**Mr Chairman , Dignitaries on the Dais, Your Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Nepal has mixed results in achieving the WSIS targets. A review conducted in 2013 shows that Nepal has made excellent progress under 16 of the 49 target indicators proposed under the WSIS monitoring framework. A stakeholders’ meeting, recently conducted as part of the preparatory process, to this WSIS event, endorsed the findings and stressed on expediting concerted actions against the 33 indicators, in which the country is lagging behind.

Significant progress has been made in connecting both the rural and urban population to voice and data services, mainly through mobile phones. Household connectivity through fixed line telephone and Internet still remains a daunting challenge owing to difficult physical terrain of the country and limited affordability of the users. Connecting schools with ICTs is being undertaken as a priority. ICT in Education - Master Plan 2013-2017 ” has been prepared and rolled out to connect the schools.

It is being realized that the conventional and evolutionary model of public services agencies, having complimentary but stand alone ICT personnel to support their main activities is not adequate to produce the desired results. Public services and development outcomes can be made more efficient, effective and sustainable through a paradigm shift in recruitment process to ensure that the segmental service providers and their professionals carry an inherent capacity to deliver their respective services through the use of ICT

Nepal has made good progress in achieving the MDG targets, particularly in those related to health, education and poverty reduction. But, there is a sizeable population, mostly at the base of the income pyramid, who are still devoid of basic facilities. ICT will provide an expeditious medium to reach out to these people who are aspiring for a better quality of life.

Nepal’s view is that ICT’s power to accelerate human development and contribute to an improved quality of life will be fully realized only if it is intrinsically integrated with sustainable development agenda. The linkages of WSIS post 2015 actions with the post 2015 sustainable development agenda must therefore be clearer, more pronounced and visible. In accordance to ITU’s recommendation to extend broadband as a transformative and catalytic medium to realize the development objectives, Nepal will aggressively promote broad band access to all Nepalese within the next five years.

Many of the isolated initiatives in providing ICT services in the rural and remote areas have not been successful, not only due to the absence of capacity to technically maintain and financially sustain the provisioned facilities but also due to a lack of content tailored to the attraction and interest of the targeted clientele.

The issue of digital divide has to be explored at a deeper level and disadvantaged groups have to be explicitly stratified. Divide exists by socio-cultural setting, income levels, geography, gender, age, level of physical abilities and many other dimensions, Special interventions are required to bridge these divides. Benchmarks must be established., progress has to be tracked and results must be shared for better understanding of the issues and provide feedback for improved policies and actions.

While considerable achievements have been made since the first phase of WSIS in 2003, numerous challenges, inter alia affordability, content, infrastructure, human and institutional capacity, cyber security, adaptive policy and regulatory frameworks still remain.

ICTs expanded role in promoting good governance, in climate change resilience, in disaster preparedness and relief, and in catalyzing rural and urban growth and there sustainable management also need to be duly recognized in the post 2015 period.

**Thank you**