R E S P E C T F U L I N T E R F A C E S S A L U T E S T H E C I V I L S O C I E T Y G R O U P S

C I V I L S O C I E T Y E C H O E S R E S P E C T A S A K E Y T H E M E

I. Introduction – Our Perspective After the WSIS Process …. II. Issues Addressed During the Tunis Phase of WSIS … Social Justice, Financing and People-Centred Development **… Human Rights** ... The Information Society must be based on human rights as laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This includes civil and political rights, as well as social, economic and cultural rights. Human rights and development are closely linked. There can be no development without human rights, no human rights without development. This has been affirmed time and again, and was strongly stated in the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights in 1993. It was also affirmed in the WSIS 2003 Declaration of Principles. All legislation, policies, and actions involved in developing the global Information Society must ==respect==, protect and promote human rights standards and the rule of law. … Despite the Geneva commitment to an Information Society ==respect==ful of human rights, there is still a long way to go. . … **Internet Governance ...** The Tunis Agenda addressed the issue of political oversight of critical Internet resources in its paragraphs 69 to 71. This, in itself, is an achievement. It is also important that governments recognized the need for the development of a set of Internet-related public policy principles that would frame political oversight of Internet resources. These principles must ==respect==, protect and promote human rights as laid down in international human rights treaties, ensure equitable access to information and online opportunities for all, and promote development. …With regard to paragraph 63, we believe that a country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) is a public good both for people of the concerned country or economy and for global citizens who have various linkages to particular countries. While we recognize the important role of governments in protecting the ccTLDs that refer to their countries or economies, this role must be executed in a manner that ==respect==s human rights as expressed in existing international treaties through a democratic, transparent and inclusive process fully involving all stakeholders. …We want to express concern at the vagueness of text referring to the role of Civil Society. In almost every paragraph talking about multi-stakeholder participation, the phrase "in their ==respect==ive roles and responsibilities" is used to limit the degree of multi-stakeholder participation.. III. Issues Addressed in the Geneva and Tunis Phases … **Culture, Knowledge, and the Public Domain** … Accordingly, culturally defined approaches, protocols, proceedings and obligations have to be ==respect==ed and culturally appropriate applications developed and promoted. In order to foster and promote cultural diversity it must be ensured that no one has to be a mere recipient of Western knowledge and treatment. … There should also be strategies that protect children and young people from the potential risks posed by new technologies, including access to inappropriate content, unwanted contact and commercial pressures, particularly with regards to pornography, pedophilia and sexual trafficking, while fully ==respect==ing human rights standards on freedom of expression. We are committed to work in the WSIS follow-up process towards a world where telecommunication allows children and young people to be heard one-by-one and, through their voices, to fulfil their rights and true potential to shape the world.…**Ethical Dimensions**…Geneva identified the ethical values of ==respect== for peace and the fundamental values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, shared responsibility, and ==respect== for nature as enunciated in the Millennium Declaration. Tunis should have improved on these by including the principles of trust, stewardship and shared responsibility together with digital solidarity. The technologies we develop, and the solidarities we forge, must build relationships and strengthen social cohesion …The strong emphasis on technology in the Tunis texts must not eclipse the human being as the subject of communication and development. Our humanity rests in our capacity to communicate with each other and to create community. It is in the ==respect==ful dialogue and sharing of values among peoples, in the plurality of their cultures and civilizations, that meaningful and accountable communication thrives. …**IV. Where to Go From Here – Our Tunis Commitment**…**Element Three: Involvement in Follow-Up and Implementation** ... In order to ensure that future implementation and follow-up mechanisms ==respect== the spirit and letter of the Tunis documents and that governments uphold the commitments they have made during this second phase of the WSIS, Civil Society mechansms will be used and created .

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