



## CONCEPT PAPER OUR COMMON HUMANITY IN THE INFORMATION AGE

### Background

The Millennium Declaration spoke of a common set of values and principles, including, among others, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility as fundamental values essential to international relations in the twenty-first century. One of the central challenges of this new century, as defined by the Millennium Summit, is to ensure that globalization can be made fully inclusive and equitable. In this context, the Declaration called for “broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future, based upon *our common humanity* in all its diversity”. These principles and values have found centre stage in the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit, emphasizing that our common fundamental values, including freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance and respect for all human rights, respect for nature and shared responsibility, are essential to international relations. The Summit also emphasized that, more than ever before, we live in a global and interdependent world and acknowledged that collective security depends on effective cooperation.

In the context of the implementation of the 2005 World Summit outcome, there is a strong need to forge a strategy to create a coalition of all countries and peoples, who are determined to promote a new paradigm of international relations that recognizes the imperatives of diversity and the reality of continuous interaction among peoples and cultures in all realms of human endeavour and at all levels – local, national, regional and international. The overall objective would be to respond to the need and demand for an inclusive global forum and platform for cross-sectoral policy dialogue, conducted in an open multi-stakeholder and transparent manner, on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for enhancing the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), notably reduction of poverty.

Against this backdrop, a global forum will be organized in the framework of the Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development (GAID), in partnership with interested initiatives, on the promotion and inculcation of these values and principles and lending them practical expressions in the actions of governments, civil society, the private sector and individuals across the globe as a multi-stakeholder forum. It strives to promote ownership of the Summit by people all over the world.

## **Objectives of the meeting**

The meeting will aim to revive the spirit of cooperation through:

- Sending a message that the global community is one family with common values and promoting the concept of equity and fairness through ICT.
- Strengthening the United Nations as a positive force for good, based on inclusion and partnership.
- Promoting global public goods, especially ICT – whose benefits reach across borders, generations and populations, including equity, eradication of diseases, environmental sustainability and peace and security.
- Building awareness that the ecological balance of the planet is fragile and is easily compromised by common threats to mankind, such as poverty, climate change, global warming, natural disasters, famine and conflicts, and, if there is no effort to deal with these threats, our common destiny is at stake.

## **Participants**

- Prominent leaders and individuals in governments, private sector, entertainment, sports, science and technology and media from the five regions
- Nobel Laureates and other prestigious awards winners from the five regions.

## **Organization of the event**

The format is for a one-day event in the form of a Plenary on the theme, *Our Common Humanity: Principles and Values for Development*. The opening session would feature a plenary with opening statements by the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly, and the representatives of multi-stakeholders, who would address broadly the challenges of globalization and the common destiny of human beings as neighbours on this planet and dialogues sessions on the fundamental values mentioned in the Millennium Declaration that will continue in the afternoon.

The dinner will be hosted by the Friends of UN and luncheon by the International Council for Caring Communities (ICCC) and Olympians for Art organizations.

## **Proposed format**

A round-table dialogue among multi-stakeholders, Nobel Laureates, private sector representatives and eminent personalities, facilitated by a well-known media personality, who is adept at interviewing and generating a "substantive" discussion and who could also be the source of ideas and solutions, and a series of testimonial and keynote addresses by entertainers, sports and media personalities.

## **Outcomes**

- Encouragement, promotion and revival of the idea of dialogue communication, mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation among peoples of different origins and cooperation against threats to humanity, such as poverty, natural and man-made disasters, terrorisms, wars, conflicts and diseases, with a view to facilitating global negotiations and forming partnerships.
- Media exposure worldwide through eminent personalities' statements/testimonies, with the view of reaching as many people as possible through the cooperation of television networks, e-messages, sports and entertainment arenas. It is anticipated that some of the eminent personalities would allow the United Nations to use a synopsis of the messages conveyed by them at the meeting in short "public service announcements" in various languages to be transmitted by major media throughout the world.