



**Minutes of Orbicom's
2001 Annual General Meeting
(AGM)
Held Online
17 September – 9 October 2001**

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Orbicom Annual General Meeting
(17 Sept. - 9 Oct. 2001)

List of participants:

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Banerjee, Indrajit
Carreno, José
Charron, Claude-Yves
Chin, Saik Yoon
Denis, Roch
De Sousa Pinto, Ana Estela
Giguère, Pierre
Harvey, Pierre-Léonard
Jamal, Eddine Naji
Joshi, Subash
Kawasumi, Yasuhiko
Khan, Abdul Waheed
Khulen, Rainer
Lafrance, André
Lafrance, Jean-Paul
Leclerc, Georges
Maisonneuve, Danielle
Molnar, Helen
Njawe, Pius
Pandyal, Chiranjibi S
Paquet-Sévigny, Thérèse
Perez, Gabriel Jaime
Plenkovic, Mario
Ravault, René-Jean
Rico, Carmen
Stone, Martha
Sjöberg, Göran
Théorêt, Yves
Tolosa, Mauricio
Van Dusseldorp, Monique
Vartanova, Elena
Von Schilling, Rainer
Wartella, Ellen

Opening of Orbicom's Virtual General Meeting

Dear Orbicom Members :

Orbicom extends its sincere and deepest sympathies to the victims, and their families, of the terrorist attacks.

The virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Members is now open, and will continue for two weeks, until Sept. 28 inclusive. Your active participation is essential to the success of this first virtual AGM. Both your opinion and your votes are important to our Network.

You are invited to access the meeting via the Orbicom web site at one of the flwg addresses:

English: <http://www.orbicom.uqam.ca/en/forum>

Français: <http://www.orbicom.uqam.ca/fr/forum>

Español: <http://www.orbicom.uqam.ca/es/foro>

Your User Name: agm

Your Password: member

Ideally, we would invite you to visit the site at least 3 times during the meeting:

- a) early this week, to familiarize yourself with all the background documents, and write your initial comments within the different "Conference Halls";
- b) at the beginning of next week, to have an overview of the thread of discussion, in each "Conference Hall", and engage in dialogue with your colleagues as you wish;
- c) and at the end of next week, towards the closing of our deliberations.

Certain sections will necessitate the casting of your Votes. You may vote whenever you want in the course of the meeting.

The electronic vote is legally recognized.

If you anticipate to have problems of Internet access during the next two weeks, please let us know, and we will be in touch with you on a regular basis by Fax, like we do with some of our members who have no Internet access.

If it is your first participation in an Orbicom virtual forum, you may wish to consult the section entitled :

"Procedures" in English,

"Modalités" en français
"Modalidades" en español
on the Orbicom web site.

We are looking forward to read your comments.

Truly yours,
Claude-Yves Charron

I. Word of the President

Dear Orbicom Members,

It is my pleasure to call the Annual General Meeting (AGM) according to statutes.

The proposed agenda is one of substance, and as for the previous AGM, the meeting will be held on-line. This year's "rendez-vous" is crucial for the Network as very significant changes will occur among Orbicom's managing team. Some of them will need to be ratified by the overall membership.

As you know, six Directors of the Board shall be replaced. In doing so, the organization must pay special attention to the geographic representation. It is never easy to find the proper balance, but Orbicom has done it right so far, thanks to the dedication and availability of those from all over the world who have accepted to serve.

The Institutional Ex-officio Members, Alain Modoux for UNESCO and Gilbert Dionne for UQAM have retired from duties during the summer. They should normally be replaced by their successors within UNESCO and UQAM. Their departure is a considerable lost as both were active players and in office when Orbicom was established. As founding members they knew Orbicom well and were great supporters.

Secretary General, Professor Claude-Yves Charron, has fulfilled a first three year term. His mandate has been renewed during the Board of Director's meeting of June 2001. His decision to serve again is a great relief as it provides for both institutional knowledge and total dedication to our organization.

For my part, after having served two consecutive mandates as President, I shall retire. The Network will have to select and appoint a new leader.

The AGM is also be the occasion to review Orbicom' s Action Plan and to discuss the state of progress of the five initiatives approved last Fall. Two of them, in their first phase, the "Digital Divide Index" and the study of "Trust in E-commerce", and for which financing has been secured by the Secretariat, have started.

Finally, our virtual AGM allows for discussions about the Network's future development with new Chairs and new Associate members to be recruited.

I am confident that our membership will actively take part in the exchanges and will provide all the inputs necessary to make this year's AGM a great success.

Sincerely,

Rainer von Schilling

Comments under item I. Complete interventions can be accessed on the Orbicom's Web (AGM 2001)

Members who intervened expressed their disappointment to learn, after reading President Von Schilling' word of introduction, that he was leaving his duties on the Board having fulfilled two consecutive mandates.

II. Approval of the Agenda

Agenda

Orbicom Annual General Meeting September, 17 Sept - 9 Oct 2001

- I. Welcome from the President
- II. Approval of the Agenda
- II. Approval of the Minutes of the last AGM (Sept 2000)
- IV. Report of the Board of Directors
 - 4.1. Report of the President
 - 4.2. Report of the Treasurer
 - 4.3. Approval of the Certified Financial Statements (2000-2001)
 - 4.4. Nomination of the Financial Controllers (2001-2002)

- V. Report of the International Secretariat
 - 5.1. Follow up on the 2001-2003 Action Plan: Status Report
 - 5.2. Development of the Network: New Chairs and New Associate Members
- VI. Report on the Chairs' Activities
 - 6.1. Report by UNESCO on the UNITWIN Program's Evaluation
 - 6.2. Overview of the Chairs' Local, Regional and International Activities
- VII. Board of Directors
 - 7.1. Motion of Appreciation for the 6 Out-going Board Members
 - 7.2. Endorsement of the 6 New Board Members
- VIII. Varia

Resolution AGM-01-1

Moved by Martha Stone and seconded by Pierre Giguère that the agenda be approved. Proposition unanimously approved.

Comments made under this item of the agenda by Rainer Khulen, Helen Molnar, Yasuhiko Kawasumi and Gabriel-Jaime Perez Montoya are reproduced in section VIII- Varia

III. Approval of the Minutes of the Assembly General of Members of 14 to 29 September 2000

Resolution AGM-01-2

Moved by the Secretariat and seconded by Martha Stone that the minutes of the AGM of September 2000 be approved (see Minutes of AGM 2000). Proposition unanimously approved.

Discussion under item III.

Complete interventions can be accessed on Orbicom's Web (AGM 2001)

All who intervened voted in favor of the resolution. One member, **Monique van Dusseldorp**, requested that a better format be found for the minutes of the online meeting; she suggested that a "rapporteur" could write up the various comments in a way that made it clearer what the main points of the discussion were.

In reaction to this request, the **Secretary general** intervened to mention that her point will well taken.

IV Report of the Board of Directors

4.1 Report of the President

Dear Orbicom Members,

In the last edition of Orbicom Forum, I called the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to take place, on-line, between 17 and 28 Sept. 2001. Much to my regret, this will be the last such meeting that I shall preside.

This virtual meeting is of particular importance because I feel that our network is at the parting of the ways. Let me explain why. The front page of this edition is dedicated to our two new ex-officio Board members: Dr. Khan and Dr. Denis. It is coincidental that the two new institutional incumbents are taking office at the same time. But I am certain that they will soon develop a taste for Orbicom and will realize to what extent Orbicom can be useful to the mother organizations, UNESCO and UQAM.

For UNESCO, Orbicom still has to become the preferred partner (with of course the necessary budgetary backing) for the implementation of UNESCO's strategy to favor the use of ICTs to build the knowledge society. In support of this strategy, all of Orbicom's initiatives are already focussing on ICTs for knowledge. Its uniqueness being the sole UNESCO network which brings together academics, communications professionals and institutional decision makers of all sectors of communications, making Orbicom a truly special UNESCO network cannot be stressed enough.

To UQAM, Orbicom's International Secretariat located within its walls constitutes an extraordinary window to the world. The association of UQAM academics to a number of Orbicom's present-day ICT related researches around the world is worthy of consideration. Moreover, the connection to over 230 Orbicom members in more than 60 countries is unequalled by any other NGO in town; this is one of our strongest trumps. I stress on the obvious advantages for UNESCO and UQAM to be associated with Orbicom because with the advantages of association with Orbicom must come the commitments to support its Secretariat's infrastructure costs.

It is not true that a research network like Orbicom can be self financed, and I repeat what I said during the last Board meeting that it is unusual for an

organization like UNESCO to give birth to a child, to be proud of this child and then to let it die out of starvation.

Our network is also at the parting of the ways because in the course of this year, fundamental ICT researches with extraordinary potential have taken off, making Orbicom a truly stimulating research network in communications. This is due in great part to the Secretariat's teamwork under the unflagging leadership of Professor Charron and to the strong work of the Co-president of Orbicom's Research Committee, Mr. Chin Saik Yoon, our indefatigable Associate member from Malaysia.

As I look back to the very beginnings of Orbicom I am impressed at how far we have come in six years. This is mirrored by the rapid development of ICTs that enables our network to generate and share knowledge amongst members and with partners. Unfortunately this capacity remains available to only a small portion of mankind.

Orbicom shares the goal of the Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) of which it is an active member and of UNESCO to bridge the divide between those who have ICT access and those who do not. Finally, Orbicom is at the parting of the ways because to the election of new Board members will follow the appointment of my successor as well as the new Vice-president. The honor of presiding over Orbicom has been mine for the first period of Orbicom's life, and I have enjoyed working with a dynamic and committed group of people.

I hope that with the support of all, the people selected to replace Carmen and me, will enjoy the job as much as I have, and that they will impress a strong leadership. For my part, I look forward to playing an active role in the continuing good work of this important collaborative venture called Orbicom.

Rainer von Schilling

President of Orbicom

4.1.1 Discussion

After reading the President's report, a good number of members including the two new ex-officio members commented on what has been perceived as a "testament" in the context of Rainer von Schilling's departure from tenure, particularly on the issue of funding from UNESCO.

Gorän Sjöberg introduced the debate insisting that Orbicom's constant problem has been the lack of financial resources. He mentioned that his own efforts to raise funds "usually stranded when potential partners asked how

UNESCO itself intended to match such investments... Even moderate contributions from UNESCO may open the doors to matching grants".

Göran's point was supported by **Helen Molnar** who requested some insight from UNESCO on what it is planning for its research program and how Orbicom might fit into this and make a contribution.

The new UNESCO ADG for communications and information, **Abdul Waheed Khan**, offered the following comments.

He stated that he was glad to be able to join the Orbicom membership in this virtual Annual General Meeting. He thanked the outgoing President Rainer Von Schilling for his outstanding work during all the years he has been chairing the Network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication (ORBICOM).

