implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

This is why we acknowledge with regret that, if the approach of volunteerism has been included in the first phase of the Summit, this approach has been omitted in the Tunis document regarding implementation.

We are proud that, even with modest means, we have managed to implement a certain number of national campaigns on volunteering and ICTs between 2004 and 2005. We believe that these examples and the projects launched as a continuation of a number of local, regional and

international consultations and conferences on this topic allowed to build solid foundations for beyond the Tunis Summit.

Finally, we would like to underline that volunteers are connectors between local and global. Let us recall the enormous success of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV 2001), which is a good illustration of the tremendous impact of volunteers. Since volunteers are innovators, they can bring forward a humble contribution to the international community in the search for solutions to the essential questions related to the use of ICTs, for example through the development of South-South and South-North volunteer programs or initiatives of online volunteering.

Mister President, Excellencies, Honorable Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, we wish that our potential of mobilization be fully used and our experience and professionalism put to profit to as many as possible. We need little to achieve a lot. We wish to continue working closely with the various actors associated to this Summit, in the framework of multi-stakeholder partnerships, in particular with governments, civil society, the private sector, to implement the objectives outlined in the Summit documents.

Thank you for your attention.

*Message prepared by ICVolunteers, Cibervoluntarios.es, Azur Développement, ICVolontaires-Mali, United Nations of Youth (UNOY) Network Nigeria, and presented by Viola Krebs, Secretary-General of ICVolunteers on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2005 in plenary of the Summit on the Information Society*