



## General Assembly's overall review of the implementation of WSIS outcomes

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### Official Form for Comments on the zero-draft

#### A. Your Information

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**Title:** Deputy Secretary General

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**Name of Organization:** International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)  
**Stakeholder Type<sup>1</sup>:** Civil Society

**Country:** Netherlands **Email:** Stuart.hamilton@ifla.org

#### B. Formal Input

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Please input your comments below:

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) welcomes the WSIS+10 Review Zero Draft Document, and the opportunity to provide further comments on its content. We propose two textual additions that can make the document stronger:

1. **A new paragraph 15bis within the section 'ICT for Development':**

*15bis. We recognise the importance of culture to development and affirm that cohesive, conceptual and practical digital strategies are needed for the preservation of and access to recorded information in the digital environment in all its forms.*

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<sup>1</sup> When specifying your stakeholder type, please indicate one of the following: Government, Civil Society, Private Sector, Academia, and Technical Sector.

Rationale:

In IFLA's opinion the lack of any mention of culture in the Zero Draft is a glaring omission. Without reference on the importance of culture to the information society the draft lacks credibility, and is difficult for key stakeholders, like IFLA, to communicate the importance of WSIS effectively to the millions of individuals involved in the cultural and creative sector worldwide.

We would therefore like to once again stress how Action Line C8 ('Cultural Diversity and Identify, Linguistic Diversity and Local Content') has been a key pillar of WSIS in the past ten years. Today the need to respect, preserve, promote and enhance cultural and linguistic diversity and cultural heritage within the Information Society must still be a priority – we live in an age where file-formats and data storage continuously cycle through platform migrations, improvements and obsolescence, leaving us unable to access our digital past. As we have previously stated, IFLA believes there must be more consideration given to phenomenon such bit-rot, or the short lifecycles of files. We are actively involved in the UNESCO PERSIST project which looks closely at solutions to guarantee long term sustainability of digital heritage<sup>2</sup>. Therefore the Zero Draft should recognize the importance of creating an enabling environment for access to digital cultural heritage. We therefore suggest that language from the WSIS+10 Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015<sup>3</sup>, along with influence from Target 11.4 of the SDGs which recognises the need to protect the world's cultural and natural heritage<sup>4</sup>, could be used to craft a new paragraph 15bis within the section 'ICT for Development'.

## 2. The addition of some simple words at the end of paragraph 52:

*52: The continued implementation of WSIS outcomes should take place within the context established by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Close links should be established between WSIS Action Lines and the Sustainable Development Goals to ensure that the spread of information and communications technology and global interconnectedness will serve to accelerate human progress, bridge the digital divide and develop knowledge societies. **Access to information through ICTs supports development.***

Rationale:

In light of the recently agreed 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we support the recognition of the need for close links between the SDGs and the WSIS Action Lines in paragraph 52. IFLA, along with over 570 organisations from the development and technology communities, supports the Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development<sup>5</sup>. We therefore believe the spirit of the Declaration could be used to improve paragraph 52 and suggest the addition of some simple words at the end.

## General Comments

IFLA is happy to be part of multistakeholder involvement in the WSIS+10 Review process, and strongly supports the continuation of a process where all stakeholders are able to contribute to the review in all its forms.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://unesco.nl/digital-sustainability>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.itu.int/wsisis/implementation/2014/forum/inc/doc/outcome/362828V2E.pdf> (Page 31, Paragraph 16)

<sup>4</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/7891Transforming%20Our%20World.pdf> (Page 18, Target 11.4)

<sup>5</sup> [www.lyondeclaration.org](http://www.lyondeclaration.org)

In terms of the Zero Draft, IFLA is especially pleased to see reference to the importance of public access facilities in paragraph 22, and media and information literacy skills in paragraph 18. As the sole point of access to the Internet in many of the world's most remote and rural communities, libraries know firsthand the importance of public access. Our research shows that, on average, users of the Internet in public libraries increase their use of technology, save themselves money, improve their health, increase their academic performance and become more involved in the community<sup>6</sup>. Mobile and broadband access cannot do it all. Public access, backed up by media and information literacy skills, which are also provided by libraries and their skilled staff, will be key to getting the next billion people online and helping them improve their lives.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.glatlas.org/PortfolioReports/ExecutiveSummary#Impact>