He mentioned that he had read his report with attention and appreciated his constructive comments for the future of the Network. He commented that ORBICOM was created seven years ago to stimulate concrete inter-university co-operation in the field of communication with an active participation from the private industry and governments.

He wrote: "I agree with him on the "obvious advantages for UNESCO and UQAM to be associated with ORBICOM" although I would add that the advantages are on both sides. UNESCO is committed more than ever to working with its communication Chairs in order to implement its communication programme and to reach more people around the globe. Our meeting last year in Mexico was a step forward in consulting with our Chairs and putting together with them a plan of action which is to guide us in the next biennium. I am personally convinced that UNESCO needs to strengthen its work in the area of communication research and training and I look forward to collaborating with the communication Chairs in this sense".

Referring to the President's remark about his wish that UNESCO does not let Orbicom die out of starvation, Abdul Waheed Khan made the following point: "I think that misunderstandings in the past must have come from a misperception of the role of UNESCO, which unfortunately is rather common, and which tends to be seen as a funding agency when it is not. While the Organization cannot finance external structures, it can, and it must, work in collaboration with other institutions to implement the programme that Members States have entrusted it with. And I would like to assure you that we will associate the communication Chairs and ORBICOM to our activities as much as possible in the next two years. The recent terrorist attacks in the US bring even into greater focus UNESCO's mandate and role in strengthening peace, tolerance and the dialogue among civilizations in the world. The role

of media will have to be discussed more than ever with professional organizations and the researcher / academic community".

Following Dr. Khan's comment about UNESCO's mandate for peace, tolerance and dialogue, **Thérèse Paquet Sévigny** intervened to further insist on peace building and new communication strategies called by world leaders including Kofi Annan. In her views, partnership of academics and professionals through a network associated to UNESCO like Orbicom "constitutes more than ever an idea which time has come". "Peace...can only be achieved through dialogue and communication development in all parts of the world...Orbicom's role is more than ever valuable in the quest for peace"

In a second message and referring to the comment made by Abdul Waheed Khan on the partnership approach, she stated that she is a living example of a person who has been immersed at times in media, in an international organizations and in the academic world and that she found these immersions intellectually stimulating.

Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny also stressed that Orbicom was created in 1994 with the partnership vision in mind to assist UNESCO to "increase the reach of its communications mandate as formulated in Chapter V of its biennium programs". She further commented that Orbicom's current action plan is in direct relation with the next UNESCO Biennium. Like Dr. Khan, she made reference to the Mexico meeting and insisted to say that the theme retained - ICTs for communications development - is "directly linked to UNESCO's principal priority for 2001-2003, - promoting equitable access to information and knowledge, especially in the public domain".

In her third intervention entitled "Orbicom, an External Structure or a Member of the UNESCO Family", Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny, explained that Orbicom should not be considered by UNESCO as an "external structure" as inferred in Dr. Khan's message and she explained why:

" MM. Mayor, Yushkiavitshus and Modoux have always identified ORBICOM's key advantages, the certain degree of distance and autonomy from political pressures (having its own Board of Directors and its own selection process for new chairs and new associates), and the positioning at the forefront of communications issues in the world. In this context, our Network could be perceived as an " External structure " .

"On the other hand, when I underwent the UNESCO's accreditation process in 1998, ORBICOM's application was refused, on the basis that it was an extension of UNESCO, its founding Convention being co-signed by UNESCO's

Director-General and UQAM's Rector. In this context, our network was considered part of the "Family".

Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny further argued that at the UN Secretariat, ORBICOM received in 1997 its full accreditation to ECOSOC, Category A, as an independent international organization (INGO). "That's the reason why ORBICOM can act as an advisor to UNESCO, as well as an agent for development of communications in the field, with different categories of partners, and not only with States as it is the case with UNESCO" she wrote.

As for the interface between ORBICOM and the UNITWIN Program. Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny recalled that Dr. Diaz, the former Director of UNITWIN, has always used ORBICOM's approach as a model for promoting new kinds of activities in other disciplines. In this context, ORBICOM was considered as a very strong and close partner of UNESCO, and a good model for UNESCO's recognition and influence in different professional milieus.

In her conclusion, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny mentioned that until now, this recognition has always been the basis for an equal financial contribution to ORBICOM by the two founding members, and of their legitimacy on the Board of Directors, as "Ex-Officio" members.

She suggested that a meeting between Mr. Matsuura, Dr. Khan and UQAM's new Rector, Dr. Denis, together ORBICOM's next President and the Secretary General could sort this out.

On the issue of UNESCO funding of Orbicom, **Subhash Joshi** intervened to say that "UNESCO is not a mere funder". He stated that "in the absence of proper funding from UNESCO...it can lead to premature death". He suggested that Orbicom starts looking for other sources of funding. " This will require a few years of withdrawal period. UNESCO then can reduce funding but never stop it" he noted.

UQAM's new Rector and ex-officio member of Orbicom, **Roch Denis**, took part in this exchange insisting on the fact that "Orbicom is an inspiring model with a special niche". After having outlined Orbicom's reputable record of accomplishments and Orbicom's special niche -bringing together academics and professionals of all sectors of communications- he suggested that the network could serve as an "inspiration" for other university ventures". He concluded by writing: "anyone who would not respect this key distinctive feature would not respect the Convention signed by UNESCO Director General and UQAM's Rector, for the foundation of the network".

4.2 Report of the Treasurer

All figures are in Canadian dollars

During Orbicom's budgetary year which ended 31 May 2001, the Secretariat's financial situation has become precarious due to reduced income and exceptional spending. After audit, there was a small surplus of \$13,358 in cash flow.

Reduced revenues.

Although UQAM's contributions in kind and in cash have remained unchanged to the level of \$ 123,000 and UNESCO has contributed to the Webmaster's salary during the last 6 months of the budgetary year for an amount of \$14,910, most of the traditional institutional contributors have either ceased their support to the Secretariat's infrastructure or modified the way they wish to support to Orbicom.

The Quebec "Ministère de la Métropole" has not renewed its support (- \$50,000), while Montréal International has increased its support from \$20,000 to \$40,000 on an exceptional basis. For next year, Montréal International's contribution will be of \$20,000 conditional to raising the equivalent amount from the private sector. The Secretariat has been successful in raising \$29,000 from the private sector (Bell Canada) in support of the local component of the "Trust" project. This was only confirmed on 25 May 2001 and will appear in next year's figures.

As for the Canada's Agency of Development of Regions, its support has now shifted to projects. The Canadian component of the "Trust " project is financed to the level of 75% by the Federal Agency. The Secretariat is allowed to retain 13% for its operations. The same applies to the Canadian International Development Agency's contribution to the Digital Divide Index project. Details on the two funded projects "Trust" and "DDI" are describe in appendix 1.

Exceptional expenses.

The extended Executive Committee meeting held last July in Mexico and the Montreal Executive Committee meeting of January 2001 in Montréal have costed \$30,000. The two important meetings have also generated additional hospitality expenses.

Reduced operation expenses.

Thanks to the secondment for a year of a diplomat in residence to Orbicom's Secretariat, the honoraria for ad hoc professional services in support of the Secretary General have been reduced to \$22,252 instead of \$31,635 the previous year. Also, it is worth noting that mailing, photocopies and telecommunications were less this year. This is a clear indication of efforts made to keep the operation expenses to a minimum.

4.2.1 Discussion

Monique van Dusseldorp intervened to thank all at Orbicom for the hard work and the many accomplishments made in establishing and growing the Orbicom network.

She suggested that the Orbicom members could get involved in assisting Orbicom with its work, in a number of ways. She proposed a list of possible contributions its members could make:

"... The ones I can think of are only a few, that spring to mind because of our own potential input. I am sure that others can think of more substantial assistance. Potential contributions could include:

- providing free promotion of Orbicom events to members' network and on their websites;
- assistance in applying for local funds to Orbicom activities;
- if Orbicom publishes relevant articles or reports, assist in translating them and getting them published in local media;
- assist in building up a network of corporate sponsors for Orbicom activities;
- assist in applying for local funds;
- promoting Orbicom by including membership on resume of all members (further status of network);
- assisting with those activities that do not necessarily cost money but can boost Orbicom network, for instance, set up guest lecturers and internship programme".

Ellen Molnar intervened to say that Monique's suggestion is a good one, and added that Chairs should also be capable of raising some funding if there was hope for matching funds. She wrote that she believes that " one of the key problems though is how to coordinate this effort given that involves so many different people/countries, and how to activate people who are able to

contribute in this way". She then went back to a suggestion she had made in the past for consideration, and that is ORBICOM regional hubs/networks coordinated by the Chairs and Board members in that region, who could work expressly towards what Monique had suggested. "This would help relieve some of the pressure on the Secretariat also", she wrote.

Claude-Yves Charron thanked Monique for her interesting suggestions. He wrote: "Indeed, it does not cost to make Orbicom better known. We all have to make sure that Orbicom is at the forefront of our preoccupations, and that every single opportunity is taken to boost Orbicom's profile".

He also commented that there is nothing wrong in raising local or regional supports for activities of chairs and associates, quite the contrary. As to Helen's interesting suggestion he replied that his instinct reaction is that funds can only be gathered if Orbicom has attractive "marketable" initiatives, well defined, well focused, and of interest to contributors. "Nobody will give money just to be nice to Orbicom, locally or otherwise" he mentioned.

Mario Plenkovic expressed the view that members should work to enhance contributions to Orbicom. He also wrote that he is "very satisfied with the financial report of the Treasurer which showed that budget has not been exceeded".

For his part, **Chin Saik Yoon** thanked the friends at the Secretariat and the Treasurer for having navigated Orbicom safely through a very difficult financial year. He added: "I am very sorry to have seen a couple of our loyal staff at the Secretariat leave their jobs as a result of our continuing difficulties with our finances".

He continued to say: "I sat down with a couple of donors over the past year to try and raise funds for two of our initiatives. Negotiations always lead to our UNESCO Connection. Some donors invariably say that they have made significant contributions to UNESCO and therefore they expect Orbicom to be supported via those contributions, since we are a network of UNESCO. Other donors will ask how much seed money UNESCO is committing towards Orbicom initiatives. They would like to see a counterpart contribution from UNESCO before they are willing to commit their contributions. Again because Orbicom is a network of UNESCO.

Both positions of the donors are fair ones. UNESCO can help us raise funds considerably by committing sustained contributions to Orbicom. These contributions may be modest but they are crucial in endorsing our work in furtherance of UNESCO goals in our negotiations with donors for more significant project funding".

Roch Denis mentioned that his predecessor had briefed him about Orbicom's difficult budgetary situation and has informed him of UQAM's

special contribution made during the summer to assist the International Secretariat.

He also indicated that Rector Dionne briefed him on the Secretary General's tireless efforts to bring Orbicom to self-financing. He added that he was told that a year ago, the messages emanating from all, was to the effect that Orbicom should finance itself through membership fees and the management of projects. Dr. Denis added that the Secretariat put that idea to a try; Orbicom's Secretariat succeeded in raising over \$ 200,000 in Canadian funds (from government and private sector) to launch two of the ICT projects proposed at the Mexico meeting of July 2000.

