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* The present report is a preliminary version of those sections of the report of the Economic and Social Council relating to the organizational and resumed organizational sessions for 2000 and the substantive session of 2000. The section relating to the resumed substantive session will be issued as an addendum to the present report. The entire report will be issued in final form as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/55/3/Rev.1)*.

The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Council at the organizational and resumed organizational sessions for 2000 and the substantive session of 2000 are being issued initially in documents E/2000/INF/2 and Add.1 and 2. Those adopted at the resumed substantive session will be issued in document E/2000/INF/2/Add.3. The resolutions and decisions will be issued in final form as *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 1 (E/2000/99)*.

Chapter III

High-level segment

Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy

1. The high-level segment was held from 5 to 7 July 2000 (11th to 16th meetings of the Council). An account of the proceedings is contained in the relevant summary records (E/2000/SR.11-16). In accordance with Council decision 1999/281 of 30 July 1999, the theme for the high-level segment for 2000 was "Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy" (agenda item 2). The Council had before it the following documents:

(a) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the high-level panel of experts on information and communication technology (A/55/75-E/2000/55);

(b) Letter dated 28 June 2000 from the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the joint communiqué of the Tenth Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Group of Fifteen, held in Cairo on 19 and 20 June 2000 (A/55/139-E/2000/93);

(c) Report of the Committee for Development Policy on its second session (E/2000/33);¹

(d) *World Economic and Social Survey, 2000* (E/2000/50/Rev.1);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General entitled "Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy" (E/2000/52);

(f) Contribution of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to the theme for the high-level segment (E/2000/70);

(g) Contribution of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) to the theme for the high-level segment (E/2000/71);

(h) Contribution of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) to the theme for the high-level segment (E/2000/72);

(i) Contribution of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to the theme for the high-level segment (E/2000/73);

(j) Contribution of the Economic and Social Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to the theme for the high-level segment (E/2000/74);

(k) Compilation of contributions of the United Nations system to the report of the Secretary-General to the high-level segment (E/2000/CRP.2).

2. At the 11th meeting, on 5 July, the President of the Council opened the session and made a statement.

3. The Deputy Secretary-General addressed the Council.

4. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States of America made a keynote address.

5. At the 11th and 12th meetings, on 5 July, the Council held a policy dialogue and discussion on important developments in the world economy and international economic cooperation with the heads of the multilateral financial and trade institutions of the United Nations system. Statements were made at the 11th meeting by the panellists, the President of the World Bank, the Director-General of WTO, the Deputy Managing Director of IMF, the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Executive Secretary of ECLAC (on behalf of ECE, ECA, ESCAP and ESCWA) and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). At the 12th meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs responded to queries raised. The panellists responded to the interventions made by the representatives of Belarus, Nigeria (on behalf of the Group of 77), the Russian Federation, Pakistan, Rwanda, Suriname and Poland. Also at the 12th meeting, the Council held a

panel discussion with the senior representatives of the regional development banks (Enrique Iglesias, President, Inter-American Development Bank; Mr. Bedoumra, Division Manager, Infrastructure and Industry North Region, African Development Bank; and Rajat Nag, Deputy Director, Programme Department (West), Asian Development Bank), and the representatives of Brazil and Bolivia made statements.

6. At the 13th meeting, on 6 July, the Council began the high-level ministerial segment on the theme: "Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy". Keynote addresses were made by Alpha Oumar Konare, President of Mali, and Gennady Novitsky, Deputy Prime Minister of Belarus.

