

[Committee on the Information Society]

Report of the first meeting 10 June 2005, Beijing, China



The first meeting of the Commission on the Information Society was held on 10 June 2005, during the 2nd UCLG Executive Bureau in Beijing. It gathered 24 participants from all continents (see attached list). However, representatives of several cities were excused (as they were unable to travel to the Chinese capital for financial reasons).

The discussion was opened by the representative of UCLG Secretariat who reiterated the reasons for the creation of the Commission. He then proposed that the meeting be chaired by Geneva's Mayor, Mr. Manuel Tornare.

Greetings to the attending members

Mr. Tornare opens the meeting underlining the reasons for establishing this entity within the UCLG. He presents the issues at stake for local authorities in the context of the current debate and evolution of the Information Society. He emphasises the cross-cutting dimension of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. He further emphasises local authorities' role in operating ICTs and in developing local contents. He calls upon local authorities to be fully aware of their responsibility in the fight to bridge the digital divide. Indeed, local authorities are the only actors who – by joining their efforts – can reduce the digital divide and enable citizens of poorer countries to have access to knowledge, education and to programs aimed at eradicating poverty. He welcomes the creation of the Digital Solidarity Fund, as a positive outcome to the proposal of President Abdoulaye Wade, and notes that the rallying of all UN member States to the initiative, last February, represents a success in itself. He calls upon local authorities representatives to provide their full support to the new financial mechanism (the "Geneva Principle") proposed by the DSF to reduce the digital divide.

For all these reasons, the UCLG proposal to create a separate entity to deal with these issues answers to a real need. However, he requests that the "working group" proposed by the UCGL be modified into a Commission. He then presents the next deadlines for the work of the Commission, which are closely linked to the 2005 international agenda.

Decision to modify the "working group on digital solidarity" into a Commission

Mr. Manuel Tornare's proposal to change the "working group on digital solidarity" into a Commission is immediately adopted by the attending members.

Modification of the Commission's name

The representatives of the City of Bilbao request that the Commission be named "**Commission on the Information Society**" and that 2 sub-groups be created, one on digital solidarity, presided by the City of Geneva, and the other on local agendas of the information society presided by the City of Bilbao. This proposal is also immediately and unanimously adopted by the attending members.

Work Programme

The Commission discusses its tentative work schedule, while stressing that its first objective is the success of the 2nd World Summit of Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society (Bilbao, 9-11 November, 2005). The Commission will have to meet several times prior to Bilbao. A first meeting could either take place during the International Conference on the Digital Divide from 19 to 20 September in Turin, or during the 3rd Prepcom, in preparation for the 2nd phase of the WSIS. A second meeting should take place in Bilbao on 8 November, on the eve of the Summit. One of the most important tasks for the Commission will be to concentrate on the Bilbao Declaration - to be presented by local authorities to the President of the WSIS in Tunis - which will also serve as roadmap for developing coordinated local authorities policies for a fairer and more cooperative information society.

Vice-Presidents

The Commission also appoints its 4 Vice-Presidents:

- For South-America: the Mayor of Quito (awaiting approval by the FLACMA)
- For Africa: the Mayor of Maputo (awaiting approval by the CCRA)
- The 3rd Vice-President will be a representative from Asia (to be identified with CITYNET)
- The 4th Vice-Presidency befalls to the City of Bilbao who will chair the sub-committee on local agendas of the information society.

M. Manuel Tornare adds that from Geneva, Mr. Christian Ferrazino, Mayor, will chair both the Commission and the working group on digital solidarity, while the Secretariat of the Commission will be ensured by the Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF), also in Geneva.

Presentation of the Report to the Executive Bureau

A report is drafted to the attention of the President of the Executive Bureau (see the annexed mandate of the Commission on the Information Society¹).



List of participants

Names	Organisation
Paco Moncayo	Mayor of Quito, Ecuador
Pablo Ponce	Adviser of Mayor of Quito, Ecuador
Horacio Sevilla Borja	Director of International Relations of Quito, Ecuador
Alejandro Paez	Mayor of San Pedro, Mexico
Angel Erick Santiago Hernandez	Association of municipalities of Mexico
Robert Le Tendre	Director of International Relations of Montreal, Canada
André Aubin	City of Montréal, Canada
Mme Touré Djeneba Sissoko	Deputy Mayor of Bamako, Mali
Mario Jorge Macaringue	City of Maputo, Mozambique
Helder Ossemane	Head of Mayor's office of Maputo, Mozambique
Jason C. Hu	Mayor of Taichung
Ramon Penagaricano	Senior Advisor Cifal- Bilbao, Spain
Josu Ocariz	Secretary General of Bilbao Summit, Spain
Jose Zudaire	Government of the Basque Country, Spain
Leandro Ardanza	Deputy director of Cifal Bilbao, Spain
Manuel Tornare	Mayor of Geneva, Switzerland
Jean Michel Daclin	Deputy Mayor of Lyon, France
Yves Delaunay	Association of French Régions
Georges Morin	Deputy Mayor of Gières, France
Louis le Pensec	Presidents of the French Association of CCRE, France
Andrej Pruszkowski	Mayor of Lublin, Poland
Antoine Joly	French Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Guy-Olivier Segond	President of Solidarity Funds
Alain Clerc	Secretary Executive of Solidarity Funds

¹ This mandate was adopted without modification by the UCLG Executive Bureau