Draft WSIS+10 Statement on the Implementation of WSIS Outcomes

Since the two Summits, in 2003 and 2005, WSIS Stakeholders have made every effort in implementing a common vision of the Information Society.

Ten years ago, the representatives of the peoples of the world, assembled in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005 for the first and second phases of the World Summit on the Information Society adopted a common vision of the Information Society, identified its key principles and outlined the main challenges towards an Information Society for All based on shared Knowledge.

The decade since WSIS has seen very considerable progress towards the people-centred, inclusive and development oriented Information Society. The multi-stakeholder approach and implementation at the international level proved to be a considerable asset in taking forward the WSIS themes and Action Lines. Still, major challenges lay ahead for counteracting the wide disparities in development and enabling entire groups and countries to benefit from universal access to information and knowledge.

A) The main achievements in the area of the information society, in particular, in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines, in the past ten years

Enormous progress has been made since the two Summits towards building the people-centered, inclusive, development-oriented information society called for in the WSIS Declaration of Principles. The number of people around the world empowered by ICT has increased dramatically accelerating social and economic growth, sustainable development promoting freedom of expression, increasing accountability and transparency in the society, creating new business opportunities, facilitating trade and serving as a platform for cultural exchange amongst others. Further media has become increasingly accessible and interactive.

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The main achievement of the current implementation process of the WSIS is the interest itself of so many actors and institutions, national, regional and international, on the initiative of jointly shaping the information society and making them aware of the challenges that this process entails.

- *We note* that the WSIS Action lines have helped in **constituting a sound framework** for realizing the goal of a globally interconnected Information Society.

- *We recognize* that this implementation framework based on the WSIS Action Lines have facilitated in drawing attention to the role that **ICTs can play a crucial in realizing development goals** and have played a **key role in poverty reduction.**

- *We commend* the WSIS Process for reinforcing the strategic role of **multi-stakeholderism that has led to** strengthened **engagement of governments, private sector**, **civil society and international organizations** to work together in order to accomplish some of the objectives reflected in the Geneva Plan of Action.

- *We recognize* that the WSIS Action Lines have helped **raise awareness within the international community** about the challenges many communities continue to face to realize the benefits of the Information Society.

- *We acknowledge* the significant efforts made towards the development of a global **digital economy**, in particular through considerable **upgrading and strengthening of the legislative frameworks.**

- *We note* with satisfaction that in the area of **digital inclusion there is greater** awareness of the importance of promoting digital inclusion for youth, women, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities.

We further recognize that:

- countries have made **considerable progress in implementing the Action lines** in the form of tangible policies, projects and services in all of the society's vital sectors, as well as integration of the **WSIS Objectives within the national ICT policies.**

- WSIS Action Lines have led to deepening the **understanding and significance of ICT for development** by policy and decision makers.

- majority of developing countries now **feature ICTs as key enablers of their national visions and plans for social and economic development.**

- increase in **access to information and knowledge has widened and deepened in the last 10 years** with more opportunities available to exercise freedom of expression and engage in social networking than ever before.

- the emergence of new services, including **social networks and cloud computing**, in the last few years have increased the means to access and distribute information.

- the increasing awareness by policymakers of the importance of **public access to ICTs and tools** to combat the digital divide, and reiterate the value of libraries in this regard.

- the increased level of **mobile penetration and rise of broadband penetration.**

- increased **knowledge, acceptance and capacity building** in ICT Applications like E-Government, E-business, E-learning, E-health, E-employment, E-environment, E-agriculture and E-science by the user and the provider

- there is significant **awareness of the need for greater collaboration among stakeholders to address different aspects of cybersecurity** including legal measures, technical and procedural measures, organizational structures, capacity building and international cooperation.

- there is increased awareness in the strengthening for respect of **privacy and protection of personal data.**

- **ICT infrastructure development has been boasted** by several enablers such as new technologies including mobile, innovative policies including Universal Service Funds, planning and background data, and international standards.