7. Statements were made by the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

8. At the same meeting, statements were made by Ebitimi Banigo, Minister of Science and Technology of Nigeria (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China); Michel Duffour, Secretary of State to the Minister of Culture and Communication of France (on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia), the other associated countries (Cyprus, Malta and Turkey) and the European Free Trade Area countries that are members of the European Economic Area (Liechtenstein and Iceland)); Agum Gumelar, Minister of Communication of Indonesia; Anne Kristin Sydnæs, Minister of International Development of Norway; Olli-Pekka Heinonen, Minister for Transport and Communications of Finland; Fernando Gutiérrez, Minister for Science and Technology of Costa Rica; Iganicio Rodríguez Plana, Minister of Communications and Technology of Cuba; Ugo Intini, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy; Gunter Pleuger, Secretary of State and Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of

Germany; and Liz O'Donnell, Minister for Development Cooperation and Human Rights of Ireland. Also at the same meeting, keynote addresses were made by Jorma Ollila, President and Chief Executive Officer of Nokia, and Raul Rodrigues, Vice-President of Business Development, Compaq.

9. At the 14th meeting, on 6 July, statements were made by Walter Fust, Director-General of the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation; Rogelio Martínez, Chief Adviser to the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico; Larbi Ajjoul, Secretary of State in charge of Post and New Information Technologies of Morocco; Atta-ur-Rahman, Minister for Science and Technology of Pakistan; Trajko Slaveski, Minister for Development of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Martha Rodríguez, High-Level Manager for Connectivity of Colombia; Jerzy Kranz, Under-Secretary of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland; Mohammad Javad Zarif, Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran; Vasilii Takev, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria; Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); Yukio Satoh, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations; Wang Yingfan, Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations; Michael Powles, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations; Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations; Nguyen Thanh Chau, Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations; Guy-Olivier Segond, President of the State Council of the Canton of Geneva; and Ryokichi Hirono, Professor, Seikei University, Japan.

10. Statements were also made by the representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Telecommunication Union.

11. At the 15th meeting, on 7 July, keynote addresses were made by Jay Naidoo, Independent Consultant and former Minister for Communications of South Africa, and Bruce McConnell, President of McConnell International. At the same meeting, statements were made by Carlos Genatios, Minister for Science and Technology of Venezuela; Mpho M. Malie, Minister of Industry, Trade and Marketing of Lesotho; Carlos Orlando, Director-General for International Cooperation of Uruguay; Gerardo Zepeda Bermúdez,

National Minister/Commissioner for Science and Technology of Honduras; Dubravka Jurlina Alibegovic, Deputy Minister of Science and Technology of Croatia; Sergey Ordjonikidze, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; Anne Konati, Minister Delegate in charge of Economic Development, Ministry of Economy and Finance of Burkina Faso; Sun Joun-Yung, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations; Fawn Bin Abdullah Mated Shobokshi, Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations; Abdullah Baali, Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations; Vladimir Galuska, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the United Nations; and Just Faaland, Chairman of the Committee for Development Policy.

12. The representative of UNDP and the United Nations Development Fund for Women made statements. Keynote addresses were also made by Wolfagan Kemna, Chief Executive Officer, World Tel; John Gage, Chief Scientist, Sun Microsystems; and Vinton Cerf, Senior Vice-President and former President of the Internet Society, World Com.

13. At the 16th meeting, on 7 July, statements were made by Hidipo Hamutenya, Minister of Trade and Industry of Namibia; Roberto Jordán-Pando, Permanent Representative of Bolivia to the United Nations; Gelson Fonseca Jr., Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations; David Stuart, Deputy Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations; Carol Markham, Deputy Director of the United Nations and Commonwealth Division of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Ottawa) of Canada; Kamalesh Sharma, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations; Joseph Mutaboba, Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations; André Mwamba Kapanga, Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations; Guillermo A. Meléndez-Barahona, Deputy Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations; Felix Mbayu, Chargé d'affaires of the Cameroon; and Subhas Chandra Mungra, Permanent Representative of Suriname to the United Nations (on behalf of the small island developing States).

14. The representatives of the International Chamber of Commerce, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Volunteers, the

International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the International Civil Aviation Organization made statements.

15. The Vice-Mayor of Shanghai Municipal People's government of China made a statement.

16. Statements were made by the representatives of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in consultative relationship with the United Nations (CONGO), Population Communication-International, World Information Transfer and Women Action 2000 (on behalf of the Association tunisie 21).

