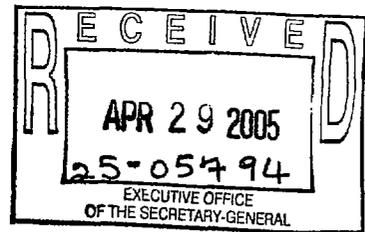


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Note to the Secretary-General



Dublin Meeting of UN ICT Task Force

The Global Forum on "A Multi-Stakeholder Approach to Harnessing the Potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for Education" and the **Eighth meeting of the United Nations ICT Task Force** took place on 13 – 15 April 2005 in Dublin. The meetings were co-hosted by the Government of Ireland and the Global e-Schools and Communities Initiative (GeSCI). The Irish Prime Minister, Mr. Bertie Ahern, opened the evening reception and I chaired the first part of the meeting.

Your message to the meeting was well received and referred to frequently in the discussions. The **MDG on universal primary education by 2015** provided the focus and context of the discussions.

The Forum attracted some 300 representatives representing different stakeholders, including a number of high-level government representatives such as the Minister for Communications of Ireland, the Minister of Education of Namibia, the Minister for School Education of Andhra Pradesh, India and the Deputy Minister of Education of Yemen. Prominent representatives of civil society and the private sector, educators, and a number of youth representatives also attended the meeting.

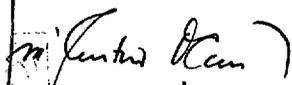
Building on the outcomes of previous meetings (on WSIS and the role of ICT in achieving the MDGs (September 2003), on Internet Governance (March 2004), and on the Enabling Environment in November 2004), the Forum made further progress in **linking the potential of ICT with the overall development agenda**, and especially the MDGs. **The September Summit in the General Assembly** and the second phase of the **World Summit on the Information Society** (Tunis, November 2005), were seen as unique opportunities to embed the linkage in national and international policies.

The intensive two-day discussion served to elaborate the distinctive role that all of the different stakeholders have to play in harnessing the potential of ICT in the fight against poverty and notably to allow education to unlock the door to a better future for the poor. **The Forum affirmed education as not only a goal in its own right, but also as an essential means for the achievement of the other seven MDGs.**

In his keynote speech **Jeffrey Sachs** insisted that **MDGs can be met everywhere but a decisive change** of course would be **required** for that to happen. Inspired by Jeffrey Sachs and the results of content-rich break-out sessions, the forum discussed in a particularly lively session a number of crucial issues, including innovative methods of financing, to fully reach the goal of **global interconnectivity**.

The discussion pertaining to the proposed **Global Alliance for ICT and Development** resulted in broad consensus on the need for such an innovative platform and that it should be non-operational, consensus-oriented, light and flexible, open, high-level, and clearly mandated, and that it should benefit from the authority of the United Nations Secretary-General.

The details of a Roundtable that the Task Force envisages to hold on 13 September 2005, prior to the September Summit in the General Assembly remain to be worked out.


José Antonio Ocampo
28 April 2005

cc : Deputy Secretary-General

MAY

HJB
cc: ym

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