Contribution by United Nations University (on behalf of UNU, MIT OpenCourseWare, and the Hewlett Foundation), for consideration by PrepCom-3 of the Tunis Phase

With comments on the Political Chapeau and the Operational Part

On behalf of United Nations University (UNU), MIT OpenCourseWare, and the Hewlett Foundation, UNU is submitting the following proposal for consideration by PrepCom-3 of the Tunis phase. The proposal contains recommended changes to the texts of the Political Chapeau and Chapters 1 and 2 of the Operational Part of the Tunis Final Documents.

This proposal emphasizes the principles of knowledge "sharing" and "openness," which is closely aligned with the vision of the Information Society, "where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life…." (*Declaration of Principles*, WSIS Geneva Phase)

The open sharing of educational content is a critical component to a "fully-inclusive and open information and knowledge society." (Section 7, *Political Chapeau*) For many educators and learners in the developing world, up-to-date material in science and technology is in particularly short supply. This point was reinforced in the discussions that took place in the **WSIS Thematic Meeting Tokyo Ubiquitous Network Conference** organized by the Government of Japan, ITU and the UNU on 16-17 May 2005, in Tokyo (Japan). The Chairman's Report from that conference makes specific reference to open content and opencourseware.

Opencoursewares help to meet this demand by offering free, openly licensed, and high-quality digital course materials. The use of external resources for educational improvement is not a new idea – educational institutions all over the world are accustomed to using publications from many sources, facilitating exchanges involving students and faculty, and seeking information via the Internet. The opencourseware movement, however, takes the principle of sharing and cross-institutional exchange to the next level, enabling open access to a vast library of high-quality educational materials in key curricular areas from a wide array of institutions all over the world.

The opencourseware movement illustrates the potential of ICTs to equalize access to knowledge and lead to a more open and inclusive Information Society. The comments contained herein are provided in this context, and emphasize the importance of leveraging ICTs for the open sharing of knowledge in order to address the goals set forth in the Geneva and Tunis Plans of Action.

Note: New text in **bold**. Deleted text in ~~strikethrough~~. *[Comments in italics.]*

Political chapeau / Tunis Commitment

Existing Text	Possible Revision
1.　　We, the representatives of the peoples of the world, have gathered in Tunis from 16-18 November 2005 for this second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to reiterate our unequivocal support for the *Declaration of Principles* and *Plan of Action* adopted at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in December 2003. We reaffirm our desire and commitment to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, premised on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and effective multilateralism, and respecting fully and upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, so that people everywhere can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, to achieve their full potential and to promote sustainable development, to improve quality of life, to eradicate poverty and to attain the internationally-agreed development goals of the Millennium Declaration.	1.　　We, the representatives of the peoples of the world, have gathered in Tunis from 16-18 November 2005 for this second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to reiterate our unequivocal support for the *Declaration of Principles* and *Plan of Action* adopted at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in December 2003. We reaffirm our desire and commitment to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, premised on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and effective multilateralism, and respecting fully and upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, so that people everywhere can create, access, utilize and **openly** share information and knowledge, to achieve their full potential and to promote sustainable development, to improve quality of life, to eradicate poverty and to attain the internationally-agreed development goals of the Millennium Declaration.
5.　　We reaffirm our resolution in the quest to ensure that everyone can benefit from the opportunities that ICTs can offer, by recalling that governments, as well as private sector, civil society and the United Nations and other international organizations, should work together to: improve access to information and communication infrastructure and technologies as well as to information and knowledge; build capacity; increase confidence and security in the use of ICTs; create an enabling environment at all levels; develop and widen ICT applications; foster and respect cultural diversity; recognize the role of the media; address the ethical dimensions of the Information Society; and encourage international and regional cooperation. We confirm that these are the key principles for building an inclusive Information society, the elaboration of which is found in the Geneva Declaration of Principles.	5.　　We reaffirm our resolution in the quest to ensure that everyone can benefit from the opportunities that ICTs can offer, by recalling that governments, as well as private sector, civil society and the United Nations and other international organizations, should work together to: improve access to information and communication infrastructure and technologies ~~as well as to information and knowledge~~; **enable and encourage the open sharing of information and knowledge, and improve access to openly available digital content;** build capacity; increase confidence and security in the use of ICTs; create an enabling environment at all levels; develop and widen ICT applications; foster and respect cultural diversity; recognize the role of the media; address the ethical dimensions of the Information Society; and encourage international and regional cooperation. We confirm that these are the key principles for building an inclusive Information society, the elaboration of which is found in the Geneva Declaration of Principles.