Action taken by the Council

17. At the 16th meeting, on 7 July, the Council adopted the draft ministerial declaration submitted by the President of the Council (E/2000/L.9). After its adoption, statements were made by the representatives of the United States, Nigeria (on behalf of the Group of 77) and France (on behalf of the European Union). The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs made a statement. The text of the declaration read as follows:

Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment submitted by the President of the Council

Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy

"1. We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations participating in the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2000 of the Economic and Social Council, held from 5 to 7 July 2000, having considered the theme "Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy", have adopted the following declaration.

"2. We recognize a wide consensus that information and communication technologies (ICT) are central to the creation of the emerging global knowledge-based economy and can play an important role in accelerating growth, in

promoting sustainable development and eradicating poverty in developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition and in facilitating their effective integration into the global economy. We note with appreciation the emphasis placed on ICT in the Secretary-General's reports to the forthcoming Millennium Summit and the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council. This consensus is reflected most recently in the declaration of the South Summit held in Havana. We note the priority being accorded to this subject in the preparations for the G-8 Summit to be held in Okinawa, Japan.

"3. We appreciate the efforts deployed by all countries, including at the regional level, in preparing for the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2000 of the Economic and Social Council, in particular the organization of the African Development Forum 1999: The challenge to Africa of globalization and the information age, held in October 1999, the Latin American and Caribbean Seminar on Information Technology and Development, held in Florianopolis, Brazil, in June 2000, and the Regional Round Table on Information Technology and Development for the Asia and Pacific Region, held in New Delhi, India in June 2000. We take note of the Florianopolis Declaration and of the recommendations of the Regional Round Table.

"4. The ICT revolution opens vast new opportunities for economic growth and social development but also poses challenges and risks. Along with important economic and social benefits, it can lead to further widening disparities between and within countries. While considering the impact of ICT on the creation of a global knowledge-based economy, we highlight that the majority of the world population still lives in poverty and remains untouched by the ICT revolution. The emerging new economy, characterized by a rapidly increasing reliance of value creation on information and knowledge, still remains concentrated in the developed countries. Unless access to and use of ICT is broadened, the majority of people particularly in the developing countries will not enjoy the benefits of the new knowledge-based economy.

"5. We are deeply concerned that, at present, ICT's huge potential for advancing development, in particular of the developing countries, has not been fully captured. This reality has given rise to manifestations of the "digital divide". In this regard, urgent and concerted actions at the national, regional and international levels are imperative for bridging the digital divide and building digital opportunities and putting ICT firmly in the service of development for all. In this regard, we call on all members of the international community to work cooperatively to bridge the digital divide and to foster "digital opportunity". In this context, we recognize the need to address the major impediments to the participation of the majority of the people in the developing countries in the revolution of ICT, such as lack of infrastructure, education, capacity-building, investment and connectivity.

"6. ICT provides unique opportunities for economic growth and human development. It can shape and enhance a wide range of development applications — from electronic commerce to access to financial markets; from generating employment to providing opportunities for investment to entrepreneurs, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises; from improved agricultural and manufacturing productivity to the empowerment of all sections of society; from long-distance education to tele-medicine, from environmental management and monitoring to prevention and management of disasters. The potential to help foster sustainable development, empower people, including women and youth, build capacities and skills, assist small- and medium-sized enterprises, reduce poverty, and reinforce popular participation and informed decision-making at all levels is enormous. The promotion of ICT should not be a substitute for the efforts to ensure the development and modernization of basic sectors of the economy but should complement and enhance these efforts.

"7. Access to information and knowledge-sharing is largely determined by education, capabilities, including resources, transparent societies, capacity to generate and utilize knowledge, connectivity and the availability of diverse content and applications, and the policy and legal/regulatory framework. These areas

require urgent action at the national and international levels to improve the capacity of all countries, particularly the developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to participate in the knowledge-based economy in order to promote their economic and social development.