- **new-generation of ICT policies and regulations** were adopted in the majority of countries designed to advance the deployment of broadband, encourage innovation and enable digital inclusion of all.

- in the area of e-Science the **WSIS process was instrumental in supporting research on emerging trends in e-Science** which provided a better understanding of these trends, its impact and future direction.

- there is a growing awareness of the **importance of cultural diversity** in all spheres of life, including the technology-related dimensions, and of the need for a more holistic and integrated approach to sustainable development.

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- there is an increasingly shared understanding that **ethical principles** for inclusive knowledge societies derive from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and comprise the right to freedom of expression, universal access to information, particularly that which is in the public domain, the right to education, the right to privacy and the right to participate in cultural life.

- improved access to **ICT in education** over the past 10 years enhanced user's capacities for individual development, for active participation in society and also supported the development of a skilled work for a global economy, giving also new opportunities for social mobility.

- there is greater recognition among policy makers that achieving digital inclusion goes beyond questions of network deployment and affordability. This includes ensuring accessible **ICTs are available and affordable for persons with disabilities and that youth, women and indigenous peoples r**eceive training on how to use ICTs for their social and economic empowerment.

- the crucial role of ICTs in **promoting youth and women's employment and entrepreneurship**.

- visibility has been raised on a global scale on the need to ensure that **women take up ICT careers**, so that women become creators of essential ICT tools.

B) The key identified challenges that would need to be addressed in the next 10 years

Several challenges have been identified in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines that still remain and would need to be addressed beyond 2015.

We recognize the following challenges:

- Still more than **half of the world's population is not connected to the Internet**, and ICT Infrastructure development needs to be continued, especially in rural and remote areas.
- To increase the **global, regional and national awareness** about the significance of WSIS and its direct relevance to national strategies and policies.
- Integrate **WSIS with the Post-2015 development agenda.**

- **Lack of appropriate policies** (including a lack of policy coherence across key knowledge society sectors such as ICT, Science and Innovation, and Education) and a growing skills gap between rich and poor within countries, between countries, and between regions of the world, is hindering economic and social development.
- Ensuring the **necessary legal, policy and regulatory frameworks** and approaches at the national levels to continue to promote investment in ICTs and infrastructure, foster entrepreneurship and innovation
- Ensuring continued extension of **access for all to ICTs,** particularly access to broadband, particularly in developing countries and among marginalised communities in all countries.
- Widening access to communications media, information and knowledge through improved telecoms and broadband internet infrastructural provision. This, together with the availability of cheap smart phones and mobile devises will lead to their mass diffusion and provide access to online content and the localisation of ICT applications, support e-commerce, e-health and e-agriculture.
- Promotion of **open education resource (OER)content and applications**
- Maintenance of the **openness and multi-stakeholder character of ICT and of internet** standards, development and governance, within a framework which also protects the internet against disruption by criminal or malign activity.
- Reaching consensus on how **to govern and regulate (or not) the internet** and internet-related activity.
- Ensuring that the proliferation of data, and efforts at open government and open data actually **meet the needs of ordinary people, and effectively contribute to transparency and accountability** rather than just flooding the internet with data for which there is no demand, and which does not make a different in people's lives.
- **Protection and reinforcement of human rights**, particularly privacy, freedom of expression and freedom of association, in a rapidly changing context, ensuring equal respect for and enforcement of human rights online and offline.
- **Environmental sustainability**, and harmful outcomes of the massive increases we will see in ICT production and consumption. This ranges from energy consumption, to sourcing of conflict minerals for the production cycle, to disposing to massive ICT waste, unless there are is a substantial shift in the approach to hardware design to be more sustainable (e.g. with devices that last longer and are upgradable) this challenge is likely to escalate.
- **Deployment of broadband networks** without increasing further gaps in access; and affordability of broadband devices and services ensuring the inclusion to broadband services especially for people with disabilities
- Building capacity at the national level with the ability of societies to adapt to unforeseen developments in the landscape.
- Urgent need to provide **modern training** in a wide range of digital and technology-based skills to meet existing employment opportunities but also to allow creative youth to participate in the development and growth of digitally-based industries including the cultural industries.
- The **build capacity of regulators** to not only to understand engineering and to carry out complex economic and legal analysis, but also to have the foresight to quickly recognize and adapt to shifting technology paradigms., regulators need
- Despite progress, **women still lack access, requisite skills, awareness** and are not well represented in decision-making positions and as producers in the ICT sector.