6. We recognise that knowledge is vital to human existence and that strengthening diffusion and exchange of knowledge would contribute to economic, social and cultural development, and help all countries reach the internationally-agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.	6. We recognise that knowledge is vital to human existence and that strengthening **open sharing of and access to** ~~diffusion and exchange of~~ knowledge would contribute to economic, social and cultural development, and help all countries reach the internationally-agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.
7. Furthermore, ICTs have made it possible for a vastly larger population than at any time in the past to join in sharing and expanding the base of human knowledge, and contributing to its further growth and application to education, health and science. ICTs have enormous potential to expand access to quality education, to boost literacy and universal primary education, and to facilitate the learning process itself and thus lay the groundwork for a fully-inclusive and open information and knowledge society.	7. Furthermore, ICTs have made it possible for a vastly larger population than at any time in the past to join in sharing and expanding the base of human knowledge, and contributing to its further growth and application to education, health and science. ICTs **and ICT-enabled content** have enormous potential to expand access to quality education **and quality educational materials**, to boost literacy and universal primary education, and to facilitate the learning process itself and thus lay the groundwork for a fully-inclusive and open information and knowledge society.
10. We shall strive unremittingly, therefore, to promote universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to ICTs for people everywhere, to ensure that the benefits are more evenly distributed between and within societies, and to bridge the digital divide in order to create digital opportunities for all.	10. We shall strive unremittingly, therefore, to promote universal, ubiquitous, **open,** equitable and affordable access to ICTs **and ICT-enabled content** for people everywhere, to ensure that the benefits are more evenly distributed between and within societies, and to bridge the digital divide in order to create digital opportunities for all.

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Operational part of the final document / Tunis Agenda for Action / Tunis Plan of implementation

Existing Text	Possible Revision
Chapter one	**From principles to action: A summit of sustainable solutions**
6. We are committed to achieving the indicative targets, set out in the Plan of Action, that serve as global references for improving connectivity and access in the use of ICTs in promoting the objectives of the Plan of Action, to be achieved by 2015, and to using ICTs as a tool to achieve the development goals of the Millennium Declaration, by: a. mainstreaming and aligning national e-strategies across national action plans, as appropriate, [with in-built time-bound measures/if possible, by 2008], aimed at achieving the development goals of the Millennium Declaration; b. designing and implementing enabling policies and a regulatory environment that is supportive of ICT entrepreneurship and that promotes investment and the mobilisation of domestic resources; c. building the ICT capacities of people and improving educational programmes to allow greater access to ICTs; d. promoting community volunteerism in the ICT4D sector; e. promoting public policies aimed at making/providing/ensuring affordable accessibility to hardware as well as software to populations living in developing regions, in particular in rural areas; f. improving access to the world's health knowledge, in areas as diverse as global cooperation in emergency response, to reaching health professionals and individual citizens to improve healthcare and quality of life; establishing monitoring and early-warning systems, using ICTs, to forecast and monitor the impact of natural and man-made disasters.	6. We are committed to achieving the indicative targets, set out in the Plan of Action, that serve as global references for improving connectivity and access in the use of ICTs in promoting the objectives of the Plan of Action, to be achieved by 2015, and to using ICTs as a tool to achieve the development goals of the Millennium Declaration, by: a. mainstreaming and aligning national e-strategies across national action plans, as appropriate, [with in-built time-bound measures/if possible, by 2008], aimed at achieving the development goals of the Millennium Declaration; b. designing and implementing enabling policies and a regulatory environment that is supportive of ICT entrepreneurship and that promotes investment and the mobilisation of domestic resources; c. building the ICT capacities of people and improving educational programmes to allow greater access to ICTs **and quality digital educational content**; d. promoting community volunteerism in the ICT4D sector; e. promoting public policies aimed at making/providing/ensuring affordable accessibility to hardware as well as software, **including raising awareness around open educational resources (such as open source software and openly available digital content)** to populations living in developing regions, in particular in rural areas; f. improving access to the world's health knowledge, in areas as diverse as global cooperation in emergency response, to reaching health professionals and individual citizens to improve healthcare and quality of life; establishing monitoring and early-warning systems, using ICTs, to forecast and monitor the impact of natural and man-made disasters.
10. In order to assure the sustainability of the WSIS process after the completion of its Tunis phase, we agree to establish an implementation mechanism for the Geneva and Tunis Plans of Action, based upon co-operation among governments and all stakeholders, with the overarching goal of	10. In order to assure the sustainability of the WSIS process after the completion of its Tunis phase, we agree to establish an implementation mechanism for the Geneva and Tunis Plans of Action, based upon co-operation among governments and all stakeholders, with the overarching goal of helping countries and

