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on the **information society**  
Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005

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# Telecommunications **Saves Lives**

## World Summit on the Information Society and Disaster Reduction

**Gary Fowlie**

**Chief, Media Relations and Public Information**  
**International Telecommunication Union**





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INTERNATIONAL  
**Herald Tribune**  
THE IHT ONLINE



## Globalist: The chance for healing after the great wave

**Roger Cohen** International Herald Tribune  
Wednesday, January 5, 2005

“It is worth pausing to celebrate a moment when that overused phrase - our shared humanity - actually means something. Web cameras, bloggers and Internet communication can marry technology and the heart to produce a surge of sympathy and civic action unimaginable in the past.”



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**BBC NEWS**

## Text messages aid disaster recovery

By Clark Boyd  
Technology correspondent

**Text messaging technology was a valuable communication tool in the aftermath of the tsunami disaster in Asia.**



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# Text messages get S O S role

Tsunamis put mobile phone technology in the forefront



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**The New York Times**  
nytimes.com

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January 5, 2005

THE INTERNET

# To Those Seeking Help and Giving It, Computer Is a Lifeline

By SCOTT SHANE and NICHOLAS CONFESSORE



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## Origins and Status

- **WSIS originally proposed by ITU PP in 1998**
- **Formally endorsed by the UN in 2001**
- **First phase, Geneva 10-12 December 2003**
- **Second phase, Tunis, 16-18 November 2005**





## Geneva Summit: Numbers

- **More than 11'000 participants**
  - 175 governments
  - About 50 Head of States and Governments and Vice-Presidents
  - 3'300 representatives of from civil society
  - 514 business representatives from 98 organizations
  - 87 international organizations
  - More than 1'000 media representatives
- **More than 300 Summit events**



## Geneva Summit: Outcomes

- Declaration and Plan of Action
  - Common vision and agenda for ICTs to achieve UN MDGs, including connecting all communities by 2015
- Agreement on many important issues
  - Cyber-security, freedom of expression, enabling environment, cultural diversity, local content, and multilingualism, intellectual property
- Asked UN SG to look into unresolved issues
  - Internet Governance and Financing







## WSIS Outcomes - ICT and Disaster

- Declaration of Principles
  - encourages special attention to extend benefits of Information Society to countries and regions with special needs (LDCs etc.) and those with '*conditions that pose severe threats to development, such as natural disasters.*'





## WSIC Outcomes - ICT and Disaster

- Plan of Action

***E-health - 'strengthen and expand ICT-based initiatives for providing medical and humanitarian assistance in disasters and emergencies.'***

***E-environment - 'establish monitoring systems, using ICTs, to forecast and monitor the impact of natural and manmade disasters, particularly in developing countries, LDCs and small economies.'***



## Focus of Tunis Phase

- **Follow-up and implementation of Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action**
  - Particular attention to challenges of LDCs - including ICTs for disaster early-warning systems
  - Stocktaking of progress
  - Do not reopen agreements from Geneva phase
- **Revisit unresolved issues from Geneva phase**
  - Consideration of UN SG reports on Financing and Internet governance



## Group of the Friends of the Chair

- **Up to 30 members (government delegations):**
  - 6 per regional group, plus 8 ex-officio members and observers from other governments
- **Prepare document to serve as a basis for negotiations**
  - To present to Prepcom 2
- **Take into account outcomes of relevant thematic, regional and other WSIS-related meetings**
- **First meeting on 22 October 2004 in Geneva**
  - Meetings throughout November, December and January
  - Special sessions open to all stakeholders



## Stocktaking of Progress

- Online questionnaire available on the WSIS website: [www.itu.int/wsis/stocktaking](http://www.itu.int/wsis/stocktaking)
- ITU/WSIS Executive Secretariat to report results to PrepCom 2 and PrepCom 3
- Overview of stakeholder initiatives related to Plan of Action
- Sharing experiences and lessons learned, forming new partnerships



## UN Task Force on Financial Mechanisms

- **Multi-stakeholder, multi-region membership**
- **Launch meeting in New York, 4 October 2004**
- **Open consultations:**
  - **Online in October/November 2004; meeting in Geneva, November 2004**
- **Task Force meeting in New York on 29 November 04**
- **Report by end of 2004**
  - **To be discussed during PrepCom-2**



## UN Working Group on Internet Governance

- **Multi-stakeholder, multi-region membership**
- **Open consultations for all stakeholders:**
  - Online and meetings started October 2004, carried on throughout 2004-05
- **Meetings of Working Group**
  - First meeting in Geneva from 23 and 25 November 2004
  - Followed by meetings throughout 2005
- **Final report in summer 2005**
  - To be discussed during PrepCom-3



## WSIS Regional Conferences

- **Asia-Pacific**
  - Mid-2005 (date and venue TBD)
- **Africa**
  - 2-4 February 2005, Accra (Ghana)
- **Latin America and the Caribbean**
  - 8-10 June 2005 Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)





## WSIS Thematic/Related Meetings

- **Some 20 WSIS-related meetings**
- **WMO - ICT applications in Natural Disaster Reduction - 21 January 2005 - Kobe**
- **ITU - Thematic meeting on Cybersecurity - June 2005**



## Road to Tunis

- **Prepcom 2: 17-25 February 2005 in Geneva**
  - TFFM report and text from PC Chair + stocktaking
- **Prepcom 3 expected August/September 2005**
  - WGIIG report and negotiations + stocktaking
- **Regional and Thematic Meetings**
- **Tunis Summit: 16-18 November 2005**



## Tsunami as Wake-up Call to Bridge the Digital Divide

- **“So the next time you think about bridging the digital divide, put aside the academic debates about email access or search engine effectiveness. Instead, think of it this way: does everyone have access to the tools and information they need to keep their families safe? If the answer is no, then you know we still have a lot of work to do.”**

**Andy Carvin, Programme Director, EDC Centre for Media and Community**



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website: [www.itu.int/wsis](http://www.itu.int/wsis)

contact: [wsis@itu.int](mailto:wsis@itu.int)

**Thank you**

