



**The Fifth General Assembly of the International Parliamentarians'
Association for Information Technology**

HELSINKI DECLARATION

We, members of the International Parliamentarians' Association for Information Technology (IPAIT) have gathered here in Helsinki, Finland for the Fifth General Assembly of our Association in order to learn from each other and to discuss different opportunities and challenges set to our societies by ICT development. We have addressed the theme of the Fifth Assembly, "Human Competency Development in the Information Society" from various perspectives, and this fruitful change of ideas will benefit us in our task as parliamentarians. This social network of parliamentarians interested in ICT legislation and governance will serve us well in the future.

- Considering that the main purpose of the Association is to support the development of information technology at the parliamentary level as well as to achieve a balanced development of information technology and sharing of information among all countries around the world by promoting international exchange and cooperation among parliamentarians;
- Understanding the critical role of basic education for development and prosperity of nations as well as wellbeing and equality of people;
- Considering that human resource is the key asset in information technology;
- Expressing our ambition to provide education for societal development to all our citizens over time;
- Considering that disabled people can greatly benefit from the learning possibilities offered by the development of ICT learning technologies;
- Recognizing the new competency requirements information society development sets to all people, including not only technology but media literacy, information security and new social capital as well;
- Recognizing the importance of a basic ICT infrastructure for successful information society competency development;
- Noting that majority of humanity is being left out from information society development either by lack of infrastructure, insufficient competencies or unwillingness to use new technologies;
- Realising the opportunities and challenges that new ICT based learning technologies set to our education systems;
- Taking into account the importance of international co-operation in the promotion of the development of information technology;
- Recognizing that children increasingly use the Internet and thus are subjects to the negative information available there;

Noting a majority we agree to:

1. Express our support for the declaration of principles and the action plans adopted in the United Nations World Summit on the information society held in Geneva 2003 and in Tunis 2005.
2. Continue implementing the recommendations and resolutions of the previous four IPAIT General Assemblies held in Seoul in 2002, Bangkok in 2004, Brasilia in 2005 and Rabat in 2006.
3. Express our determination to provide all our citizens, especially the youth, with basic competencies needed in order to use information and communication technologies regardless of their gender, ethnicity or social status.
4. Encourage girls and women to acquire information and communication technology skills.
5. Promote the development of new ICT learning technologies that take into consideration the needs of disabled people and enable them to benefit from these.
6. Request the development of affordable, easy to use information systems that do not require complex infrastructure.
7. Stress the importance of free access to information and unlimited communication for learning and creation of new knowledge - potential that, if fully utilized, can help to bring about social and political change.
8. Underline the importance of scientific and proprietary information for developing nations.
9. Encourage the development of easily portable, language independent and affordable or non-proprietary learning systems.
10. Facilitate the proliferation of successful learning systems and practices.
11. Affirm our determination to improve digital security and combat Internet crime without sacrificing basic human rights like freedom of speech and privacy in the process.
12. Underline that developing nations must be supported in their efforts to increase and promote their ICT capacity, and that for this end they require not only economic and technological support but informational support as well.
13. Promote education campaigns for parents in order to be able to supervise the use of the Internet by their children, and thus protect them from possible harmful information available on the Internet
14. Encourage governments and parliaments to keep up with ever updating ICT systems;
15. Perceive the importance of ICT's contribution to encouraging and enhancing life-long education.
16. Encourage the increase of bilateral and multilateral cooperation among the IPAIT member countries aimed at decreasing the digital gap between them.

Done in Helsinki with corresponding versions in Finnish and Swedish on January 17, 2007.