helping countries and societies to achieve the development goals of the Millennium Declaration. To that end, for each Action Line in the Geneva and Tunis Plans of Action (as identified in the Annex), a team of stakeholders will work together to promote implementation. We request the UN Secretary-General to nominate, from among existing UN bodies or specialised agencies, those that will [moderate/coordinate] the work of each team, based on respect for their mandates and leveraging on their expertise, and within their existing resources.	societies to achieve the development goals of the Millennium Declaration. To that end, for each Action Line in the Geneva and Tunis Plans of Action (as identified in the Annex), a team of stakeholders will work together to promote implementation. We request the UN Secretary-General to nominate, from among existing UN bodies or specialised agencies, those that will [moderate/coordinate] the work of each team, based on respect for their mandates and leveraging on their expertise, and within their existing resources. *[For action items C3, C4, and C7 (E-learning), we propose that UNESCO serve as the coordinating body, based on their expertise and proven leadership in these areas.]*
Chapter two	**Financial mechanisms [for meeting the challenges of ICT for development]**
22. We recognize that there are a number of areas where the current approaches to ICT for Development financing have devoted insufficient attention to date. These include: a. ICT capacity-building programmes, materials, tools, educational funding and specialized training initiatives; b. Communications access and connectivity for ICT services in remote rural areas, small island developing states and other locations presenting unique technological and market challenges; c. Regional backbone infrastructure to link networks across borders in economically-disadvantaged regions; d. Broadband capacity to Internet access at affordable prices; e. Coordinated assistance for small countries; f. ICT applications and content aimed at customers, communities and local institutions in the developing world.	22. We recognize that there are a number of areas where the current approaches to ICT for Development financing have devoted insufficient attention to date. These include: a. ICT capacity-building programmes, materials, tools, educational funding and specialized training initiatives; b. Communications access and connectivity for ICT services in remote rural areas, small island developing states and other locations presenting unique technological and market challenges; c. Regional backbone infrastructure to link networks across borders in economically-disadvantaged regions; d. Broadband capacity to Internet access at affordable prices; e. Coordinated assistance for small countries; f. ICT applications ~~and content~~ aimed at customers, communities and local institutions in the developing world. **g. Localization and development of ICT-enabled content to meet the needs of customers, communities and local institutions in the developing world.**
24. Accordingly, we recommend improvements and innovations in existing financing mechanisms, including: a. Enhancing regional cooperation and creating multi-stakeholder partnerships; especially for trans-national infrastructure backbones; b. Coordinating programmes among governments and major financial players to mitigate investment risks and transaction costs for operators entering less attractive rural and low income market segments;	24. Accordingly, we recommend improvements and innovations in existing financing mechanisms, including: a. Enhancing regional cooperation and creating multi-stakeholder partnerships; especially for trans-national infrastructure backbones; b. Coordinating programmes among governments and major financial players to mitigate investment risks and transaction costs for operators entering less attractive rural and low

c. Creating policy and regulatory incentives and more open access policies; d. Identification and acknowledgement of the key role of ICTs in national poverty reduction strategies, and their elaboration in conjunction with e-strategies ; e. Developing institutional and implementation capacity to support the use of national universal service/access funds, and further study of these mechanisms; f. Ensuring the relevance to developing countries of the information applications, services and local content delivered by ICTs; g. Supporting the "scaling-up" of ICT-based pilot programmes; h. Using ICTs in government as a catalyst for implementation of successful e-strategies; i. [Enabling tax, tariff, import, and business regulation policies designed to reduce risks and financial burdens for, and provide incentives to, ICT investors, start-up firms, and domestic financial resources;] j. Helping to accelerate the development of domestic financial instruments including by supporting local microfinance instruments, ICT small business incubators, public credit instruments, digital solidarity and other innovations; k. Building human resource and institutional capacity (knowledge) at every level for achieving Information Society objectives, especially in the public sector; l. Encouraging business sector entities to help jump-start wider demand for ICT services by supporting local producers, programmers, artists and small businesses in the applications and content fields.	income market segments; c. Creating policy and regulatory incentives and more open access policies; d. Identification and acknowledgement of the key role of ICTs in national poverty reduction strategies, and their elaboration in conjunction with e-strategies ; e. Developing institutional and implementation capacity to support the use of national universal service/access funds, and further study of these mechanisms; f. **Supporting localization and** ~~Ensuring~~ ensuring the relevance to developing countries of the information applications, services and ~~local~~ content delivered by ICTs; g. Supporting the "scaling-up" of ICT-based pilot programmes; h. Using ICTs in government as a catalyst for implementation of successful e-strategies; i. [Enabling tax, tariff, import, and business regulation policies designed to reduce risks and financial burdens for, and provide incentives to, ICT investors, start-up firms, and domestic financial resources;] j. Helping to accelerate the development of domestic financial instruments including by supporting local microfinance instruments, ICT small business incubators, public credit instruments, digital solidarity and other innovations; k. Building human resource and institutional capacity (knowledge) at every level for achieving Information Society objectives, especially in the public sector; l. Encouraging business sector entities to help jump-start wider demand for ICT services by supporting local producers, programmers, artists and small businesses in the applications and content fields.

Annex

Action Lines

	[Moderator/Coordinator]
C1. The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for Development	--
C2. Information and communication infrastructure	--
C3. Access to information and knowledge	**UNESCO**
C4. Capacity building	**UNESCO**
C5. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs	--
C6. Enabling environment	--
C7. ICT applications	**UNESCO (e-learning)**
● E-government	
● E-business	
● E-learning	
● E-health	
● E-employment	
● E-environment	
● E-agriculture	
● E-science	
C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content	--
C9. Media	--
C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society	--
C11. International and regional cooperation	--
B. Objectives, goals and targets	--
D. Digital Solidarity	--
E. Follow-up and evaluation	--

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