

December 1995

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Russell Pipe

Global Information Infrastructure Commission

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Recommended Citation

Pipe, Russell, "Linking National Information Infrastructures into Global Networks" (1995). *PACIS 1995 Proceedings*. 1.
<http://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis1995/1>

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Linking National Information Infrastructures into Global Networks

Russell Pipe

Global Information Infrastructure Commission, Center for Strategic & International Studies
Washington DC, USA

Abstract

At the moment many countries in Asia and other parts of the world are implementing ambitious national information infrastructure programmes, we see the dawn of the era of **cyberspace**. Of course, government must design and implement policies to ensure that modern telecommunications facilities, computer and information services are build-up within their borders. The commitments of countries such as China, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Vietnam to create "information societies" soon after the turn of the century, is a testimony to true vision and understanding of new realities.

Yet the arrival of information societies has many implications about the way we presently consider national borders. Physical territory has become irrelevant to communications networks encircling the globe. National infrastructure are transparent links in an interlocking world-wide electronic grid.

To succeed, however, national initiatives must address several key issues which will strongly influence globalisation. They are:

- interconnectivity (harmonises standards that allow ease of linking disparate networks)
- security and confidentiality of messages transmitted by all types of users
- intellectual property by appropriate laws and practices
- modernization and liberalization of laws and regulations:
 - (i) on communications (telecommunications and broadcasting as well as cable, satellite, cellular, etc.)
 - (ii) information related services (as professional services and intracorporate networks), &
 - (iii) liability on service providers and users.

These challenges cannot be addressed fully and effectively by any one country - international collaboration both governmental and non-governmental, will be required. A far more interdependent world will require greater cooperation than now exists - between many government agencies and private sector organisations, and professional bodies.