WSIS Assignment
Due in class on September 20

This class is about digital divide —

• What is it?

•What can we do?

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), a United Nations affiliated organization, is undertaking one of the most important efforts at addressing digital divide around the world. The instructor for the course, Shigeru Miyagawa, will attend the Tunis meeting of WSIS where the final document will be shaped.

Specifics of the assignment

- This is a written assignment. Due to the CI nature of the course, you should write a specific number of pages minimum for each assignment. The WSIS assignment calls for at least 2 double-spaced pages.
- Double-space, 12 point fonts, 1 inch margin around the page.
- In the file, "OCWPrepCom3ContributionFINAL.pdf," you will find
  - cover letter
  - the original document ("Existing Text") and, to its right, "possible
    revisions" in bold and in strikeout text.
- **In your own words, write a position paper supporting the idea of 'opencoursewares' and/or 'open source' for WSIS.**
- In doing this assignment you should refer to:
  - the entire text (GFC report.pdf);
  - the "WSIS Backgrounder1.pdf";
  - the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see Related Resources)
  - the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (See Related Resources)
  - Anything else (e.g., the WSIS/ITS sites)

WSIS Background
Many thanks to Farnaz Haghseta of MIT OCW for compiling this

- **WSIS Context**

  - Towards the end of the 20th century, the transformative power of the digital revolution was being counter-balanced by the ever-widening digital divide. Recognizing that this new dynamic requires global discussion, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a UN agency, following a proposal by the Government of Tunisia, resolved at its Plenipotentiary Conference in 1998 (Resolution 73) to hold a World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and place it on the agenda of the United Nations.

  - The WSIS was endorsed by the UN General Assembly (Resolution 56/183) while according the lead role to ITU for managing the entire process.

WSIS Goals

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  - The goal of the WSIS is to establish a road-map for future national and international initiatives on the Information Society. The Information Society is one "where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life, premised on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respecting fully and upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

  - The WSIS intends to raise the awareness of political leaders on the importance of an Information Society and on the role that ICTs play in many aspects of development.

  - It also intends to promote the deployment of communications infrastructure and encourage the application of ICTs across all social and economic sectors.

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