



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

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Geneva, 9 October 2003

PARLIAMENTARY PANEL WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

From 10-12 December 2003, Geneva will be hosting the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) - an event of major political importance, to be held pursuant to a decision of the United Nations General Assembly.

As declared by its organizers, the Summit will bring together Heads of State, Executive Heads of United Nations agencies, politicians, industry leaders, non-governmental organizations, media representatives and civil society in a single high-level event, which will provide a unique opportunity for all key stakeholders to develop a better understanding of the ongoing digital revolution and its impact on the international community. It will aim to produce a clear statement of political will and a concrete plan of action for achieving the goals of the Information Society, while fully reflecting all the different interests at stake.

The programme of the Summit is very diverse and includes more than 80 events, most of which will take place at the PALEXPO Centre in Geneva. Anticipating that many parliamentarians would participate in the Summit either as members of official national delegations (recommended option) or in a multitude of other possible ways (please consult the official WSIS Web site <http://www.itu.int/wsis/> for details), the governing bodies of the IPU decided that one such event would be organized specifically for members of parliament attending the Summit.

I am pleased to inform you hereby that a Parliamentary Panel on the theme "*Shaping an enabling normative environment for the Information Society: the role and responsibility of parliaments*" will take place within the framework of the WSIS programme on 11 December 2003 from 3 to 6 p.m. in room "H" on the PALEXPO premises.

It is our intention to make the Parliamentary Panel an interactive event, in which the participants will not only be able to hear presentations, but also be free to ask questions and make comments and observations. Interpretation into English, French and Spanish will be provided. The detailed programme of the Parliamentary Panel will be posted on the IPU Web site (<http://www.ipu.org>) by mid-November.

The Parliamentary Panel will be open to members of parliament and to other delegates duly accredited to the Summit and wearing a valid WSIS badge. Please note that all participants are responsible for their own accreditation, travel, visa and accommodation arrangements in connection with the Summit. We recommend using the on-line facilities provided by the host country (see <http://www.wsisgeneva2003.org>). To avoid any possible misunderstanding in this regard, I wish to make it absolutely clear that the IPU Secretariat will be unable to help parliamentary delegates with the above-mentioned matters which remain the exclusive prerogative of the WSIS Secretariat and the host country.

I thank you in advance for bringing this information to the attention of those members of your Parliament who will attend the Summit and for informing them about the Parliamentary Panel on 11 December 2003. Even though there will be no formal list of participants in the Panel, for logistical reasons we would much appreciate being notified in advance of the names of members of your Parliament who will attend the Summit. Please use the enclosed registration form.

Finally, may I use this occasion to reiterate our standing invitation to all members of parliament traveling to Geneva to pay a visit to the newly inaugurated Headquarters of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Situated a short distance from PALEXPO, the building bears the name "*The House of Parliaments*" and its doors are always open to its real owners - the elected representatives of the people.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anders B. Johnsson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Anders B. Johnsson
Secretary General