"8. Efforts to achieve universal connectivity, particularly at the lower income levels, in all countries and especially in developing countries, will require innovative approaches and partnerships, including group and community connectivity and private-sector investment. In this regard, the establishment of integrated multipurpose and multimedia community information centres will be important.

"9. In addition to establishing connectivity, capacity (human as well as institutional) is critical in sustaining access and ensuring that its benefits are captured by society. Investment in education, including basic and digital literacy, remains the fundamental way of developing human capacity and should be at the heart of any national, regional and international information technology strategy.

"10. Besides connectivity and human and institutional capacities, the availability of diverse content can encourage access. The development of local content on the Internet and the ability of people to freely access it will help foster a culturally and linguistically diverse cyberspace and encourage broad and sustainable use of the Internet. Local content can also facilitate entrance to the knowledge-based economy for individuals and firms in developing countries and also as a means to expand their participation in the new networked economy.

"11. The ability to use ICT could contribute to the improvement of the capabilities of firms, including small and medium-sized enterprises, especially in developing countries, to participate in international markets. Electronic commerce offers the possibility to increase opportunities to access world markets and to accelerate economic growth. Towards that end, concerted efforts are needed at the national, regional and international levels to create a conducive environment. In this context, special attention should be paid to those

countries that lack the capacity to effectively participate in electronic commerce.

"12. Market forces are fundamental but they alone will not suffice to put ICT in the service of development. Effective and meaningful collaborative efforts are required, involving Governments, multilateral development institutions, bilateral donors, the private sector, civil society and other relevant stakeholders, to enhance the developmental impact of ICT. Such efforts should include transfer of technology to developing countries on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, especially technology related to knowledge-based sectors, the mobilization of resources from all sources, public and private, at the national and international levels, and promoting capacity-building.

"13. We recognize that consistent and coherent actions at the national and local levels are essential for making ICT for development programmes effective and sustainable and appropriate to the particular national and local context. In this regard, best practices and lessons learned by countries and communities that have already implemented ICT programmes need to be drawn from and built upon. Developed countries should share with developing and transition economy countries their experience in promoting and establishing ICT sectors in their own economies so that mistakes are avoided and benefits maximized.

"14. National programmes for putting ICT in the service of development must be integrated into national development strategies, as defined and implemented on the basis of national priorities and on the principle of national ownership of such strategies. These programmes need to enunciate a national vision of challenges and approaches, establish national priorities and, as appropriate, a national focal point, and provide a conducive environment for the rapid diffusion, development and use of information technology. These national programmes could include, inter alia:

(a) Establishing a transparent and consistent legal and regulatory framework that foster ICT development including, as appropriate,

by removing impediments to growth in the ICT sector;

(b) Development of the basic infrastructure necessary for connectivity including for most remote areas;

(c) Application of ICT, wherever possible, in public institutions, such as schools, hospitals, libraries, government departments and agencies;

(d) Generation, development and enhancement of local content transmitted by ICT through, inter alia, the introduction of local language character sets;

(e) Promoting access to ICT for all by supporting the provision of public access points;

(f) Measures to bring down connectivity costs to make it affordable, including through market-based mechanisms and competition, as appropriate;

(g) Development of appropriate policies to promote investment in ICT sector;

(h) Making the necessary investment in human resource development and strengthening the institutions and networks for the production, acquisition, absorption and dissemination of knowledge products;

(i) Technical preparation of national manpower for securing national capacities to administrate information systems and to develop sustainable ICT projects;

(j) Promoting the digital enhancement of already established mass media;

(k) Developing strategies to link established technologies, such as radio and television, with new technologies, such as the Internet;

(l) Promotion of the creation of technological incubators linked to universities and centres for research.