But at the same time, the Secretariat has demonstrated that the administrative costs supporting project management could only be applied to the projects themselves, not to the Secretariat's infrastructures costs. Orbicom is thus facing the same situation that prevailed a year ago. Dr. Denis further mentioned that it is his understanding that Orbicom is an international network supported by a secretariat and that its financing would come from a diversity of sources including UQAM and UNESCO. He went on, recalling that Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny who is the "institutional memory" of Orbicom has alluded, in one of her messages of Friday 28 September, to the equal financial contribution by both UNESCO and UQAM, the "raison d'être" of the ex-officio members serving on Orbicom's Board of Directors.

In the opinion of the rapporteur, comments on the recruitment of chairs or associates made by Thétèse Sévigny, Abdul Waheed Khan, Chiranjibi Paudyal, Helen Molnar and Mario Plenkovic were misplaced in the section dedicated to the Treasurer's report. The Secretariat has placed them in section (5.2 development of the Network: new chairs and new associate members).

4.3 Approval of the Certified Financial Statements

Resolution AGM-01-3 moved by Göran Sjöberg and seconded by Carmen Rico that the financial statements 2000-2001 be approved
(see Financial Statement 2000-2001 / AGM 2001 site)

Proposition unanimously approved.

4.4 Nomination of the financial Controllers (2001-2002)

Resolution AGM-01-4 moved by Monique Dusseldorp and seconded by Carmen Rico that the firm Samson, Belair, Deloitte, Touche and Tomatsu be appointed as External Auditors for the period 2000-2001.
Proposition unanimously approved.

4.4.1 Discussion

While voting for the motion, **Carmen Rico** made a proposal to the effect that in future the choice be made between two or three firms. The Secretary General answered that the current firm is providing Orbicom with a rebate given Orbicom's tight financial situation. Also the Secretariat must propose to the AGM a resolution presenting only one firm.

V) Report of the International Secretariat

5.1 Follow-up of the 2001-2003 Action Plan

The Secretariat presented the following projects' update.

1.) Equitable Access to ICTs

Summary

This initiative focuses on the different Latin American national policies and experiences, the private sector's responsibilities and implications, and the role of regulating agencies to improve an equitable access to ICTs.

Partners

Latin American UNESCO chairs in communications, private sector, professionals and Latin American regulating agencies.

Outcome / impacts

A regional conference was held on Nov 28-29, 2000 in Mexico City, and focused on the participation and responsibilities of the private sector in relation with the access to NICTs, and the strategies of various Latin American governments to reduce the digital divide. A 9 point action plan was developed and approved. The action plan implementation is in direct preparation to the ITU World Summit on Communications and Society.

2.) NICTs and TRUST-Building Mechanisms

Summary

This initiative undertakes a comparative research in 6 regions, concentrating on some trust-intensive issues, such as the usage of filtering/blocking/rating software, and the topics of access, authorship, and privacy, in order to find out to what extent trust-building mechanisms are universal or cultural-dependent.

Ongoing negotiations are taking place to identify the international partners interested, for regions outside of Canada. Phase I is being undertaken in Canada and focuses exclusively on trust in e-commerce as the initial idea is too wide in scope for the limited initial contributions received locally.

Partners

Phase I: University of Quebec in Montreal, Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, private sector.

Outcome /impact

Phase I of this initiative focussing on Trust in Ecommerce in Canada with feasibility study components in Germany (?) and in one Asian country (to be determined) has been launched on 30 April 2001. This initial research should be terminated in February 2002. Interested readers may consult the table of content of Phase 1 appended.

3.) Development of a Digital Divide Index (DDI)

Summary

The aim is to design, build, test, maintain and publish periodically the results of a system for monitoring and forecasting the Digital Divide.

There exists no measurement instrument of some reliability that could be used to assist the stakeholders in their analysis of developing countries' ICTs' needs.

In order to fill this information gap, ORBICOM, in collaboration with CIDA, plans to build as a preliminary phase of a more global project, the methodology and a model to develop a measurement instrument of the digital divide in the world called the "Digital Divide Index".

It will assist major stakeholders in focusing on access to NICTs in developing countries using the following data sets (not exclusive): state of infrastructures, public policies and regulations, industrial and managerial capacities, and human resources and training in ICTs.

Partners

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), National Research Council of Canada (NRC), and others.

Outcome / impact

Phase I of this Initiative has started on 30 March 2001, and has focused on the construction of a methodology and a model to measure the Digital Divide worldwide. A first draft of the methodology has been written and should be tested in 9 countries before being presented in November to the Symposium on the Digital Divide at the University of Texas at Austin. This first phase should be completed by February 2002.

4.) Human Resources and Training in ICTs

Summary

The Montreal Conference objectives were to both diagnose the challenges, and propose concrete solutions, to the growing gap between available human resources and training in the domain of communications in all economic regions of the world. Follow up initiatives have been undertaken in terms of electronic forums for information flow exchanges and regional training workshops.

Partners

GKP, UNESCO, CIDA, UNDP, IDRC, BCE, Bell Canada, CGI, France Telecom, The Freedom Forum, National Research Council of Canada

Outcome / impact

The Montreal Conference which convened Communications specialists from 55 countries, resulted in an Action Plan with two main orientations:

- a) An electronic forum for on-going assessment / exchange of information and communication trends, and training needs and opportunities, via Orbicom's web site;
- b) Organization of a series of regional workshops for the training and retraining of communication professionals for the new knowledge economy (next workshops: in Nigeria, in June and November 2001).

The Proceedings of the Conference have been published and distributed in 2000, in 3 languages, under the title:

"New Partnerships in Communications for the 21st Century: Strategies for Governance, Technology, Employment and Lifelong Learning",

Charron, C.Y., Chica, M.C., S. Hamilton, editors, Montreal, Orbicom, 2000, 374 pages.

This book is also published on-line, available freely, in 3 languages, via Orbicom's web site:

5.) Core Literature on Development Communications and the Impact of new ICTs in Developing Countries

Summary

During the Orbicom Board of Directors' virtual meeting of November 2000, it was decided that the proposal made by four chairs, to study "the Impact and Use of New Information and Communications Technologies in Developing Countries" was to be merged with the proposal on "Core Literature for Development Communication" submitted by an associate member. This is an interesting development as some chairs and associate members have decided to combine their research activities in a real partnership between the academics and the professionals.

The objective is to collect, review and select landmark publications, papers, articles and audiovisual material that have shaped the field of development Communications since its beginning: this collection of Spanish, French and English material will form the core literature for the discipline; it will span the early application of mass media in development programs to current initiatives aimed at introducing Internet-based technologies to developing communities; it will be designed to support research, training and practice in the developing countries.

Partners

The promoters of this initiative are the chairs of Morocco, France, Australia and Canada in association with the President of Orbicom Research Committee, Mr. Chin Saik Yoon, Associate Member from Malaysia.

Professor Jan Servaes of the Catholic University of Brussels has accepted in principle to be the Scientific Director.

There is no funding for this research at this time.

Impact

This research would lead to the publication of major background documents to be circulated in advance of the ITU Summit in Communications, in cooperation with UNESCO and other agencies.

6.) Communications for Peace, Sustainable Development and Human Security

Summary

Using case studies from different regions of the world, the purpose of this initiative is to demonstrate how communications networks contribute to sustainable development and human security, and how they contribute to the on-going debate about the culture of peace

There has been no move made by this initiative's promoters (Danielle Maisonneuve and Charles Okigbo).

Complementary Initiatives Initiated during Summer 2001

7.) REFORMA (The International Network for the Training of Teachers in Africa)

Summary

An other initiative of Orbicom related to Major Programme V Communication and Information of UNESCO and to its main lines of action "Developing human resources and capacities" and "The contribution of information and communication technologies to the development of education?" has been developed during the summer in partnership with the "Centre interuniversitaire G?rin-Lajoie. Its goal is to reinforce the training of teachers in Africa. To achieve this, the project will establish a communication network between universities of the North and institutions and organizations involved in teachers' training and education research in Africa, and between African institutions themselves. These networks will use communication modes based in great part on ICTs. The initial phase is supported by the International Development Reseach Centre (IDRC) of Canada. Orbicom is involved in the project development phase sharing with partners and participants its knowledge of virtual networks and the use of ICTs for development.

8.) The Digital Review of Asia Pacific

A new initiative that must be perceived as complementary to the Digital Divide Index project has been submitted to international partners. The Digital Review of Asia Pacific, to be undertaken jointly by the Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP) of UNDP, the Pan Asia Networking (PAN) of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and Orbicom, will constitute a comprehensive review of the state of diffusion, adoption and application of new information and communication technologies in the Asia-Pacific region and will result in joint publication.

5.1.1 Discussion,

In opening the discussion, the Secretariat made the following comments: "Following the Action Plan submitted at the last AGM, the Secretariat was successful in finding funds for the preliminary phases of two projects, "Trust" and "DDI", and initiated two others initiatives related to UNESCO's priorities and Orbicom's Action Plan with external partners: the Digital Review of Asia-Pacific and REFORMA in Africa. As for the first initiative "Equitable Access to ICTs", it is understood that the Latin American chairs have been active as well".

Ms Carmen Rico that while she mentioned that she is impressed by the scope of the projects, she wondered how other chairs and associates can participate. **Mr. Subhash Joshi** commented that the methodology for measuring DDI will be a very important contribution and he expressed his interest to participate in the test in India. **Mr. Paudyal Chirajibi** offered essentially the same comment and proposed his participation if the DDI were to be tested in Nepal.

For her part, **Ms Elena Vartanova** indicated that the DDI topic has become quite important for many countries. Since ORBICOM brings together different continents and parts of the world it would be of crucial importance to bring together already existing studies and on-going projects related to DDI, she commented. She added: "We have already started the similar work in Moscow and are ready to cooperate. As for the Digital Divide conference in Austin, it would be most like to get more information through ORBICOM about this event since not all of us plan to attend it. I would like to call upon more "transparance" in our research to make our projects on DD more useful for ORBICOM. For instance, during last Budapest IAMCR conference in cooperation with ECCR we held a panel on Digital Divide and perhaps its materials might be of some use for our further work".

Ms Helen Molnar referred to the review of literature project on communication development and mentioned that she was interested to discuss with other members who worked on the proposal how we might move this project forward. In a reference to the Mexico meeting she recalled that UNESCO identified the project as its number one priority then. She requested some feedback on whether this is still the case.

Mr. Chin Saik Yoon answered that he agreed with Helen's recall about UNESCO's endorsement of the Core Literature on Development Communication project idea. He explained that the proposal for the project idea has been drafted and exists in fairly detailed form. Lack of funds has prevented the project from being launched. He wrote: "A grant from UNESCO towards this important initiative will go a long way in interesting donors in

supporting the project. It will be wonderful if one of our colleagues from UNESCO could indicate if such seed-funding may be available for this financial year".

