

I Infopoverty World Conference

Infopoverty: possible solutions

June 18, 2001

Milan



Agenda

Opening Session

Sergio Zaninelli, Dean, Catholic University of Milan

Mario G. Dutto, General Director, Ministry of Public Education

Guido Podestà, Vice-President, European Parliament

First Session

Fight against Infopoverity: a global priority

Chairman: Giuseppe Gargani, President, European Parliament Commission for Media and Culture

Effects of Infopoverity: by children side

Cristina Castelli Fusconi, Professor of Development Psychology, Catholic University of Milan

Technology and human development: a conflicting relationship

Domenico Ferrari, Professor of General IT, Catholic University of Milan

Full-court commitment

Claudio Giuliadori, Social Communication Office Manager, CEI

The future of on-line culture

Alfredo Ronchi, Responsible of Medici Framework, European Commission

Digital divide reshapes the planet

Pier Luigi Malesani, Institutional Relations Director, RAI

Second Session

Challenges of advanced technology: exemplary experience

Chairman: Francesco Casetti, Vice-Dean, Catholic University of Milan

E-Health experience

Alberto Rovetta, Robot Mechanics Professor, Politecnico di Milano

Honduras Solar Villages

Gerardo Zepeda Bermudez, President, Selar.net Village

E-inclusion Project

Giorgio Capellani, Hewlett-Packard Italiana SpA

E-Learning Programmes

Cesare Scurati, CEP@D Director, Catholic University of Milan

Financial system for the fight to Infopoverity

Mario Zanone Poma, UNESCO Italian Commission

Francesco Rispoli, Linea Business Multimediale Director, Alenia Spazio

Economic Reasons to Infopoverity

Alberto Quadrio Curzio, Political Science Faculty Dean, Catholic University of Milan

Third Session

Round Table: For a coordinated action plan for the fight to Infopoverty

Chairman: Staffan de Mistura, Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations

Session report Presidents: Giuseppe Gargani

Francesco Casetti

Pierpaolo Saporito, President, OCCAM

Participants:

Giorgio Bosco, Plenipotentiary Minister, International Law Professor, Italian Public Administration Superior School

Armida de Lopez Contreras, Vice-President, Picacho Christ Foundation, Honduras

Giampaolo Crepaldi, Secretary, Pontificio Consiglio Justitia et Pax

Eleanore E. Fink, Senior Cultural Heritage Specialist, World Bank

Fiorella Ghilardotti, Social Affairs Commission, European Parliament

Giulio Cesare Giordano, General Secretary, COPEAM

Hisanori Isomura, President, CICT – UNESCO

Mario Mantovani, Development and Cooperation Commission, European Parliament

Piero Micossi, Health Counsellor, Liguria Region

Donaldo Ochoa, Central American Bank for Economic Integration (BCIE)

Mario Panaro, General Director of Cultural Cooperation and Development, Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carlo Ravizza, PPRI Trustee Rotary Foundation

Conclusion: Sonia Mendieta De Badaroux, President, UNESCO Executive Board

Final Declaration

In the light of the vast contribution of ideas and proposals, furnished in the course of the First International Conference on the struggle against Infopoverty, held in Milan 18th June, 2001 the Institutions present at the conference, together with all the participants, propose to undersign the Declaration which follows:

in full awareness that the Digital Revolution is inducing a wide mutation in all fields of human activity

that a great divide has been produced between wealthier nations and the emerging, with the risk that the latter be excluded from such development and lose their cultural identity

that knowledge and technological applications comprise a patrimony restricted to only a few

that Internet, the innovative tool for interactive communication, presents access problems, is limited to advanced territories and sections, is accessed by user codes which not everyone is able to possess, it appears inadequate for connective capacities and applicable standards and is not particularly equipped to be employed for social and cultural ends

that the lack of shared global directions registered in these sectors leaves choices to the market which are not pertinent; that the present financial crisis may determine the fall itself of these innovative potentialities of social development, giving way to elite and even more discriminatory control

- **Affirm:** the necessity of fighting all forms of inequality and discrimination between peoples, acknowledging the right of each single community to affirm and diffuse its own cultural identity
- **Emphasize:** the requirement to guarantee a free and participatory access to the new means of communication to all, in order to construct a democratic society of knowledge
- **Hope:** for the creation of networks having high social valences, of easy access and planetary diffusion, with the goal of giving tools and development opportunities to all
- **Consider:** that it is extremely urgent to individuate new alliances between social exigencies and the world of production in order to get underway the creation of new cultural products and working procedures, directed in particular at the promotion of distance learning as the main tool to bridge the existing gap; the development of telemedicine, of microfinance and any other activity which can support the struggle against infopoverty and all forms of extreme poverty
- **Recommend:** the rigorous observance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as guiding light of future decisions concerning political, economic, technological and social choices implied in the process of globalization
- **Ask for the undertaking:** from the governmental institutions of the more advanced countries to realize forms of convergences of traditional media finalized to the diffusion of knowledge, in the full respect of specific cultural identities
- **Appeal:** to all the decision makers, whether they be heads of state, of leading institutions or multinationals, to work in the rigorous respect of this Declaration, reaffirming the

primary role of the United Nations and relevant agencies for directions to guide future decisions on development

In order to render these recommendations more incisive and in order to take concrete action, this first Conference, having approved the outlines of the Action Plan, has decided to constitute itself as:

Permanent Forum for the fight against Infopoverty

and confers on the Promoting Committee of this Conference the mandate to actuate these principles and:

1. to present this Declaration to the President of the Italian Republic **Mr. Carlo Azelio Ciampi**, thanking him most heartily for his illuminating message and for his unceasing work in favor of developing countries
2. to present this Declaration to the President of the Italian Council of Ministers **Mr. Silvio Berlusconi**, as an immediate step in view of the coming G8 Summit in Genova, under the Italian Presidency, in July 2001. This forum will support the design of worldwide initiatives in order to fight against Infopoverty and to bridge the digital divide, based on the special cases presented during this Milan First International Conference, as real successful experiences of remote communities integrated through technologies, as possible solutions.
3. to present this Declaration to the President of the European Commission **Mr. Romano Prodi** as contribution that may be referred to for the activities of the European Union in this sector and, in particular, as operative proposal for the European-Latin American Summit to be held in Madrid, Spain, in 2002
4. to submit this Declaration to the General Secretary of the United Nations **Mr. Kofi Annan**, to the President of the UNESCO Executive Board **Mrs. Sonia Mendieta de Badaroux**, to the General Director of UNESCO **Mr. Koichiro Matura**, to the President of the European Parliament **Mrs. Nicole Fontaine**, and to the other eminent International Authorities, that this resolution may be taken up by all the Governments and the competent International Organizations, in order to act upon and promote the worldwide implementation of the action plan, outlined during this International Conference as an instrument to fight against Infopoverty.