

DECISION ON THE WORLD SUMMIT ON INFORMATION SOCIETY (WSIS)
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The Executive Council:

1. **RECALLS** Decision CM/Dec. 675 adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its 76th Ordinary Session held in Durban, South Africa, from 28 June to 6 July 2002;
2. **ALSO RECALLS** that the idea of organizing the World Summit of Information Society is primarily an African initiative in the sense that it was launched by Tunisia with the backing of other African countries, at the Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the International Telecommunications Union held in Minneapolis, U.S.A, in 1998, and that Africa was at the forefront of the adoption of Resolution 73 which gave effect to the idea of organizing this Summit;
3. **FURTHER RECALLS** the following Resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly within the context of the World Summit on Information Society:
 - Resolution 55/2 on the Millennium Declaration particularly the development objectives;
 - Resolution 56/183 which endorsed the International Telecommunications Union's proposal to organize the Summit in two phases, in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005 respectively, and entrusted the preparation of the said Summit to a select intergovernmental committee;
 - Resolution 57/238 which called on the international community to get actively involved in the preparatory process leading up to the Summit and the financing of the Special Trust Fund which the International Telecommunications Union has set up to this effect;
 - Resolution 57/295 on Information and Communication Technologies at the Service of Development adopted by the Special United Nations General Assembly meeting held from 17 to 18 June 2002 calling for the United Nations system to be provided with a global information and communication strategy.
4. **TAKES NOTE** of the recommendations and proposals arising from the African Regional Conference preparatory to the Summit, held in Bamako from 28 to 30 May 2002.
5. **REAFFIRMS** the significant importance attached to the uniqueness of the Summit and its preparatory process requiring a global and integrated vision of the two phases of the Summit as well as coordinated efforts underpinned by complementarity, interaction and synergy, so as to confer on the process leading up to the Summit political prominence and provide the conditions necessary for its success;
6. **URGES** the international community, particularly African States to:
 - Get actively involved in the process leading up to the Summit with a view to forging a common understanding on an Information Society and on a just, comprehensive and sustainable development project;
 - Promote the establishment of a genuine partnership between all the stakeholders concerned and wide access to information and communication technologies with the aim of reducing the digital gap between countries, thereby upholding the principles of solidarity and knowledge sharing;

- Transform the digital gap into digital success that makes it possible to reduce the social inequality within and between States and integrate information and communication technologies as a strategic vehicle for economic, social and cultural development;
- Promote cultural and language diversity through the use of information and communication technologies.

7. CALLS ON Member States to:

- Intensify consultation and coordination efforts geared towards ensuring effective and visible participation in the formulation of guidelines and results of the Summit;
- Ensure participation of Heads of State and Government in the two-phase Summit, thereby demonstrating the special importance African countries attach to the stakes in, and prospects of, the information society;
- Work towards the adoption of a Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003;
- Ensure that the second phase scheduled to take place in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005 culminates in the adoption of a Charter and an agenda that promote digital solidarity worldwide and regional plans of action.

8. REQUESTS the Commission of the African Union to participate actively in the preparatory process and in the two-phase Summit, Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005, and enhance its visibility in the process and report thereon to the next session of the Executive Council;

9. REQUESTS the Chairperson of the Commission to submit a report on the implementation of this decision to Council at its next session.