In view of the previous comments and the interest shown by the Orbicom members who intervened in the above discussion, **Mr. Claude-Yves Charron** offered information supplements with regard to the "Trust Project" and the "DDI Project".

On the "Trust Project", he wrote: "During last year's Chairs and Executive Committee meetings in Mexico, one of the initiative of our Action Plan, as introduced by Rainer Khulen, Chair holder in Germany, was related to TRUST in E-Commerce.

We have initiated since then a Phase I with a case study in ONE country, and are exploring ways leading to a Phase II, in terms of a comparative studies in SIX countries.

Yves Theoret, one of our associate members, has acted as scientific director of Phase I, for which you will find, below, a status report.

This Phase I should be completed by March 02. And we are already drafting grants applications now, so that we could hopefully initiate Phase II, next Spring, involving some of our chair holders and associate members within different regions.

Status Report on Phase I

Trust and Security : Challenges and Innovations of Electronic Commerce
Phase 1 of the research project is sponsored by the Agency of Economic Development of Regions (Canada) and Bell Canada. Carried out by an Orbicom research team, the project has the following objectives:

- to identify the relationship between trust and e-commerce in Canada;
- to analyze the Canadian e-commerce situation in relation to the G8 countries;
- to initiate a pre-test with one European and one Asian country;
- to draw a model of e-commerce development in westernized countries.

1). Context

In all transactions, trust is necessary between the two parties. With its own specificity, e-commerce does not escape this reality. Certain people believe that the more users are in confidence, the more they will adopt this transaction mode, and do e-commerce.

However, five years after its appearance and development, e-commerce has not achieved the expected results. In order to resolve this obvious contradiction, the research tries to determine the relationship between the consumers' trust and the development of e-commerce. The obstacles to the adoption of e-commerce by business and governments are well documented by a number of governmental studies and university researches, and there are reasons to believe that most of these obstacles can be overcome.

2). Research's Directions

It is different with consumers, because the obstacles are technical, economical, social, cultural and cognitive. If access to communications' infrastructures and price of goods and services have an influence on the consumers' will to make transactions or not on electronic networks, their decision seems, first and above all, to rely on social, cultural and cognitive processes for which there is little documentation with regard to e-commerce. This is why the research focus specifically on the following interrogations:

- How to raise consumers' confidence towards e-commerce in order to favor its rapid development and its appropriation? More specifically, what are the obstacles (or irritants) to the development of e-commerce?
- Similarly, what are the pre-requisites and the necessary transformations or modifications in order to achieve the full potential of e-commerce?

To answer these interrogations, a number of research leads or tracks have been selected:

- The use of e-commerce by the consumer is hampered by different technical, economical, social, cultural and cognitive obstacles. In identifying resistance factors (generally called "irritants") common to on-line transactions, e-commerce promoters could remedy the prevailing situation.
- Once the irritants are identified, it is essential to implant the necessary pre-requisites to the development of e-commerce, at the technical and legal levels, and at the national and international levels. The interaction between the 3 groups of actors (government, business and consumers) then becomes a fundamental piece of information about the success of e-commerce and trust building.
- It is only after the equation "business-consumers" is reversed that e-commerce will undergo a new phase of expansion. In fact, the offer for existing services is now limited, thus not favoring, or favoring to a little extent, on-line transactional operations. However, if consumers define the goods and services they wish to have, then we are dealing with a "consumers-to-business" equation, not with "business-to-consumers" anymore. If it is the case, e-commerce is likely to attract a greater number of users.

3). Research's Methodology

To conduct this research, Orbicom has organized:

- six focus groups of e-commerce specialists;
- six conferences in the Quebec region;
- an online survey conducted jointly with Bell Canada;
- an electronic forum on the Orbicom web site;
- a round table of experts.

4). Expected Results

- participants do not agree on a definition of e-commerce;
- pre-requisites to e-commerce play a major role in the development of the consumers' trust;

- e-commerce's environment is very important: the development and expansion of e-commerce are partly or totally related to the following criteria: technical and security aspects, and user-friendliness of sites.
- Finally, the social and cultural variables have a real effect on the purchasing comportment of the Internet users. Claude-Yves "

On the DDI Project, the Secretary General offered the following explanations:

"In continuity with the summary submitted to you within the "Documents" Section, allow me to provide you with a status report of Phase I of this initiative, which began in the Spring 2001, focusing on the elaboration of a design and methodology of the DDI.

This status report is structured in 3 parts:

- 1) The Project Aim
 - 2) A Summary of the March 30th decisions of the Advisory Committee
 - 3) A Summary of the September 7th decisions of the Advisory Committee
- This initiative was proposed to our Action Plan during our last year AGM by Mr. Chin Saik Yoon (Penang, Malaysia).

Dr. Sciadas acts as project scientific director and Mr. Chin as project co-director.

PART I: The Project AIM

1.) The Digital Divide.

New communication and information technologies are central to economic, educational, and social development of individual nations and the global community. Much previous research has shown significant differences among social groups within nations and among nations in access to and utilization of new communication and information technologies. This has come to be called the digital divide.

2.) Basic questions.

What is the nature of the division that constitutes the digital divide? Is the divide growing or receding? How does the divide differ in developing regions versus industrialized countries? What impact will the digital divide have on social stratification, culture, economy, international development, and politics between countries?

3.) The Digital Divide Index.

The aim of the overall project is to design , build, test, maintain and publish periodically the results of a system for monitoring and forecasting the digital divide. This system will be called the "Digital Divide Index". It will help to focus discussions on access to the new Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs).

4.) The Ultimate Objective.

The ultimate objective of the "Digital Divide Index" idea is to help focus attention on the issues of training, research and practice (as related to the

new ICTs). Current takes on the digital divide has very much been on connectivity and hard/software issues. An industrial approach pushed by the industries.

The ORBICOM-CIDA initiative will attempt to bring a more holistic view on the subject, and may be used to advocate for resources to be allocated to addressing urgent needs in education and research into the application of these new ICTs, especially in developing country settings where the issues may have less to do with connectivity and more about relevance of the technology, and their fit into unique information and communications systems.

PART II:

Summary of the Decisions / ADVISORY GROUP / 30 March

Purpose of the meeting

Dr Jacques Lyrette, Vice-President of the Canadian National Research Council (CNRC), and Co-Chair, introduced the meeting. He explained that the purpose of the Advisory Group meeting, and the technical exchanges that preceded and followed the 30 March venue, was to clear the path for the development of Phase 1 of the Orbicom-CIDA Digital Divide Index project (DDI): the development of a methodology and a model to measure the digital divide worldwide. The intent was not to find all answers to all questions a complex project of this kind is raising. The aim was to exchange views and possibly to reach a common understanding of what the DDI should ultimately be, and to try to determine if possible, what is doable from what is ideal, and to decide on a division of labor.

The Advisory Group is encompassing two types of participants: those representing committed agencies and organizations: CIDA, CNRC, STATCAN, Orbicom and UNESCO (communication and information) , and those interested in the outcome of Phase 1, so that they may determine their potential association with the DDI: UIS, IDRC, Industry Canada...

Discussions

Tony Zeitoun, Senior Advisor, Knowledge for Development, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and Co-Chair, led discussions. There was general agreement that the DDI is a necessity given the importance of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the context of international development. There is a need to measure the regress or the widening of the digital divide following a whole range of initiatives likely to be pursued or implemented by major stakeholders in order to bridge the divide. Although the DDI should ultimately be useful to the work of the G8 Dot force (if continued), the approach of the Orbicom-CIDA project should retain a good degree of autonomy.

From the point of view of the participants, the DDI should attempt to bring a holistic view on the subject of the digital divide and present it as an instrument to advocate for resources to be allocated to addressing urgent needs in education and research into the application of the ICTs, especially in

developing country settings were the issues may have less to do with connectivity and more about relevance of the technologies, and their fit into unique communication and information systems.

It was agreed that as the dividing line between digital and analogue, and old and new technologies are rapidly becoming fuzzy, that the DDI should explore the possibilities of including information and communication technologies in its scope of coverage.

Principles

The meeting agreed to the three guiding principles in the development of the DDI.

1. That we aim for practical rather than perfect methods;
2. A neutral approach be adopted in dealing with the technologies;
3. The focus be placed on measuring outputs rather than inputs.

Areas of coverage

Participants agreed that the DDI cover the following six areas in the construction of the index, and that both quantitative and qualitative data be used in deriving the index:

- a. State of infrastructures including access,
- b. Public policies and regulations,
- c. Industrial and managerial capacities (to be further defined),
- d. Human resources and training,
- e. Use of ICTs,
- f. Content

Potential users

1. User groups,
2. Private sector,
3. Policy makers
4. Civil society (NGOs)
5. Development community,
6. International communication specialists.

Data collection and access to existing data sets

The issue of data was recognized by both the advisory committee and the technical working group as a critical issue which the project will address on a continuous basis. The UIS representative indicated the possibility of incorporating some needs of the DDI in the design of the household surveys that UIS is planning to undertake in the near future.

DDI Project / Phase 1 / output

The following outputs are expected at the end of Phase 1 (Feb. 2002):

1. Report on the complete literature review on the issues relating to the digital divide;
2. A listing and description of data sets available for building the model;
3. Specifications for the model;
4. Prototype model, including the methodology for its construction;

5. Prototype Digital Divide Index (encompassing a maximum of 8 sample countries), including the methodology for deriving the index from the model, its periodic revision and update;

6. A publication entitled: " a Methodological Approach to Modeling the Digital Divide ".

Division of labor

Two committees were formally established.

The Advisory Committee with essentially the same representation, but which could be expanded when new partners or observers join the process. It may include for example, Mimos, Acacia and others...

The decision was made for the Advisory Committee to meet again in Ottawa, at CIDA, on 7 Sept 2001 for the whole day.

The Experts' group, composed of professionals in the field of statistics with the participation of Orbicom's Secretariat.

Dr George Sciadas has accepted to be the Scientific Director with Mr Chin Saik Yoon acting as the Project' s Co-director.

Sample countries

At the 4 April meeting at Orbicom that followed the Advisory Group meeting of 30 March in Ottawa, the following countries were proposed for regional representation and comparison purposes (between developing and developed countries). They are:

In Africa: Senegal and South Africa;

in Asia: India and Malaysia;

in Latin America: Colombia and Mexico (for reason of Orbicom's chairs related work on the question of access and use of NICTs in Latin America);

in North America and Europe: Canada and Finland

PART III SUMMARY OF THE DECISIONS / CONSULTATIVE GROUP 7

SEPTEMBER 2001

Decisions

The DDI Consultative Committee meeting of 7 September 2001 took place at CIDA/Hull under the chairmanship of Jacques Lyrette of NRC and Tony Zeitoun of CIDA.

