

**Statement adopted by the Board of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament
at its second annual meeting, United Nations headquarters,
New York, on 28 February 2008**

1. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) outlines a vision for an open, people-centred, and inclusive society that allows citizens to access, utilize, and share authoritative and timely information. This vision can only be achieved by governments, parliaments, civil society, business and the United Nations working closely together.
2. For their part, parliaments have clear political, policy-making, legislative and oversight responsibilities in the shaping of tomorrow's information society. Parliaments are the guarantors of the democratic values underpinning the information society.
3. Parliaments are also empowering themselves to become more representative, transparent, accessible, accountable and effective through the use of technology. The World e-Parliament Report 2008 shows, however, that there remains a significant gap between what is possible with technology and what has actually been accomplished by parliaments thus far.
4. The international community has repeatedly called for increased cooperation between the United Nations and parliaments in implementing the international development agenda. The outcome documents of the Millennium Summit, the 2005 World Summit, the WSIS, and several resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the Inter-Parliamentary Union reflect this spirit.
5. The United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union have responded to this call by establishing, with the direct participation of parliaments, a broad partnership around the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament in favour of development and democracy. The Board of the Global Centre, at its second Meeting on 28 February 2008 in New York, makes the following recommendations:
 - a) We affirm that the development of the information society can not be separated from the promotion of fundamental rights, which need to be adapted to the new environment created by technology;
 - b) We further affirm that parliaments have the responsibility, as the central institution of any democracy, to guarantee the political, social, and developmental dimensions of the information society;
 - c) We are convinced that parliaments can efficaciously prevent the emergence of monopolies that tend to submit the development of the information society to private interest;
 - d) We recognize that parliaments have an essential role in minimizing the risks of cultural and linguistic standardisation and preventing the marginalization of the weaker sectors of society;

- e) We urge parliaments and legislators to engage strongly in the WSIS implementation process, including in the Internet Governance Forum, and to translate the WSIS principles into practical action through the political, policy-making, legislative and oversight means at their disposal;
- f) We call on parliaments to provide guidance to the processes of informatization of the whole public sector towards the objectives of institutional transparency and accountability at all levels;
- g) We invite all parliaments to hold discussions and hearings in parliament on the status of the information society in their respective country and to prepare a public report on it by the end of 2008, and later biannually;
- h) We affirm that the use of information and communication technologies can significantly enhance and strengthen the mission of parliaments within each country, and empower people, in all their diversity, to be more engaged in public life;
- i) We request all governments, parliaments, international organizations and the donor community to take close note of the conclusions and recommendations of the World e-Parliament Report 2008. We affirm that this Report can be the basis for developing better methods of inter-parliamentary cooperation;
- j) We call on all parliaments to make all possible efforts to ensure that, by 2020, authoritative, timely and complete information on all stages of the legislative process in every country is publicly accessible on the Internet;
- k) We urge all stakeholders to work towards these objectives in a collaborative and coordinated way, in close cooperation with the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, and to share existing parliamentary expertise so that maximum benefit can be drawn from the new technologies in the complex parliamentary environment;
- l) We encourage the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament to prepare a second World e-Parliament Report in 2010 and we invite all parliaments, chambers and assemblies from around the world to participate in it;
- m) We request the co-Chairs of the Board to send this Statement to the Secretary General of the United Nations and to the Presidents of all parliamentary chambers around the world.