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03



world summit
on the information society
Geneva 10-12 December 2003



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2003年 日内瓦 - 2005年 突尼斯

Всемирная встреча на высшем уровне
по вопросам информационного общества

Женева, 2003 г. - Тунис, 2005 г.

القمة العالمية
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جنيف 2003 - تونس 2005



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**PASCAL COUCHEPIN,
PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS
CONFEDERATION**

This is the first time that Switzerland has had the honour of hosting and co-organising a global summit as a full member of the United Nations. I am very proud that the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has given our country the task of organising the first stage of this summit. It gives us great satisfaction to be able to pave the way for others, and at the same time it acts as a source of genuine motivation.

Many people around the world have no access to communications networks. Information and communication are the most important preconditions for the economic and cultural development of any society. It is therefore our duty to bridge the «digital divide».

I hope that this meeting of representatives from all interest groups in the information society will lead to a successful exchange of information and experiences, and that this will in turn help to reduce the gulf between rich and poor and bring different cultures closer together.

The political declaration and the plan of action make up only one aspect of this summit. Switzerland is also coordinating a range of events that will take place at the same venue as the Global Summit. Unique among these Summit Events is the presentation of practical measures that permit those involved to develop tailor-made solutions to specific problems and to initiate further projects.

On behalf of the Swiss Federal Council, I am delighted to welcome you to the World Summit on the Information Society and would like to wish you all every success in your meetings and discussions.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pascal Couchepin".

Pascal Couchepin