A) From the perspective of the Co-chairs, the meeting achieved the following:

1) the validation of the Draft Document dated June 2001 and the purpose of the DDI as a measurement instrument of the regress or progress of the divide; ultimately the DDI should ideally reflect the capacity of a country to access, absorb and disseminate knowledge;

2) the decision was made to focus in Phase 1 on measurable ICT indicators that are available in 9 countries including China;

3) the set up of a sub-group to address the issue of quantitative and qualitative indicators;

4) the levels of aggregation should be approached in a flexible way;

5) in Phase 2 an attempt should be made to broach the notion "knowledge", in this context, the matrix proposed by Carl should be kept for future toughs;
6) the "demarche" to enlist future partners/contributors for phase 2 should continue.

B) The sub-group.

1) Orbicom will convene shortly a virtual discussion of interested participants to address the issue of qualitative indicators as well quantitative indicators by adding, subtracting, substituting or modifying indicators;

2) Forming a sub-group of volunteers to improve the list of indicators is a short-term initiative; the idea is to use all existing knowledge and expertise to come up with the best list that we can and which can be applied to measurements shortly (with the desire data or at least proxies).

3) Therefore, in their future interventions the sub-group's participants should :

a) name the source if an indicator is identified,

b) when there is no indicator, identify the best "proxy".

4) Over the long term (but also in the drafting for proposals of Phase 2 in the next few weeks), the experience acquired from the Phase 1 pilot will be used in conjunction with all other ideas of the stakeholders to advance the project.

C) Round Table to address the issue of Skill..

Orbicom will organize a round table at the Symposium on the Digital Divide at Austin Texas on 16 or 17 November to specifically focus on the issue of skill (most difficult to measure) in relation to the DDI.

If you need any further information about this Status report, please do not hesitate to consult the Secretariat. Claude-Yves".

Concluding the discussion, **Elena Vartenova**, thanked the Secretary General for keeping the membership informed of the progress in the elaboration of the DDI. She agreed that approaches to measure 6 areas which were proposed to construct the index should be different. Some indicators are possible to identify through easily accessible statistical sources (state of infrastructure, number of connections). She suggested that perhaps this might be included as a part of a general strategy of network cooperation among UNESCO Chairs. She mentioned that she realizes that other parameters require more efforts and should be based on more extensive work. On the Core Literature on Development Communication she said that it might also be possible to point to relevant books/researches. She concluded saying that the particular attention in DDI should be paid to training programs and media education. The number of schools and universities with connections to the Internet, number of projects and training programmes for certain regions are more important than home and office connections, she wrote.

5.2 Development of the Network.: New Chairs and New Associate members

Chairs

During the Executive Committee Meeting of 8 January 2001, the issues of chairs' evaluation and selection were addressed. The following lines are excerpts of the discussions. This topic is of particular importance as UNESCO has mandated a study of the UNESCO chairs under the UNITWIN program by external consultants and that the Director General of UNESCO will soon request the endorsement of his policy by UNESCO's Executive Council.

Clarification was made to the effect that when we talk about chairs in communications, then they exist within the Orbicom Network. It was also explained that the path to be followed in the case of the Australian chair to be transferred from one university to another, had been clarified with Helen Molnar.

It was mentioned that Orbicom needs active chairs and that, in future, efforts should be made to commission them in very populous countries like China, India, Malaysia or Indonesia. As for Nigeria, six potential candidates have been identified. The best way to proceed in this case is to invite these academics to be associate members and find out afterwards who is active and who is not.

The applications from Durban, South Africa, and Chile received favorable support from the Selection Committee and has been officially submitted to UNESCO's ADG for approval. For Peru, at the time the Executive Committee met, the Secretariat had yet to receive the application package. The applications from Jordan, Ivory Coast and Denmark are also pending.

It was also clarified that the chairs belong to the universities not to the chair holders.

Concerning the total number of Chairs within the network, 25 is the number which appears within the initial protocol. Orbicom has now reached this figure.

Once UNESCO undertakes the review and evaluation of the Chairs and of expired protocols, the solution might be to replace dormant ones by active ones taking into account the following criteria:

- a. more even geographical representation,

- b. populous countries should have priority
- c. expertise of the new chairs in ICTs is crucial.

Recruitment of Associate members

We currently have 216 Associate members, and eighty seven scholars and professionals are potential associates in recruitment.

The Secretariat has received the mandate to proceed with offers to others if needed, upon recommendation of two members, keeping in mind the balance between

The following new members have joined Orbicom during the last twelve months, they are by alphabetical order:

Michel Agnaieff, Sathish Chadran, Pierre Giguère, Jean-Pierre Guay, Miguel Sales, Yves Théorêt.

Distribution between Academic and Professional Members

One of the key distinctive feature of the network resides within its partnership formula between academics, professional and policy makers, in communications.

The Secretariat has, with the help of Ms. Paquet-Sevigny, elicited the following distribution of our members within these categories (as of 31 March):

ORBICOM'S MEMBERSHIP

<u>Geographical Areas</u>	<u>Academic</u>	<u>Professionals</u>	<u>UN and other Agencies</u>
-Africa	10	14	0
-North America	25	23	2
-Latin America & Caribbean	17	12	0
-Asia-Pacific	23	21	0
-Europe	41	37	8

-Middle East	2	1	0
Total :	118	108	10

5.2.1 Discussion.

Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny also intervened to say that a dynamic network lies upon a critical mass: the strength and representation of its membership. In her view Orbicom should try to obtain from Abdul Waheed Khan an update concerning a) the identification of new chairs in areas not represented; b) the assessment of existing chairs and c) conditions to join or leave the network. Also in her opinion, ORBICOM should aim at a membership of a minimum of 500 associates with a larger representation of people from enterprises. Orbicom should recruit members at a rhythm of twice a year bearing in mind geographic representation.

In response to the remark made by the Secretariat that after a long period, the issue of the chair in Australia had not been settled by UNESCO, **Abdul Waheed Khan** made the following comment: " I hope that you will understand that the recent structure changes and the new nominations in the Communication and Information Sector of UNESCO have caused delays in handling some of the transferred files. This does not mean that UNESCO lacks interest in the files themselves. I have already acknowledged receipt of RMIT's letter informing us that the Chair in this distinguished institution is relinquished. We will follow that up. So no reason to be embarrassed".

Chiranjibi S. Paudyal agreed with Mr. Khan that there may be delay in the handling of the official documents and that needs to be addressed very effectively. He went further writing " I am not sure whether I should mention it here or not, but it has been very difficult for me to get any information from the Orbicom and in spite of deep desire to contribute in the Orbicom activities, I think that I have not been able to do as I wanted to do. Hope it will be all right in the coming days".

Helen Molnar intervened to recall to the membership that at our AGM in Montreal there was some discussion about the role of UNESCO Chairs in the ORBICOM network, and some of the Chairs stressed that they were UNESCO Chairs, not ORBICOM Chairs. She wrote: "This report would appear to give UNESCO and the ORBICOM network the opportunity to clarify what the expectations are in terms of the contributions the Chairs make to ORBICOM. It is reasonable to assume that these will vary depending on the resources/interests the Chairs and their universities can contribute - but it would be valuable at this point to articulate these expectations more clearly. The suggestion that field offices be assigned the responsibility to direct

coordination and cooperation with their area's chairs/networks is a good one, and helps regionalise ORBICOM's work. One concern though, is about the suggestion of an admin unit to back up the Chair program at HQ. This raises the potential of another administrative layer. The other is the reference to a fund raising task force - I'm sure this would be welcomed by the chairs given the current tight economic environment in universities - but how will this be coordinated so that it does not duplicate other fund raising efforts, and how will it be tied in with the field offices?

The recommendations on quality control, ceilings and geographical balance are all interesting, with one rider - Chairs in developing and in transition countries are likely to need a reasonable level of on-going admin/funding support. This is addressed in the report, but it will be interesting to see how levels of admin/funding support will be determined, especially given the number of Chairs involved".

For his part, **Mario Plenkovic** wrote that he agreed with what he has read in consulting the papers. He suggested the Orbicom works on increasing the number of members from Middle East, both academics and professionals.

VI Report on the Chairs' Activities

6.1 Report by UNESCO on the UNITWIN Program's Evaluation

I. BACKGROUND

The General Conference of UNESCO, meeting at its 27'h session (1993), adopted the Resolution 1 .I2 by which it "Requests the Director-General to prepare a thorough evaluation of the UNITWIN/UNESCO chairs programme - both internal and external - at the end of the current Medium-Term Plan, to be submitted to the Executive Board".

In September 1999 the Director-General of UNESCO appointed us as external evaluators of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme. In October 1999 we undertook a first short mission to UNESCO HQ with the purpose of discussing the terms of reference for the external evaluation, i.e., its objectives and methodology of work and also with the purpose of establishing a working calendar. Our mission In October 1999 also included meetings with the Division of Higher Education (House-wide Coordinator for UNITWIN), the Director of the Central Evaluation Unit and focal points in the Sectors of Sciences, Social Sciences, Communication and Culture. We were provided with numerous documentation, including statistical data concerning the development of the UNITWIN Programme. The discussion held with the Division of Higher Education included such issues as: analysis of the terms of reference related to the external evaluation of UNITWIN, types of information

and data to be collected, methods of work, including questionnaires to be addressed by evaluators to the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks, to the National Commissions for UNESCO in those Member-States where the UNESCO Chairs and Networks are established and to the UNESCO staff involved with the Programme. We also established a working calendar for the years 1999 and 2000. It was agreed that we would prepare the evaluation report to be considered at the 160th session of the Executive Board (Autumn 2000).

In April and in May 2000 we addressed the above-mentioned questionnaires to some 600 recipients - different actors of the Programme. We received 223 replies - 169 from Chairs/Networks, 24 from National Commissions and 30 from UNESCO Staff: In June 2000 we undertook a second four-days mission to UNESCO HQ to collect additional information and to discuss with the Division of Higher Education the structure of the first draft report and its draft summary. On July 25, 2000 we submitted the Summary of the Preliminary Report. We are now submitting the final Report of the External Evaluation of UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme.

The Executive Board of UNESCO when considering at its 155th session (October 19-November 6, 1998) the preliminary proposals concerning the Draft Programme and Budget for 2000-2001 (3OCY5) decided, among other, that "efforts should also concentrate on reinforcing inter-university cooperation within and across regions, through the further development of the UNITWIN network, and on defining more clearly the concept of UNESCO Chairs with a view to ensuring a better geographic and subject balance and the sustainability of the UNESCO Chairs" (Dot: 15YDec.4.1, para.35).

The current Programme and Budget of UNESCO for years 2000-2001 (3OC/5 Approved. Provisional version) in paragraph 01232 (Results expected at the end of the biennium) mentions as first, "Existing UNITWIN networks and UNESCO Chairs assessed, consolidated and reinforced, paying due attention to their sustainability and to the need to review and define the criteria for attributing UNESCO Chair status".

