



Informal Meeting, 2-3 Mars 2004

*Informal Proposal
Civil Society working group on Scientific Information*

IMPLEMENTATION of the DECLARATION and PLAN of ACTION

PROPOSAL of an INTERFACE PROCESS between GOVERNMENTS and CIVIL SOCIETY

Either at the level of the planned coordination group,
either at the level of the executive secretariat of the Civil Society, in its quality of
“facilitator”.

1/ Help to implement WSIS recommendations, at national levels, at the initiative of the Civil Society, before parliaments and other national bodies.

It is proposed to help Civil Society (WSIS accredited NGOs) to send request of letters of support related to a specific summit topic; to the whole set of governments through the channel of their WSIS delegation. To better understand what we are dealing with, let us give an example. A parliamentary inquiry is underway in the United Kingdom, concerning “scientific publishing”. The Civil Society working group on Scientific Information has recently submitted written evidence that contains selected paragraphs of the WSIS declaration and plan of action, in favour of Open Access to scientific journals and archives. It would be highly desirable to complement this evidence with letter of support by concerned countries. In these letters, we only kindly ask that concerned countries declare that they would welcome with great interest the implementation of WSIS recommendations concerning Open Access to scientific publications; without naming the UK. This kind of letter might be useful in other countries as well. Instead of contacting; individually, one by one, about 180 countries, the request of our Civil Society working group would be sent to the coordination group that would transmit officially the request to WSIS country participants. Of course, the coordination group would only transmit Civil Society requests that are within the topics of the WSIS.

2/ Help provided by the Civil Society in order to implement at national levels (mainly for developing or transition countries but not exclusively) WSIS recommendations.

The Civil Society possesses a vast amount of expertise in the TIC domain, that could be offered either freely or very cheaply. In a procedural manner that would mirror the above paragraph, it is proposed that concerned governments might be able to request expert help to the coordination group that would then transmit and broadcast to the very many WSIS accredited NGOs.

3/ Compliance of current WSIS actions and partnerships with the WSIS recommendations.

It is proposed that Civil Society would be allowed to convey to the coordination group, observations and suggestions so that current and future actions should be in agreement with the spirit and the texts of the WSIS.

4/ Help to find financial resources within the Civil Society.

Philanthropic foundations have considerable financial resources but are not present at the WSIS. It becomes very important that they become involved in the WSIS process.

It is proposed that the coordination group would contact directly the foundations, in a way to maximize political impact (eg. with a letter by Kofi Anan) , following suggestions of the Civil Society. Funds could requested to help the WSIS set of meetings and to implement specific actions as recommended by the WSIS texts.

In the latter case, collected funds could be managed by the UNITAR.