

## Press release

### **The DSF places its chips on revolutionary technologies to reduce the digital divide and presents its new label**

Geneva, 20 March 2007

**According to the Global Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF), revolutionary technologies will make it possible to overcome the digital divide by 2015, the deadline set for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In this context a partnership has been established with StratXX. The DSF is now urging all public and private stakeholders and the civil society to join a “Digital Solidarity Pact” through the “1% digital solidarity” contribution. During a ceremony held in Geneva on 20 March 2007, following the 2<sup>nd</sup> DSF Foundation Board meeting, the new digital solidarity label, a symbol that represents an information society governed by principles of solidarity, was awarded to eight recipients.**

Reducing the digital divide is one of the Millennium Objectives and a priority of the international community. It is only through widespread access to new technologies, and consequently knowledge, that the other Millennium Goals – such as fighting hunger and poverty or improving education and health – will be achieved.

The DSF is positive that this new North-South divide can be reduced by the 2015 deadline. *“We’re no longer pursuing a utopian dream; the digital divide can be reduced”*, declares Guy-Olivier Segond, President of the DSF. This statement is based on three factors:

1. Firstly, new technologies have appeared in the market that make access to the Internet and IT tools financially viable;
2. Secondly, the private sector and public authorities share the same interest in tackling this challenge;
3. Finally, the “1% digital solidarity” financing mechanism, devised to raise funds to narrow the digital divide, is in the interest of all stakeholders.

*“To achieve that result,”* explains Alain Clerc, Executive Secretary of the DSF, *“we urge all the stakeholders concerned – national states, local authorities, civil society and businesses, especially those from the digital sector – to join forces with us, through a Digital Solidarity Pact.”*

A revolutionary development illustrates the new opportunities that are emerging, include “Wireless Broadband access”. It is the X-Station project from the Swiss company StratXX with design partners EPFL, ETHZ, University of Neuchâtel, Empa, University of York, DLR (German Space Agency) and RUAG Aerospace. X-Station is a geostationary platform (consisting of an airship and a Payload plane) which can deliver a broadband wireless network over an area of up to 1,000 km at a cost that is affordable for developing countries. X-Station covers all digital applications.

To raise awareness of the “Digital Solidarity Pact” in the public sphere, the DSF presents its new label. Built around evocative symbols (a globe and ‘hyperlink pointer’ hands), the label symbolises an equitable and inclusive information society. The digital solidarity label is awarded to any public or private institution that makes a commitment to narrowing the digital divide by adopting the “1% digital solidarity” principle (a voluntary contribution of 1% on IT-related transactions, deducted from the profit margin of the supplier). Today Guy-Olivier Segond, President of the DSF, awarded the digital solidarity label to seven companies and the City of Lausanne.

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Download the digital solidarity label, the press kit and view the list of awardees at [www.dsf-fsn.org](http://www.dsf-fsn.org). For more information, contact Denis Inkei, Communications Officer, by telephone on +41 79 643 7052 or by email at [denis.inkei@dsf-fsn.org](mailto:denis.inkei@dsf-fsn.org)

*The aim of the Global Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF), the only global organisation entirely dedicated to reducing the digital divide, is to enable all populations to access the knowledge society. Through access to ICTs and valuable content, the DSF works at the community level to foster the development of marginalised populations.*