II. EXTERNAL EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The above decisions taken by the governing bodies of the Organization were helpful in identifying the objectives of the external evaluation which has focused foremost on the last two biennia (1996-d999). These are:

to assess the current status of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme in quantitative and qualitative terms ("Where we are");

to provide a thorough assessment of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme with regard to the programme's relevance, efficiency and impact both in terms of strength and weaknesses;

to provide UNESCO with recommendations aiming at the fostering of the further development of UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme and more clear definition of its concept in order to ensure better geographical and subject balance as well as organizational and financial sustainability of the UNESCO Chairs and Networks.

Taking into account the above-stated objectives, we have carried out the evaluation in accordance with the methodology detailed as follows:

Three different questionnaires were drawn up, each one in English, French and Spanish, in order to obtain standardized information from: a) Chairs/Networks b) National Commissions c) UNESCO Staff to assess the current status of the Programme in quantitative and qualitative terms. These questionnaires were sent by UNESCO HQ to some 600 recipients;

a relational data base for standardized management and access on line was designed in order to load the completed questionnaires received in Montevideo and The Hague by the respective evaluator in accordance with his regional responsibility;

after performing the necessary quality controls on the data base contents, conclusions were drawn from the analytic review of summarized answers and cross-data relationships, as well as from the comments and observations included therein;

analyses were performed of the conclusions presented in the Internal Evaluation Report, of relevant decisions of the Executive Board and of the General Conference of UNESCO, and of the outcomes of a special session on the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme organized during the World Conference of Higher Education;

review of relevant documentation concerning individual projects was undertaken;

meetings and interviews with persons assuring co-ordination of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme within the Division of Higher Education (ED/HEP) were carried out;

meetings and interviews were scheduled with persons serving as Focal Points for UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme, the Central Programme

Evaluation Unit (BPEKEU) and/or any other persons or units at Headquarters of UNESCO relevant for the conduct of this evaluation.

III. CONCEPT

The UNITWIN/UNESCO CHAIRS Programme has been conceived, in an ambitious and direct manner and through international academic cooperation and solidarity, to foster a solution to one of the major inequities of modern society: access to scientific and technological knowledge by developing countries (especially those least developed) and the use of that knowledge to solve their own problems. "The developing countries in particular cannot hope to bridge the gap separating them from the industrially developed world - and thereby reduce their dependence on external technical and scientific assistance - unless they develop their own institutions and programmes of advanced studies and research and secure ready access to the latest advances in science and technology", correctly points out the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs

Programme presentation document.

The gap in higher education, science, technology and research between the industrialized and developing countries, has dramatically increased during the last decades (Human Development Report 1992. UNDP). Moreover, as indicated in the UNESCO World Education Report 1998, the main difference in the Educational Gross Rate between the more developed regions and the less developed ones is precisely in higher education.

Along the same lines, the World Declaration on Higher Education in the XXI Century, emanated from the World Conference organized by UNESCO in Paris in 1998, underlines in its Preamble I'... an increased awareness of its vital importance for socio-cultural and economic development, -and for building the future, for which the younger generations will need to be equipped with new skills, knowledge and ideals. " and emphasizes in Article q5: " The principle of solidarity and true partnership amongst higher education institutions worldwide is crucial for education and training in all fields that encourage an understanding of global issues, the role of democratic governance and skilled human resources in their resolution...The practice of multilingualism, faculty and student exchange programmes and institutional linkage to promote intellectual and scientific co-operation should be an integral part of all higher education systems. The principles of international co-operation based on solidarity, recognition and mutual support, true partnership that equitably serves the interests of the partners and the value of sharing knowledge and know-how across borders should govern relationships among higher education institutions in both developed and

developing countries and should benefit the least developed countries in particular. "

For the achievement of these ambitious objectives, the Programme has proposed to "strengthen international cooperation between higher education institutions and programmes through twinning and other networking arrangements and to foster academic solidarity in favour of developing countries".

Over the past ten years the Programme has conveyed the all-important worldwide policy message that higher education is crucial to sustained development and that the most effective way to support higher education in developing and transition countries is to strengthen institutional capacities in those countries, and in particular by fostering post-graduate education and research through direct interuniversity cooperation. In launching and sustaining the Programme over the years UNESCO has reiterated this message at a time that bi- and multilateral programmes for higher education support in developing countries suffered from budgetary cutbacks and shifts in attention to other fields of education.

We have considered appropriate to start this external evaluation recalling, on the one hand, the explicit objectives of the UNITWIN Programme and, on the other, the explicit commitment of UNESCO to foster the development of higher education, science and technology in the world and particularly in the least developed countries. This commitment of the Organization has the most extended political support from governments and the world's academic community, obtained as a result of debates and proposals set forth throughout the world ending in the November 1998 Paris World Conference.

After almost a decade of operation, one should ask to what extent the Programme's significant initial aims have been reached and what would be the recommendations to strengthen these achievements as well as correct eventual deviations.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY

This external evaluation has thought it appropriate to back up its work mainly with the opinions and perspectives stated by the persons directly involved in the UNITWIN Programme, that is, the UNESCO staff (from HQs as well as from the different Regional Offices) and the National Commissions, all of them involved in the Programme's management and monitoring; and, above all, by the Chairs and Networks staff directly responsible for their operation.

A) REPLY TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Upon analysis of the inquiry carried out by this external evaluation, it is important to point out that less than half of the Chairs/Networks addressed (169 out of 390 as of May 2000) replied to the corresponding questionnaire. Even though there may have been some information and communication difficulties, it is not possible to attribute to this cause the high number of omissions. The obvious conclusion is that a significant number of Chairs are either temporarily inactive or have definitely ceased operations. A Chair/Network was considered "active" if it replied to the questionnaire or if it had submitted the March 2000 Progress Report. In accordance with the previous criteria, the total number of "active" Chairs/Networks would be approximately 251, or 65% of those registered by May 2000.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

More than two hundred and fifty chairs, allocated in the different regions of the world, are presently active, working, most of them, on "important subjects for the specific national/regional context". Moreover, the vast majority of Chairholders coordinators, National Commissions and UNESCO Staff, evaluate the relevance, efficiency and impact of the Programme as highly positive.

According to this categorical verification of its success, the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme, should not only be continued but should also be extended and improved. To accomplish improvement of the Programme, its future development should be reoriented in accordance with the few recommendations included in this chapter.

Prior to reorientation of the Programme's future development, active chairs/networks should be precisely identified. The chairs/networks that have repeatedly failed to comply with the basic administrative obligations (Progress Report, evaluation questionnaires and related information) over the past two years, may be regarded as non-operational and an appropriate mechanism to decide on their continuation should be applied.

Status renewal

Existing and new chairs should be notified that after a period of three years, applications for the continuation of their UNESCO chair/network status will have to be filed again, and will be examined on the basis of past performance and present relevance of their new specific goals and proposals.

Field Offices and HQ Specialized Divisions should also cooperate in this evaluation.

Management

The development of the programme in terms of number of chairs established over the past few years has resulted in a programme that, taken as a whole, is both open-ended and difficult to manage in terms of administrative monitoring, quality control and budgetary implications. Parameters to assess the efficiency of the Programme do not exist and urgently need to be defined.

The overall management of the Programme should be maintained as a responsibility of UNESCO. The Director General, assisted by the appropriate Secretariat staff, should determine the parameters to assess the efficiency, impact and relevance of the Programme in accordance with the general criteria established by UNESCO Governing Organs.

The Headquarters offices need to centralize -in one unit endowed with enough administrative and financial support- information channels, fund-seeking, data base set-up and operation, as well as coordination with Field Offices.

The new Programme development strategy requires to reinforce the Division of Higher Education, as the focal point of UNITWIN, both in terms of professional staff as well as facilities.

Field Offices should be assigned the responsibility of direct coordination and cooperation with their area's chairs/networks. They should participate in the selection and preparation of projects, monitoring and operational support.

A small but experienced and professional "task force" should be recruited, in order to actively and aggressively carry out a fund-seeking world campaign.

UNESCO should be more deeply involved in quality control, performance and ascertaining updated objectives and contextual relevance of chairs/networks.

Attribution of UNESCO Chair Status

In order to achieve greater transparency in the selection of projects, a UNITWIN Selection Commission -made up with internationally well-known academics from each one of the Regions and appointed by the Executive Board- should advise the Division of Higher Education in the selection of projects submitted through UNESCO Field Offices along with their recommendations.

The specific criteria for attributing UNESCO Chair status, as well as their renewal, should be established by the Director General, assisted by the Selection Commission and the appropriate Secretariat staff, in accordance with the general criteria established by UNESCO Governing Organs and the Programme's objectives: to strengthen international cooperation between higher education institutions and programmes through twinning and other network arrangements and to foster academic solidarity in favour of the less developed countries.

New chairs and networks or the renewal of existing ones should be based on project and staff quality as well as regional/national problem relevant aims

Subject balance

Efforts should be made to promote and support projects in the scientific and technological field without disregarding human rights and peace consolidation thematic and with flexibility as global thinking about development makes progress

The review and adjustment of the attribution of UNESCO chair status should, from the point of view of the thematic involved, be relevant to the current and important problematic of the directly involved countries or regions.

Geographical balance

The focus should be directed to ensure that chairs objectives and activities be relevant to the basic aims of the Programme, rather than to obtain a balanced geographical coverage.

Developing and in transition countries should be heavily represented, being the original target group of the Programme.

Programme "ceiling"

An "overall ceiling" for the Programme should be established by UNESCO. This "overall ceiling" should be a flexible magnitude, determined by the number of UNESCO Chairs renewed plus the joint UNESCO-Institutes of Higher Education management capacity to provide not only start-up funding for new projects but also assure sustained financial support for their middle-term activities.

Funding

According to Chairholders, National Commissions and UNESCO Staff who responded to the external evaluation questionnaire, as well as internal UNESCO documentation made available, funding constitutes a mayor issue of concern to assure the consolidation of the UNIIWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme.

"UNESCO should engage itself in a more systematic search for extra-budgetary funding, in close cooperation with the institutions participating...An energetic funding campaign should be launched with adequate means and personnel..." (Chitoran Internal Evaluation Report).

Launching a fund-seeking world campaign to generate advocacy to the Programme could involve all member countries in the organization of a Donors Forum where private and public enterprises, NGOs, national and international governmental offices and other potential donors could participate.

Aside from UNESCO involvement in fund-seeking endeavors, the UNIIWN/UNESCO Chairs Programme should have a permanent allocation in UNESCO's budget for the biennium. This allocation would ensure maintenance of the Programme, cover-up financial gaps in projects while fund-raising becomes significant and also account for the administrative and financial reinforcement of UNESCO units in order to manage the Programme.

The avenues to fund raising should result from a combination of sources, types and country-international contribution, defined in each case according to the nature of the projects and the current contextual possibilities.

No funding source or donor may distort the original aims pursued. The strict compliance with the objectives of the Programme, should be guaranteed.