"15. The United Nations system, in particular the Economic and Social Council, can play a key role in promoting synergies and coherence of all efforts directed to expand the development impact of ICT in the following ways:

(a) Supporting national actions aimed at harnessing the potential of ICT for development through providing assistance to developing

countries and countries with economies in transition aimed at fully and beneficially integrating them into the networked knowledge-based global economy, and strengthening their capacity in building infrastructure and generating content;

(b) Serving as a global forum to accelerate and promote universal access to knowledge and information, contribute, as appropriate, within their respective mandate to the development of norms and standards on a transparent, meaningful and participatory basis, taking into account in a balanced manner, development priorities and incentive for innovations and contribute to addressing such issues as cultural diversity, information ethics, privacy, security and cyber-crime;

(c) Contributing to a more systematic, ongoing identification, review and dissemination, especially at the regional level, including through networks of learning communities, of ICT expertise, distance learning programmes, information and reliable data on ICT, case studies, best practices and successful models, thus becoming an important 'knowledge bank' in this field;

(d) Emphasizing the importance of universal access to knowledge and information for promoting development;

(e) Providing global leadership in bridging the digital divide and promoting digital opportunity, and adopting, in order to enhance the capacity of the United Nations system to achieve these goals, a coherent system-wide ICT strategy that would ensure coordination and synergy among programmes and activities of individual organizations of the system and transform it into a knowledge-based system of organizations;

(f) Promoting the complementary roles of old and new media in bridging the 'digital divide', through, inter alia, the United Nations TV Forum;

(g) Bringing together the relevant actors from the public and private sectors to build partnership.

"16. All members of the international community should make a commitment, at the highest level to strive to bridge the digital divide and to bringing ICT to the service of development and

all the peoples of the world. Adequate resources need to be mobilized and committed for achieving this goal. Stronger partnerships are needed among the donor community and between donors and recipients in order to avoid wasteful duplication and to foster collaboration and openness including amongst multilateral development institutions.

"17. We call upon the international community, including the relevant international organizations, funds and programmes, and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, to urgently:

(a) Promote programmes to intensify cooperation, especially South-South cooperation, in ICT for development projects, including ideas and projects for enhancing direct connectivity among developing countries;

(b) Actively explore new, creative financing initiatives for ICT through appropriate arrangements involving all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector;

(c) Devise measures to substantially reduce the average cost of access to the Internet within developing countries;

(d) Promote measures to increase the number of computers and other Internet access devices in developing countries;

(e) Explore measures to facilitate access to ICT training;

(f) Explore and find ways to promote and facilitate investment in the research and development of technologies, products and services that would contribute to raising the literacy and skill levels in developing countries;

(g) Facilitate the transfer of information and communication technologies, in particular to developing countries, and support efforts towards capacity-building and production of content;

(h) Encourage research and development on technology and applications adapted to specific requirements in developing countries, including distance learning, community-based training, digital alphabetization, tele-medicine, interoperability of networks, and natural disaster prevention and mitigation;

(i) Explore and define ways and means to strengthen the use of ICT in small and medium-

sized enterprises in developing countries and countries with economies in transition as these enterprises constitute a major source of employment, and also to enhance their competitiveness in the emerging global economy.

"18. Partnerships, involving national Governments, bilateral and multilateral development actors, the private sectors, and other relevant stakeholders, should play a key role. In this context, we note the proposal contained in paragraph 11 of the report of the high-level panel of experts convened from 17 to 20 April 2000 that the United Nations create an ICT task force, and we request the Working Group on Informatics to make recommendations regarding that proposal. The Working Group may submit its recommendations to the Council for its consideration.

"19. The Economic and Social Council should review the mandates and activities of its subsidiary bodies dealing with ICT with a view to establishing modalities to provide the United Nations and Governments with comprehensive, practical and action-oriented advice on policies and programmes and on new developments in the field of ICT for development.

"20. We recommend the endorsement of the present declaration at the Millennium Assembly.

"21. We call upon Governments, the United Nations system, and the other members of the international community to urgently translate the present declaration into coherent and concerted actions. We request the Secretary-General to initiate, on an urgent and priority basis, all necessary steps to implement the present declaration, and to submit a progress report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2001."

Notes

¹ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 33.*