MINISTER EDUARDO CAMPOS SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE SOLEMNITY OF THE III GENERAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IPAIT), AT THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, IN BRASÍLIA (DF), ON 07.06.05

In the name of president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and of the Minister of Science and Technology, I transmit to the members of the International Parliamentary Association for the Information Technology, as well as to all other participants from this Third General Meeting, the Brazilian government welcome.

The creation of IPAIT in 2002 – to which Brazil has became part in 2004 – is a product of the developing countries legislative powers growing sensibility to the great and extraordinary velocity in which the impact of new technologies succeeds, in particular those of information and of communication (ICT), about all the aspects of the human life.

The theme of the ICT started to have special resonance on the international plan from the second half of the 90's, stimulated by the market objectives from the most important disseminating centers of such technologies. However, the range of implications of these technologies, on the individual and social areas, made this theme be introduced on the United Nations agenda, in the scope of the Millennium Declaration, justifying after that the accomplishment of the world summit on Information Society, in Geneva, on December 2003.

Coincidently tomorrow begins, at Rio de Janeiro, a regional reunion from Latin America and the Caribbean, preparatory to the second phase of the summit, which will take place in next November in Tunis, Tunisia's capital.

The information and communication technologies put on a superlative level the challenge created by the great technological innovations, since they introduce radical qualitative changes on the economic, social and political life of the nations.

The Geneva Summit, once touching the question on its multiple dimensions and developments, guide itself by the strong idea that the ICT may not be

an end in itself, but it must be an instrument of the development strategies conceived because of the diverse national realities.

From the position adopted by the international community – and the governments from the inside of the national areas – facing this challenge will depend, in last analysis, on the realization of the extraordinary potential of the information an communication technologies to the public and to the mankind welfare. Or, in the other hand, that the concentration of the technological possession became a formidable obstacle to the liberation of a good part of Mankind from the ties of delay, misery and hunger.

In the center of the debates about the information society universalization is the undoubtedly question of defining a new juridical order to the cybernetic space. That is to say: the rules to the Internet, this extraordinary conquest from human engine which constitutes, at the beginning of this century, a new and not entirely explored space of unlimited economic, political, social and cultural interaction.

Coherent with the democracy and transparency principles that is defended at the international level, the Brazilian government implanted a new model of administration to be adopted in the Country by the internet management committee.

Its composition was amplified from 12 to 17 members, now it has a fourpart character, with representatives from the following social sectors: government, third sector, private sector (distributed between access and contents provider, telecommunications infrastructure suppliers and the industry of informatics, telecommunications and software goods) and the scientific and technological community. The choice of the representatives of the managing committee is done through direct election, characteristic pioneer and innovative in the whole world.

In the government of the president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, science, technology and innovation acquired a central role on the context of the public policy. One of the landmarks of this orientation is the Industrial, Technological and Foreign Commerce Policy, centered on the idea of innovation, which searches to increase the economic efficiency and the diffusion of the technologies with greater potential to accelerate the development process.

From this strategic option occurs the effort concentration in areas of growing and sustainable dynamism, among them the information technology, where the software and microelectronics industries emerge as strategic priorities.

The information technology, as it evolved in Brazil on the last 20 years, presents a landscape multifaceted. We can point out some international issues like

bank services, electronic government, in particular the collection service; the public health system and the electoral system, to mention just a few examples. The sector also has a good infrastructure on telecommunications and it has an expressive industrial base.

Brazil is the seventh software market in the world, including products and services, with an annual budget estimated on US 7 billions. The ICT sector universe has 11 thousand companies, from which approximately 5 thousand are software developers.

The sector still counts on the support of one of the biggest development science and technology systems of the Country, which production is increasing in numbers and quality. A computational net, maintained by the Ministries of Science and Technology and of Education, connects all States and the Federal District, giving the support to the activities of the higher education and research in Brazil, totalizing 369 institutions, with about 1 million users, from which 58 thousands are researchers, teachers and students associated to research groups.

A new generation from this net will increase substantially its capacity, operating initially on the axle Campinas (SP) – Rio de Janeiro (RJ), though its progressive expansion to other Country regions.

The Ministry of Science and Technology contributes decisively to the formation and consolidation of this great community of scientists and researchers, today around 50 thousand professionals. The activities of research and development in the field of information technologies has deserved special attention, existing various programs and funds to support them.

At least 260 institutions has searched this federal financial mechanisms in this area, and 163 institutions received the credentials of educational and research institutions to carry through joint programs with enterprises, involving more than 4,500 researchers and professionals of higher level.

Now, the biggest effort of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is, more and more, to transform research, technology and innovation into products, processes and services that can guarantee a better life quality, economic growth and that can favor social inclusion.

The Ministry of Science and Technology, through its Secretary of Social Inclusion, is participating actively on the conduction of government actions oriented to the digital inclusion, a lot of them made possible through the constant dialog between the MCT and the Legislative Power and through the sensibility of parliamentarians,

from all Parties, that effort themselves on the presentation of federal budget emendations.

Two projects can exemplify very well the use of the ICT as instruments of social inclusion. The first is the Connected PC, that has as a goal to endow 7 million of houses (that has an average income of three to ten minimum salaries) with computers, foreseen an 1 million unities production even on the first year. The machines, that will work exclusively with free software programs, must cost R$ 1.4 thousands at maximum.

The second project are the Brazil Houses. It is oriented to the implantation of communitarian telecenters, connected to the Internet, supported, among other infrastructures, by multimedia spaces. The project foreseen the implantation of one thousand Brazil Houses until the end of 2006.

We will not advance with this or other projects without the fundamental participation of the Legislative Power. This participation, in Brazil, is firm and constant, reflected on the decisions of the Deputies Chamber and the Senate, without them the programs and projects that have a base on the technological development to the social inclusion would be delayed.

To conclude, allow me to reinforce that the "new solidarity" affirmed by the Geneva Declaration, at the Summit on Information Society, finds plain resonance on the Brazilian government and, in particular, on the Ministry of Science and Technology.

The cooperation spirit, which the advances of science are imposing almost as a categorical imperative, is present at the Brazilian international relations, in particular with those countries that shares with it the fight for surpass the scourge of inequality and exclusion, through the development with social justice.

Thank you very much for everybody's attention.