In all cases, significant amounts of extra funding should be channeled through UNESCO. Not only because the Programme is managed by UNESCO and this procedure confers greater transparency and credibility to donors, but also because UNESCO should retain a small percentage (to be determined) which can be used to finance Chairs and Networks in developing countries with less fund-raising possibilities as well as the additional UNESCO management costs.

Programme future development

The highly successful "catalyst" first-stage strategy for launching the Programme and for creating a substantial demand for participation, mainly based on UNESCO seed-money support, should give place to a different strategy in the following years in order to consolidate and obtain further achievements.

Where developing and in transition countries are concerned, the new strategy should provide, aside from start-up money, direct UNESCO involvement in fund-seeking and technical assistance and strong and continued support to develop North-South and South-South inter-university links.

Where developed countries are concerned, a one-off UNESCO Award should be granted based on their past performance and objectives accomplishment

Short-term goals should be redefined in coherence with the long-term objectives, yet with care as to the viability of adequate UNESCO steering of the Programme at all times; expanding while consolidating through redefined monitoring and evaluation processes, parameters to assess efficiency and appropriate funding support.

6.1.1 Discussion

Mr. Claude-Yves Charron introduced the debate. In his opinion, the initial duration of a chair should be of 3 years subject to renewal according to relevance and performance criteria.

As for UNITWIN networks, he went on to say that it is easy to understand that it takes more than 3 or 4 years to establish a network. He added that Unesco should not only assist during the initial phase, but also during the consolidation phase. In connection with the evaluation likely to be made of Orbicom by UNESCO in the near future, Mr. Charron expressed the view that the evaluation process should cost less than what is being attributed to Orbicom by UNESCO.

Helen Molnar, in her intervention under this topic, summarized her views as follows: "I think the Unitwin report is very interesting and makes a number of good recommendations re. quality versus geographic balance etc. The idea of promoting more chairs in developing countries or countries in transition is also valuable as long as they have access to on-going resources to enable to function effectively. Some on-going issues though for ORBICOM to need to be tackled now if the network is to grow effectively.

At the Montreal AGM some of the UNESCO chairs were very ambivalent about their role/connection with ORBICOM, and what this involves. The small number of Chairs contributing to this AGM would also suggest that this requires clarification. The initial premise, in Paris 1995, was that the Chairs would be the core of the network, and that they in turn would assist with involving/coordinating other ORBICOM member categories in their activities where feasible. Each Chair is potentially the focal point of a regional hub. In addition to the role of the UNITWIN chairs being strengthened as suggested in this report, there would also appear to be an urgent need to revisit the role of the chairs in relation to the ORBICOM network. The key for ORBICOM will be having active chairs who have the time, energy and interest in ORBICOM - and these are not necessarily the most senior academics. Two other issues relating to the UNITWIN report - one is the suggestion to set up an administrative unit at HQ with fund-raising capacity. It will be good for any fund-raising activities to be coordinated with fund-raising activities that ORBICOM is involved with, otherwise we could potentially be requesting funds from the similar donors/organisations for similar projects".

Responding to Helen Molnar, **Göran Sjöberg**, wrote that he agreed with her viewpoints about both broader and more active participation in Orbicom's AGMs and other discussions over the net. He added that formalities such as supporting candidates and voting on agenda and budgets are easy to handle. He mentioned that our main focus must be on the networking, exchange of views and comparisons between different regions of the world. In his view this is why Orbicom was created in 1995. Such discussions need, however - as Helen has pointed out - input well beforehand, so that the virtual meetings, AGM and others, get a flying start. Mr. Sjöberg further wrote; "There are other divides in this world than the Digital one: and one minor such divide is between Orbicom and the Chair holders. I felt the distance between the latter as a group (not individuals) and the Orbicom Board members in Mexico City, where we even had different dates for our meetings and thus lost a marvelous opportunity of merging knowledge and business practice on the one hand (associate members) with knowledge and academic research on the other hand". He proposed that this be discussed within the new Board and not least to with the UNESCO persons on the new Board.

Jamal Eddine Naji, intervened in French and brought some philosophy in the discussion. His full intervention is reproduced in French as the translation would not give credit to his thought. "Je trouve que l'intention d'encadrer par des critères précis et des objectifs de développement les chaires unesco est pertinente. Encore faut-il d'abord évaluer selon un protocole consensuel ce que ces chaires ont déjà engrangé, en tenant compte de la spécificité de chaque secteur de chaires. L'Unesco en a tellement initié et les expériences sont si disparates et d'inégales moissons. D'un autre côté, la situation internationale actuelle introduit de nouvelles données: sommes-nous à la veille d'un bouleversement du droit international et partant d'un bouleversement du paysage institutionnel international? Si changement il y a le sera-t-il dans le sens du renforcement des organisations internationales et d'une meilleure promotion de leurs mandats? Ou l'inverse? Qu'en sera-t-il spécifiquement d'organisations comme l'unesco qui ne gèrent pas directement la problématique de la paix mais participent indirectement sur des registres d'accumulations humaines à long terme, au plan de l'enseignement, de la culture et de la communication? Gardons-nous d'écarter une telle hypothèse de changement de contexte endogène et exogène pour l'unesco et continuer d'exprimer nos doléances sur la foi de ce qui était de mise jusqu'au 10 septembre... Cependant je conçois qu'on continue provisoirement de raisonner sur la base de notre expérience passée. et à ce titre je pose une question: dans sa réflexion d'évaluation sur les chaires est-ce que l'unesco s'est penché avec un oeil critique sur les commissions nationales unesco? Sur leur mandat par rapport aux chaires, par rapport aux objectifs et plans d'action de l'unesco..? L'inévitable dimension politique qui sous-tend ces commissions, à la faveur de la souveraineté des états membres, suffit-elle pour mettre ces commissions à l'abri de toute évaluation critique, à l'abri de toute supervision qui se soucierait de vérifier si un partenaire technique (ces commissions le sont) contribue adéquatement à la réalisation des objectifs globaux et sectoriels de l'organisation, en l'occurrence l'unesco..? Quand on regarde la situation des commissions nationales dans les pays du sud, comme dans certains du Nord, on a beaucoup de mal à être convaincu qu'elles jouent leur rôle davantage pour l'unesco et ses objectifs qu'elles ne le font au bénéfice de leurs membres... Ce relais, en principe politique (pourquoi?) entre l'unesco et les chaires, ne saurait avoir de légitimité dorénavant, au regard des enjeux de l'époque (enjeux de productivité, de créativité, de compétitivité intellectuelle, d'efficacité et de vitesse d'application) que s'il est perçu comme un relais technique et donc un instrument soumis à la supervision, à la régulation et à un certain type d'orientation par rapport aux objectifs globaux de «l'organisation mère», l'unesco. Les inégalités, les doublons, les déséquilibres entre les régions et les terrains laissés en jachère que nous remarquons sur la carte des chaires unesco trouvent, en partie, leur explication dans ce positionnement désuet des commissions nationales dans

le dispositif unesco de réseautage. J'aimerais tant que cette question des commissions nationales devienne matière à discussion à proposer aux états membres dans un sens ouvert à toutes les hypothèses, y compris celle qui consisterait à les revoir de fond en comble, voire les supprimer".

6.2 Overview of the Chairs' Local, Regional and International Activities

Note from the Secretariat.

Items 6.1 and 6.2 have been discussed to some extent during the Board meeting of June 2001. Orbicom members are invited to consult the discussion area of that meeting in order to generate ideas.

User name: board

Password: member

To have a detailed overview of each Chair's activities, we invite you to visit the web page dedicated to each chair within Orbicom's web site.

It is understood that a typical development process of a chair, once it is created, is to build its own network of associates and program of activities in its own milieu; and then, to expand at the regional and the international level, by joining in some of the joint initiatives of Orbicom.

6.2.1 Discussion.

This item generated no comment except for the following one emanating from **Mario Plenkovic**: "I find the work of local and regional activities extremely important as well as international activities and I believe that this work was very good and that results are here".

VII) Board of Directors

7.1 Motion of Appreciation for the 6 Out-going Board Members

Thank you Rainer, Carmen and other Orbicom Members leaving the Board of Directors

It is with great sorrow that Orbicom's statutes limiting members serving on its Board to two terms of office only are being applied thus depriving the Executive Committee of two of its most dedicated officers. President Rainer von Schilling, Editor/Publisher of the Mannheimer Morgen and Associate

Member of Orbicom, and Vice-president Carmen Rico de Sotelo, Director, International Relations, Catholic University of Uruguay, are leaving office. Both of them were associated with Orbicom from the very beginning and through their unfailing contributions over the years, they took great care of our network in its childhood. They exercised their enthusiastic leadership in order to bring Orbicom to maturity.

In addition to Carmen and Rainer, Board members Chin Saik Yoon, our very active Co-president of the Research and Publications' Committee, José Marques de Melo, Göran Sjöberg and Yassen Zassoursky are also leaving Orbicom's Board of Directors. All of them always have stood for the network and have worked hard to see it develop and become the respected organization it is now. They were great ambassadors of Orbicom in their Board duties and will certainly remain such as active Orbicom members. Thank you all!

Resolution AGM-01-5

It is proposed to mark Orbicom's appreciation of the good services that have been provided by the outgoing Board members over the years. This motion is reflected in the text above.

Moved by Claude-Yves Charron

Seconded by Pierre Giguère

Motion unanimously approved.

Twenty seven testimonial statements can be found under this item of the agenda. Orbicom members are invited to consult them on the AGM 2001 site.

7.2 Endorsement of the 6 New Board Members

A.) Board Configuration and Nomination Process.

1. Board of Directors' Configuration.

Orbicom's Board includes 15 members:

- * 6 Chair holders
- * 6 Associate members
- * 3 Ex-Officio members.

Within the Board, the Executive Committee includes 6 members:

- * the 3 Executive Officers;
- * the President

- * the Vice-President
- * the Treasurer

- * and the 3 Ex-Officio members

- * UNESCO's Director General (or the ADG /communications)
- * UQAM's Rector
- * Orbicom's Secretary General

2. Nomination Process.

Since Orbicom's creation, the nomination process is the following:

- * the 3 Ex-Officio members serve and rotate according to their function within UNESCO (DG or ADG) UQAM (Rector) and UQAM (Orbicom's Secretary General);
- * the 12 members serving on the Board of Directors (6 Chair holders and 6 Associate members) are nominated by the two founding and Ex-Officio members of Orbicom (UNESCO and UQAM), and their nomination is ratified by the Assembly General of Members
- * once their nomination is ratified, the Board members elect among themselves the 3 Executive Officers: the President, the Vice-President and the Treasurer.

According to an amendment adopted at the 1999 AGM, each incoming Board member serves a 2 year mandate renewable only once, and there is a rotation of 6 Board members each year, providing both continuity and change over each 2 year cycle.

