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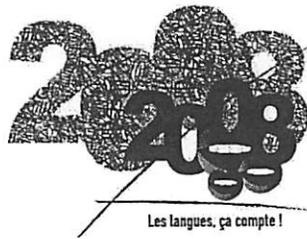


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## BAMAKO INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON MULTILINGUALISM

Bamako, Hotel Salam, January 19-21 2009

**ACTION PLAN OF THE BAMAKO COMMITMENT ON  
UNIVERSAL MULTILINGUALISM**



### 2008 – International Year of Languages

Bundesministerium für  
Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur

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In the spirit of the “Bamako Commitment on Universal Multilingualism”, and considering the need to define the measures required *for its implementation*, the following plan of action had been designed:

## **1. For international awareness-raising**

- Engage governments, international organisations, the private sector, and civil society (ACALAN, MAAYA, UNESCO), in favour of the World Summit on Multilingualism (WSM):
  - Include the Bamako commitment and plan of action from the Bamako Forum in the report on the International Year of Languages, to be presented on February 20 2009, on the occasion of International Mother Language Day.
  - The MAAYA Network and the Technical Secretariat for the follow-up of the Forum, with the support of the governments represented at the Forum, will run the process of setting up an international commission to draft a report to be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly, with a view to the WSM, in relation to the Global Agenda.
- Set up a mechanism for updating language policies throughout the world according to population changes over time.
- Involve geo-linguistic areas in an international partnership for the promotion of multilingualism.
- Educate all stakeholders on the rights of every individual to use the language or languages of their choice in public life.

## **2. For multilingual education**

- Carry out advocacy with the political authorities of all countries so that they make a commitment to set up clear language policies in favour of multilingualism and quality mother tongue-based multilingual education.
- Exhort the political authorities of all countries to implement language policies in favour of multilingual education based on teaching of the mother tongue.
- Where education is provided in a territorial language, encourage governments to implement mother tongue-based multilingual education, using the appropriate methodology, with the national language serving only as a stepping stone to the foreign language.

- Exhort governments to guarantee the necessary human, material, and financial resources for the training of trainers, and the production of teaching aids required for convivial multilingual education.
- Promote the exchange of experience, building on past experience, and the dissemination of best experience and practices in mother tongue-based multilingual education.
- Work for the improvement of the status of multilingualism and a commitment in favour of developing and using mother languages, with a view to setting up mother tongue-based multilingual education.

### **3. For a multilingual cyberspace**

- Draft a didactic manual in several languages to educate the uninformed public about issues relating to the presence of languages in cyberspace<sup>1</sup>.
- Create the legal and methodological conditions required to enable the use of local languages in public administration, especially within the municipal administration.
- Continent by continent, encourage the appropriate actors to carry out a census of the technical and human resources for all the languages spoken throughout the world.
- Promote the development of tools and technologies that foster the presence of languages that are currently absent from cyberspace and/or for which there are no adequate technological tools.
- Carry out awareness-raising campaigns for all language specialists, on the importance of digital integration of languages and their presence and use in cyberspace.
- Coordinate the production of language resources and development of the required technologies for all languages to be processed, between partner countries and international organisations.
- Coordinate the development of research projects and support to research, with a view to placing all languages on a comparable footing in terms of availability of language technologies, with particular emphasis on those languages where there is a lack of research in this area.
- To this end, increase the number of researchers trained on language technologies in higher education, for the different languages, and in different countries.
- Foster the creation of synergies among observers of multilingual Internet use, and encourage the ethical use of information in matters relating to language.

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<sup>1</sup> Along the lines of the book by Professor Marcel DIKI-KIDIRI, published by UNESCO, and entitled "Securing a Place for a Language in Cyberspace"

- Encourage the participation of speakers of all languages in decisions on protocols, norms, and all other technical instruments aimed at ensuring the integration of these languages in the digital world.
- Create training aids for the general public, to initiate people on content creation techniques.
- Create a multilingual site to centralise language tools that allow open and free access.
- Promote, through financing or voluntary participation, localisation of free and open code software to be used for navigating the Internet and for language functions.
- Implement the specific recommendations contained in article 53 of the Tunis Agenda of the WSIS:
  - *advance the process for the introduction of multilingualism in a number of areas including domain names, e-mail addresses and keyword look-up.*
  - *Implement programmes that allow for the presence of multilingual domain names and content on the Internet and the use of various software models in order to fight against the linguistic digital divide and to ensure the participation of all in the emerging new society.*

And, to this end, in particular:

- Carry out multidisciplinary research and experiments with the aim of drafting naming classes (RFC 2929) for cyberspace information networks, in order to construct a semantic web, thus enabling dialogue among languages and civilisations.
- Support the development of free software, in particular translation software, in order to enable universal and inclusive multilingualism in cyberspace.

**Bamako, January 21 2009**

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