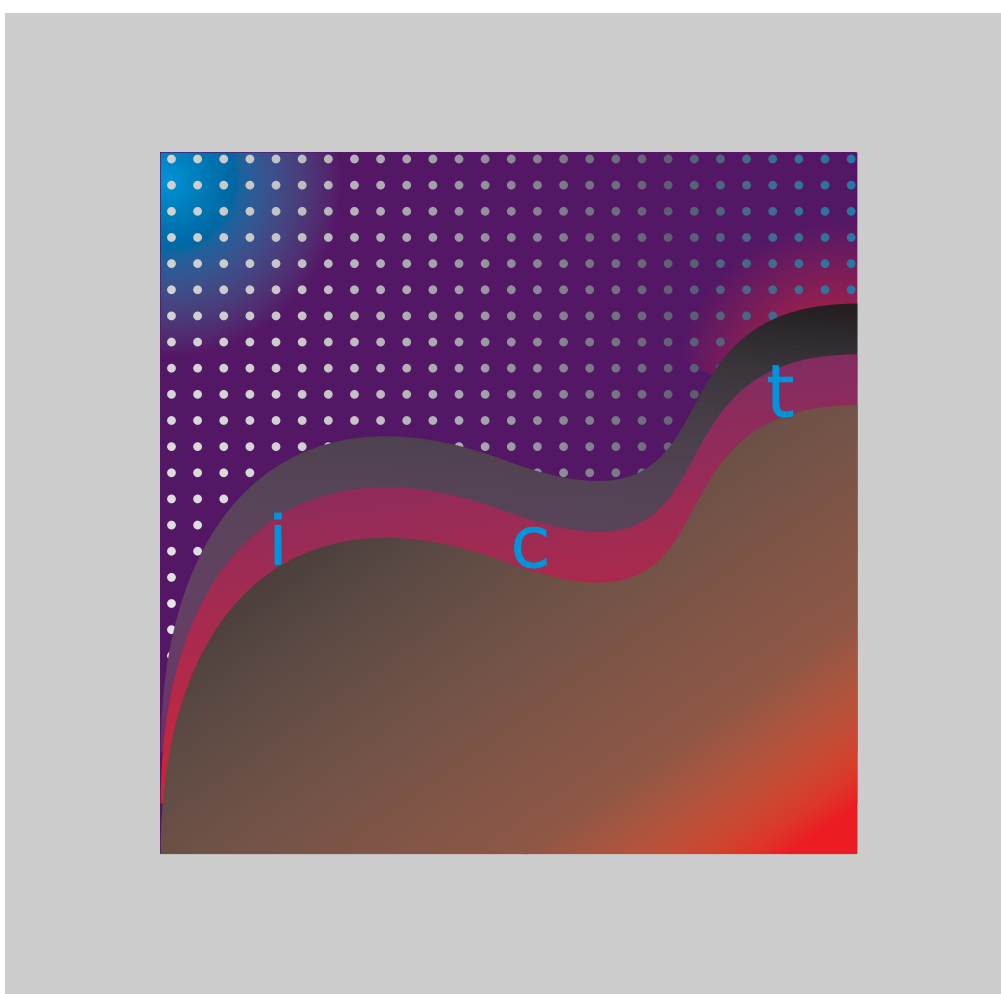


UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

E-COMMERCE AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2001

Prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat



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Foreword

The emergence of electronic commerce over the past decade has radically transformed the economic landscape. For developing countries, the digital revolution offers unprecedented opportunities for economic growth and development, as entrepreneurs from Bangalore to Guadalajara to Dakar will testify. On the other hand, countries that lag behind in technological innovations risk being bypassed by the competitive edge of those using the new technologies.

The *Electronic Commerce and Development Report 2001* reviews trends that developing countries need to be aware of as they try to position their economies to take advantage of ICT and the Internet. It provides basic facts and figures about electronic commerce and discusses the impact on sectors of particular relevance to developing countries. It also suggests, with concrete examples, ways in which developing countries can create the necessary enabling environment for e-commerce.

The ICT age has dawned, but not yet for all. This Report, which will serve as a useful reference for the United Nations Task Force on ICT, aims to help policy makers and practitioners in developing countries understand the nature of the network economy, and develop the infrastructure, capabilities, flexibility and openness with which they can reap its benefits. As a contribution to our collective efforts to unite the great promise of ICT with the needs of the poor, it merits the widest possible readership.



Kofi A. Annan

Secretary-General of the United Nations

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