- Improved **engagement of youth** in the discussions related to ICTs for Development.
- For markets to truly flourish, **regulators need to develop new regulatory approaches** that are as innovative as the technologies as their subject.
- Developing **equitable and inclusive global frameworks for international cooperation** for building confidence and security in the use of ICTs.
- Strengthened **information security and privacy** to the citizens and creation of regional centers of coordination for incidents in computing security (CIRT).
- Lack of **on-going investment in digital inclusion** measures.
- Establishment of **Financing mechanism taking into account innovative approaches** to bring the benefits of ICT to all.
- Creation of a **clear link between the WSIS Process at the international level and institutional set up** at the national level.
- The development of **telemedicine at new levels,** with mobile devices, distance intervention and controls, which allows improving health care services in all the national territory.
- Timely adjustment of the National educational programmes to build ICT skills to respond to the specific market needs of the countries.
- Empowerment through innovative approaches for **distance education** from primary school education for the new generation.
- Broad recognition of **electronic transactions in order to benefit from e governance**
- Recognising the economic potential of **ICTs for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises** (SMEs), they should be assisted in increasing their competitiveness by streamlining administrative procedures, facilitating their access to capital and enhancing their capacity to participate in ICT-related projects.
- Utilization of ICTs in **justice administration, legal records and electoral mechanisms**.
- **Use of unused wireless capacities**, including satellite, in developed countries and in particular in developing countries, to provide access in remote areas, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and to improve low-cost connectivity in developing countries. Special concern should be given to the Least Developed Countries in their efforts in establishing telecommunication infrastructure.
- Creation of policies that **support and respect, preservation, promotion and enhancement of cultural and linguistic diversity and cultural heritage** within the Information Society,
- Identification of **best practices in ICT Applications** and provision of policy guidance on how they may be mainstreamed.
- **Universal access to information consumption and production**, in the framework of the respect of the moral and economic right of the authors.
- Continued **inequity of access in terms of human capacities and access to technologies** between countries, and between urban and rural communities within countries.
- The lack of production of **content in local languages** threatens the local cultures and life styles.
- Convergence of **mass media and social media** lead to situation in which the former regulatory standards for media are not effective anymore and new approach for regulation and self-regulation is needed.

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- **Protecting, respecting and promoting human rights** and recognition of their importance to realizing economic development.
- Establishing **environments that will facilitate economic and social development** on a foundation of human rights and the rule of law.
- Building models of **governance at national, regional, and international levels** that are open, transparent, and inclusive, and encourage multistakeholder participation in policy development and decision-making.
- Ensuring that the **Internet remains open, unconstrained by technology mandates and burdensome** regulation, and free of limitations on what, when, and how users can communicate, access information, and build community.
- Identification of **emerging technologies** which could be cost-effective.

C) Our vision for an information/ knowledge society ensuring the digital inclusion of youth, women, poor, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples for their social and economic empowerment

We envision:

- The **full participation of all citizens of the world** must be a priority for the information society. The full involvement of women, older people young people, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples, in the development of ideas and policies concerning the information society is essential if their concerns, needs and interests are to be fully incorporated in policies and outcomes of the information society.

- An information society that has the interests of the most poor and marginalised people of our societies at its heart is necessarily an information society that takes as its starting point a **rights-based approach** to development.

