

JAKARTA DECLARATION ON INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

Jakarta, Indonesia, 30-31 May 2001

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the Group of Fifteen, meeting in Jakarta on 30-31 May 2001, recognize that information and communications technologies (ICT) are central to the emergence of a knowledge-based economy and information society. In conjunction with the basic elements for development, ICT has the potential to accelerate sustained economic growth and promote sustainable development in developing countries. In order to achieve the objectives of development, ICT-driven economic transformation should be geared toward empowering, local communities, and individuals to enable them realize their potentials and aspirations. We are however deeply concerned that, at present, the huge potential of ICT for advancing development is largely eluding most developing countries resulting in a growing digital divides.

2. We affirm that for ICT to serve the cause of development, there is an urgent need to address the major impediments to the participation of the majority of the peoples in developing countries in the ICT revolution. To this end, we consider it a priority to evolve concerted actions at the national, regional and international levels to remove impediments related to lack of infrastructure, local content, training, capacity-building, investment, connectivity, modern technology and appropriate policy framework.

3. We consider it important that national programmes should aim at mainstreaming ICT into a national development strategy and be defined and implemented on the basis of national priority. This should be undertaken to promote infrastructure development, investment, enhance national institutions and capacities, generate local content, as well as facilitate widespread access to ICT for development. To complement these efforts, there is a need for regional action to pool resources and exchange experiences to facilitate the integration of developing countries into the new global economy and information society. We therefore urge the international community, particularly developed countries, to demonstrate their commitment to promote digital opportunities for all through innovative approaches and partnerships between government, private sector, civil society and NGOs. This effort should be geared towards facilitating affordable access to new technologies on favourable terms, improved market access for exports from the South and enhanced capital and investment flows to developing countries, on a sustainable and stable basis. To this end, multilateral development institutions and developed countries should encourage and strengthen ICT-related applications and local industry in developing countries through investment, transfer of technology, education and training, development of institutional and appropriate policy framework, as well as support for national programmes at harnessing the potential of the ICT for development.

4. We are convinced that unless there is a common vision and adequate as well as timely international cooperation to bridge the digital divide, the information and knowledge revolution could increase economic inequalities among and between peoples, countries and regions of the world. We therefore welcome the various international initiatives to enhance the capacity of developing countries to take advantage of the development opportunities presented by ICT. In this regard, we acknowledge the efforts of ECOSOC 2000 in bringing the issue of ICT for development to the forefront of the UN agenda and in raising the awareness of its potential for development. We also appreciate the adoption of the Council's Ministerial Declaration on harnessing ICT in the service of development and ongoing initiative of establishing a UN ICT Task Force for carrying this critical process forward. We express our support for ITU's initiative to convene a World

Summit on the Information Society to be held in 2003. We hope that the activities of the G-8 Digital Opportunities Task Force (DOT Force) will benefit all developing countries, including G-15 countries. We acknowledge the importance of E-Commerce and its implications for the developing countries, and within the WTO, we recognize the need for the continuation of the study process on the trade-related aspects of global E-Commerce without prejudice to the outcome of this process or any deliberations in this regard.

5. As the Group of Fifteen addresses issues related to the ICT, including the question of access to worldwide information networks such as Internet, due attention should be given to the preservation of cultural diversity, privacy and other aspects of "Info-ethics". We call upon the international community to bear these aspects in mind in dealing with ICT issues.

6. In light of the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital era, we agree on the establishment of a G15 Task Force on ICT to elaborate the modalities for the implementation of a framework of cooperation and collaboration on ICT, including the proposal to establish a G15 Online Resource Center, and to provide coordinated actions and responses to enable our countries and other developing countries to participate in the various international ICT initiatives in a way that is beneficial to developing countries. Accordingly, we mandate our Personal Representatives to follow-up this decision, taking into account the outcome of the Expert Group Meeting on ICT, held on 18-19 April 2001 in Jakarta, and to report to our Twelfth Summit in Caracas in 2002.

7. We call the international community to join us in evolving a common vision and realistic approaches to promoting partnerships among all stakeholders to make digital opportunities a reality for all.