B.) The 6 Out-Going Members of Board serving since 1995 (mandate ending Sept. 2001)

(A) for Associate and (C) or Chair holder

- * Rainer von Schilling (President) (A)
- * Carmen Rico de Sotelo (Vice-President) (A)
- * Yassen Zassoursky (C)
- * José Marques de Melo (C)
- * Goran Sjoeborg (A)
- * Chin Saik Yoon (A)

C.) The 6 On-Going Board Members continuing until Sept 2002

* **José Carreño Carlón (C)**

Head of the Communications Department, UNESCO Chair Holder
"Telecommunications and Society"
Universidad Iberoamericana
Mexico City, Mexico

* **Rainer Kuhlen (C)**

Chair for Information Science
Institute for Library Science
Humboldt University Berlin
Berlin, Germany

* **Jamal Eddine Naji (C)**

Titulaire chaire en communication
Université Mohammed V Souissi
Rabat, Morocco

* **Ellen A. Wartella (C)**

Dean & Walter Cronkite Regents Chair in Communication and Mrs. Mary
Gibbs Jones Centennial Chair in Communication
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, United States of America

* **Helen Molnar (A)**

Director
MC Media and Associates
Richmond, Australia

* **Yasuhiko Kawasumi (A)**

General Manager,
Corporate Planning Japan Telecom
Tokyo, Japan

D.) During its last virtual meeting held in June this year, the Ex-officio Board members made the decision to recommend to the AGM the appointment of 6 members who will serve on the Board until September 2003. They are :

* **Gabriel-Jaime Perez Montoya (C) (Colombia)**

Dean of Faculty Social Communication Javeriana University
Bogota, Colombia

* **Stefaan Verhulst (C)**
(United Kingdom)

Program Director
Center for Socio-Legal Studies
Wolfson College
University of Oxford
Oxford, United Kingdom

* **Subash Joshi (A)**
(India)

Group Director
Social Research Group Development & Educational Communication Unit
Ahmedabad, India

* **Alain Modoux (A)**
(Switzerland)

Assistant Director General, for Communication and Information
UNESCO
Paris, France

* **Pius Njawé (A)**
(Cameroon)

General Director
Groupe Multimédia Le Messenger
Douala, Cameroon

* **Elena Vartanova (A)**
(Russia)

Associate Professor
Moscow State University
Moscow, Russian Federation

Resolution AGM-01-6

During the Board meeting of June 2001 the two Ex-officio members representing UNESCO and UQAM have decided to recommend to the AGM the appointment of the following Orbicom's members whose mandates will end in September 2003.

Gabriel-Jaime Perez Montoya

Stefaan Verhulst

Subash Joshi

Alain Modoux

Pius Njawé

Elena Vartanova

Motion moved by the ex-officio members, endorsed unanimously by the AGM.

VIII Varia

Rainer Khulen while supporting the agenda suggested an additional topic: "As you probably know there will be an ITU World Summit on the information society (in coordination with other UN organizations such as UNESCO) in 2003. What does that mean to ORBICOM? Should we be involved? There is also another "regional" European pre-conference for this summit in June 2002 in Saarbruecken/Germany (working title "Information cultures and information interests". As I probably have mentioned earlier I would like to have ORBICOM members included in this pre-conference, at least the European ones, if not all others as well. (If of interest I mail additional information about this regional conference). The Secretariat has taken good note of these suggestions and will present them to the new Board.

Helen Molnar also intervened under this agenda item to request, under the discussion on Chairs and Unitwin, to add a line for discussion on evaluation of non-performing chairs, and mechanisms to change them since this has been a very frustrating issue for Australia and severely limited its potential involvement in the network activities.

Yasuhiko Kawasumi availed himself of the discussion under this item to inform the membership that he has contributed to the ITU NEWS magazine titled "connecting rural communities" subtitled Multimedia services for rural areas using wireless IP technologies. He mentioned that an electronic version will be available from the ITU's website. He informed that ITU BDT is working for the digital divide by promoting wireless IP technology for rural areas and that he is heading the Task Force in ITU. This news has been briefly reported in the last edition of ORBICOM newsletter. In a second message, Yasuhiko Kawasumi expressed the view that : "UN ICT Task Force will be of interest to us to participate for bridging digital divide".

Gabriel-Jaime Perez Montoya intervened to extend his greetings and regards, and thanked ORBICOM for the honor of being nominated as Board member candidate.

Patrick Salin volunteered to publish in the monthly Orbicom bulletin a short "rubrique" about major regulatory developments in relation to international terrestrial and space communications. He added : "I would write this monthly update on the basis of my on-going research work in that field. This

"rubrique" could be bilingual, French-English, sorry no Spanish, at least not by me".

Chin Saik Yoon and **Yves Théorêt** commented favourably on Patrick Salin's initiative. **Helen Molnar** added: "I think Patrick's idea is an excellent one. I know this has been a dreadful time following the awful events in America, and not the ideal time for people to take part in AGMs. However, lack of participation has been a problem for all on-line ORBICOM AGMs - and it would appear that the same small core of people regularly reply, and this time with a few new members which is great. I am not sure whether we need a quorum and what that would be, but it would be good to think about how to make these meetings more effective, and involve more members. I am wondering, for example, if the Secretariat asked Chairs to present reports of interest as agenda items - thus involving them more - and also for different parts of the network to submit short reports eg. on research (eg. an update from Chin on where the Dig Divide project is at and issues raised by this for ORBICOM research), publications, fund raising and to lead these discussions, whether we could achieve something that is more dynamic and which really informs the whole network".

Following Helen Molnar's comments, the Rector of UQAM and ex-officio member of Orbicom **Roch Denis** made this observation: " I agree with the observations of Dr Molnar. On the other hand, allow me to add if I may a small nuance: very few international organizations have developed the necessary skills, have appropriated these new virtual platforms as a mode of information flow and decision making. Somehow, Orbicom is undertaking some "pioneering work", in an experimental way, with VERY modest means and finances.

I have asked our Secretary General why this year's budget was so high compared to last year, with an extra \$30,000 in the travel category; he explained that it referred to the Mexico extended Executive Committee meeting. A single meeting like that is very expensive. A meeting for the whole AGM, with members in 60 countries, would be even more expensive. So dedicating funds more to research and teaching initiatives, and less to administrative meetings might not be a bad strategy. So we need to find "la voie du milieu" between the different modes of communications and information flows. And we need further experiments to help the Secretariat to support the Board and the membership meetings in a progressively virtual convivial mode".

Specifically referring to Patrick Salin's proposal, **Roch Denis** added that he warmly supports his suggestion of contributing a regular column. He took the opportunity to thank the in-coming board member from Ahmedabad, **Subhash Joshi**, for his regular column over the last 3 years.

He wrote: "We need more of these contributions, providing another type of information exchange, while all of us appropriate progressively these virtual platform. If Orbicom still retains the 7 fields of intervention that were elicited within the founding Convention, it might be relevant to try to establish one regular column in each of these fields, from chair holders and associate members".

In the Varia section, **Jamal Naji**, offered an interesting perspective on what has accomplished the cellular phone in very different settings, from the tragic events of 11 September to safety of prostitutes in Morocco and the opening of complete villages to the world. His text is reproduced below in the language it was positioned.

"Je partage le souci de recherche de M.Lafrance concernant l'usage que font les populations, au Nord comme au Sud au fait, des NTIC. Le téléphone cellulaire a eu sa part dans la tragédie de New York: des otages ont pu communiquer et décrire leurs bourreaux, des victimes ont pu rester on line au moment où elles périssaient, le cellulaire a joué le rôle d'une sonde aux mains des sauveteurs fouillant dans les décombres... C'était le portable au nord. Au sud, le portable a doublé tous les observateurs attirés lors des dernières législatives sénégalaises. Il a dissuadé les fraudeurs, une fois relié on line par les radios. Le portable permet aux prostituées au Maroc et ailleurs de déserrer les rues où elles étaient la proie de toutes sortes d'agressions pour, désormais, «rencontrer et recruter» leurs clients dans la sécurité et être évacuées quand elles le veulent là où elles le veulent par des taxis pour qui l'équipement en cellulaire a rendu leur travail plus rentable et plus sécuritaire. Ils préfèrent tourner avec une liste de clients et clientes identifiés, comme un réseau d'abonnés, que de se hasarder dans la circulation à la recherche de clients qui peuvent cacher de mauvaises surprises (agressions). Le portable, devenu une marchandise populaire, grâce à la concurrence, désenclave des villages entiers qui ont cessé de revendiquer à l'État les lourds équipements collectifs traditionnels pour le téléphone fixe. La «téléboutique», au Maroc, en Tunisie et ailleurs est un «centre d'affaires» à chaque coin de rue dans les quartiers populaires comme dans les villages: c'est un pool d'équipements d'où on peut téléphoner, envoyer un fax, faire une photocopie, faire un traitement de texte, acheter un cellulaire et sa carte d'appel, et, de plus en plus, pour moins de 2DUS l'heure naviguer sur le net! A une certaine échelle il faut certes se pencher sur un fossé numérique, mais il ne faut pas oublier d'examiner aussi, dans chaque contexte formant le tableau global du fossé numérique, les usages et ingénuités par lesquels des populations ont comblé le vide qui les entoure immédiatement. Plus intéressant à étudier: ce que ces usages de populations déficitaires (structurellement) engendrent comme bouleversements et mutations pour elles sur tous les plans".

The last intervention under the Varia item, came from **André Lafrance** informed that since the creation of Orbicom, he has volunteered to produce 17 TV series of 30 minutes each broadcasted in Canada. At the 1999 Montreal Conference, he also produced a few programs in connection to the event.

He proposed that "funds permitting" to make a series of TV programs, internationally, in cooperation with chairs in Moscow, Sao Paulo, South Africa and elsewhere. But to switch to this higher mode requires additional and complementary funding. If Orbicom members agree, André Lafrance could propose an estimate to the Board and discuss whether it is possible to produce such a series that should provide Orbicom with a higher profile.

Closure of the AGM

Dear Members of Orbicom,

This year's virtual meeting has taken place in unusual circumstances. The tragedy of the 11 September, and the attacks of the Nimda virus have had a disruption effect on our virtual AGM.

We were nonetheless able to achieve our goals in terms of legal requirement for an annual general meeting and fruitful discussions on the fate of Orbicom and its relationship with UNESCO, the state of our projects and initiatives, and the endorsement of new Board members who I warmly welcome on board!

In the next few days, a Board of Directors' meeting will be called to elect two new executive officers, the new Vice-president and my successor as President of Orbicom.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all of you who have taken the time and have made the effort to participate in this successful statutory meeting. I am certain that your suggestions for improvement will receive a sympathetic ear within the Board and by the Secretariat.

For your information, all the information flow related to our 2001 AGM (position papers and conference halls) will remain accessible to you for consultation, with the user name "agm" and password "member".

I therefore declare the 2001 Assembly General of Members of Orbicom closed.

Rainer von Schilling, President, 9 October 2001