

**Contact: Roberto Rivola**  
**41 79 222 7163**  
**Barbara Erskine Favre**  
**41 79 202 4528**

**EMBARGO FEBRUARY 27 AT 11:30 AM LOCAL TIME**  
**Switzerland aims for concrete actions and scorecard in**  
**World Summit process**

Geneva, 27 February--Marc Furrer, Director General of OFCOM (Federal Office of Communications), Switzerland, will speak to the media today at the Club Suisse de la Presse in Geneva. Mr Furrer will take this opportunity to brief the media on the status of the second Preparatory Committee (PrepCom 2) of the World Summit on the Information Society, which has taken place in Geneva 17-28 February. Mr Furrer is responsible for the Swiss participation in the Summit, and represents the host country for the organization of the WSIS.

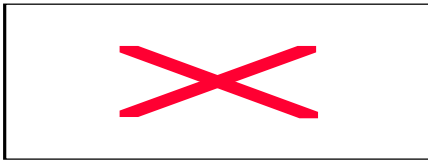
“The success of the World Summit on the Information Society to be held in Geneva 10-12 December will depend on two things,” states Marc Furrer, “the success of the parallel events organized on this occasion and the political relevance of such a Summit. This Summit is special if we manage to give civil society and the private sector a special position in participation and decision-shaping.”

“From the political process of the Summit, we are looking for concrete actions,” according to Furrer. “We cannot just have declarations, we must have substantive actions, using best practices to make strategies. We need to establish benchmarks, something we can measure. The Swiss Government will look at actions to be taken following PrepCom 2, to suss out commitments of the private sector and to find ways to finance projects, This can only be done in partnership,” he affirms.

During PrepCom 2, Marc Furrer held several meetings with representatives of civil society organizations concerning the participation of civil society in the WSIS Summit. Mr Furrer has stated that he agrees with them that civil society must be a full participant in the Summit and he has endorsed their efforts for inclusion. “We need civil society and NGOs to express the needs and feelings of citizens. We cannot afford to neglect them, certainly not from a business point of view. The private sector will build and deliver services. The government role is to provide frameworks, notably frameworks for private projects to then use opportunities to create win-win situations in the field of ICT development and with the least developed countries. This is not to overlook the importance of media and content, and freedom of expression,” he stated. “The meeting on Tuesday 25 February between the newly-created Civil Society Bureau with the Bureau of PrepCom, made up of governments, is an example of a good cooperation.”

-Continued-





Mr Furrer also participated in meetings with members of the private sector, in the context of the UN ICT Task Force meetings and the private sector workshop held at the World Economic Forum, and on the occasion of the release of the Global Information Technology Report. In these discussions it became clear that the private sector is subject to the same frustrations dealing with the formal Summit process as those faced by the civil society organizations.

According to Marc Furrer, "Switzerland, as host country of the United Nations Summit has a role to play in helping lead the world Summit process. This Summit is especially important for Switzerland as a new member of the United Nations. Switzerland fully subscribes to the Summit goal of establishing an all-inclusive information society. Switzerland recognizes the importance of finding solutions in partnership, with governments, the private sector, civil society and the media." He continues, "One of the main focuses of the WSIS must be how ICT (information and communication technologies) can be a means for economic recovery and how we can create these win-win situations with the less developed countries. An example of a necessary benchmark would be to establish a telecentre in every village by 2008," stated Furrer.

For more information, contact Roberto Rivola at OFCOM, telephone (41 79) 222 7163, email: [Roberto.rivola@bakom.admin.ch](mailto:Roberto.rivola@bakom.admin.ch) or Barbara Erskine in the Office of the Delegate of the Swiss Federal Council for the World Summit on the Information Society, rue de Varembe 9-11, P.O. Box 125, 1211 Geneva 20, telephone (41 79) 202 4528, email: [Barbaraerskine@ch.inter.net](mailto:Barbaraerskine@ch.inter.net).

-End-