- That youth, women, the poor, indigenous people and persons with disabilities benefit from the opportunities provided by ICTs should remain a **cross-cutting priority for bridging the digital divide, reinforced by accountability.**

- The concept of **digital inclusion** goes beyond affordability and access to ICT networks, services and applications. It recognizes there are additional needs for different marginalized groups that include accessible ICTs for persons with disabilities, digital literacy training for women, youth and indigenous peoples, and the use of ICTs for social and economic empowerment, including, e.g. ICTs to promote youth employment and entrepreneurship.

- that in order to remove **gender inequalities in the knowledge society** and that the knowledge society actively empowers women in all aspects of their lives, it is necessary to

apply a gender lens in all aspects of the knowledge society, across sectors and from strategies and planning through implementation and investments. This includes on the demand and supply side, from awareness, literacy and meaningful engagement to affordable access, appropriate policy frameworks and relevant content. An important way of ensuring this is realized is though women's leadership and participation in decision-making.

- Provision of an **equal opportunity and universal design for all to make use of the benefits and opportunities** of new technologies.

- Better cooperation with **more funding and assistance for inclusive ICT initiatives** in developing countries.

- Establishing the **ICT infrastructure** and its easy access that can provide access to all the communities and make available simplified devices, including text-free interfaces and applications aimed at digital inclusion

- **Safe spaces**, both online and off, should be available to build confidence in vulnerable users.

- Reach of **broadband infrastructure and affordable services** to everyone, including through universal service and universal access.

- Bridging the digital divide to cross and reap the benefits of **ICT and broadband** in transforming the lives of communities particularly the youth, women, poor, and persons with disabilities.

- Relevant and useful **multilingual and local digital content** should be available to ensure that all members of the community are able to understand and participate in online life.

- In order to harness the opportunities provided by the ICT's to the women, poor and persons with disabilities there is an urgent need to **establish international technical standards and promotion of proper policy and regulation.**

- **Further development of national and regional policy, legal and regulatory initiatives and approaches** to pay specific attention to youth, women, poor, persons with disabilities and indigenous people when addressing the range of issues that impact their ability to benefit from the opportunities of ICTs and the information society.

- **All persons have a voice** in the development of policies that are important to them, as different marginalized and disadvantaged groups have different needs.

- **Incorporation of accessibility issues in the public procurement policies** and in international regulatory fora.

- Increased **involvement of all stakeholders** in leveraging the transformative potential of ICT and a better and more sustainable socio-economic development in order to reach an inclusive and people-centered Information Society.

- Deepening of the current **multistakeholder model** with particular emphasis on the benefits of the decentralized decision-making structure to ensure participation of youth, women, poor, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples.

- **Training and capacity building** in ICTs, including media and information literacy be available to help users develop their abilities to evaluate and interact with online information resources.

- An enhanced learning experience for those with a range of disabilities through **assistive technologies**.

- Increased **participation of youth in decision-making processes** as vital ingredient for improving democracy.

- Fostering policies and projects that ensure **para and per-Indigenous approaches** to ICTs, that is policies and projects designed with and by Indigenous Peoples themselves.

- following **inclusive approaches to e- science**, including a citizen science approach, where local communities, indigenous peoples, youth, women, the poor, people with disabilities etc. can participate fully in the scientific process.

- An enabling **environment** with adequate market and regulatory reforms would spur competition and improve access to ICTs by making them more affordable.

- **Affordable access to ICTs**, that not only has the potential to transform lives of citizens and communities, but also to help the marginalized persons with disabilities and indigenous people by empowering them and their communities.

- Availability of **affordable user devices**, including through subsidization programs.

- An information society where the most vulnerable, especially **children, feel secure and protected online.**

- That regulators and policy makers may consider **transforming existing universal service programmes into programmes for digital inclusion** that support broadband services for

all citizens while further facilitating the access to ICTs of women, girls, the disabled and indigenous people.

- **inclusion of people in rural and remote areas** where not only market forces, but investment from the government might be necessary.