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| **Council Working Group on WSIS&SDG 34th meeting – Geneva, 25 September 2019** |  |
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| **20 September 2019** |
| **English only** |
| At the request of the Chairman CWG-WSIS&SDG, this contribution from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues ([CWG-Internet-13/11](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-RCLINTPOL13-C-0011/en)) is submitted to the group. | |

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| **Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues Thirteenth meeting – Geneva, 19-20 September 2019** |  |
|  | **Document CWG-Internet-13/11** |
| **9 September 2019** |
| **English only** |
| Saudi Arabia (Kingdom of) | |
| UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON DIGITAL COOPERATION | |

Background

During C19, The United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Coordination presented the report of the United Nations High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation. He noted the particularly diverse composition of the High-level Panel, which had undertaken extensive, multi-stakeholder consultations, in which ITU had been a key partner. He drew attention to the four main themes addressed in the report, and the various recommendations it contained. Follow-up to the launch of the report would include consultations to gauge the views of Member States, other stakeholders and regional organizations. Convergences in views would then be identified and a roadmap on how to proceed produced. He hoped to work closely with ITU throughout that process.

Discussion

The High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation was convened by the UN Secretary-General to advance global multi-stakeholder dialogue on how we can work better together to realize the potential of digital technologies for advancing human well-being while mitigating the risks.

Its final report, “The Age of Digital Interdependence” makes 5 sets of recommendations:

* Build an inclusive digital economy and society
* Develop human and institutional capacity
* Protect human rights and human agency
* Promote digital trust, security and stability
* Foster global digital cooperation

The relevant recommendations to the work of CWG-Internet, which are the following:

**#1. Inclusive digital economy and society**

1A: We recommend that by 2030, every adult should have affordable access to digital networks, as well as digitally-enabled financial and health services, as a means to make a substantial contribution to achieving the SDGs. Provision of these services should guard against abuse by building on emerging principles and best practices, one example of which is providing the ability to opt in and opt out, and by encouraging informed public discourse.

1B: We recommend that a broad, multi-stakeholder alliance, involving the UN, create a platform for sharing digital public goods, engaging talent and pooling data sets, in a manner that respects privacy, in areas related to attaining the SDGs.

1C: We call on the private sector, civil society, national governments, multilateral banks and the UN to adopt specific policies to support full digital inclusion and digital equality for women and traditionally marginalised groups. International organisations such as the World Bank and the UN should strengthen research and promote action on barriers women and marginalised groups face to digital inclusion and digital equality.

1D: We believe that a set of metrics for digital inclusiveness should be urgently agreed, measured worldwide and detailed with sex disaggregated data in the annual reports of institutions such as the UN, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, other multilateral development banks and the OECD. From this, strategies and plans of action could be developed.

**#4. Trust, security and stability**

4: We recommend the development of a Global Commitment on Digital Trust and Security to shape a shared vision, identify attributes of digital stability, elucidate and strengthen the implementation of norms for responsible uses of technology, and propose priorities for action.

**#5. Global digital cooperation**

5A: We recommend that, as a matter of urgency, the UN Secretary General facilitate an agile and open consultation process to develop updated mechanisms for global digital cooperation, with the options discussed in Chapter 4 as a starting point. We suggest an initial goal of marking the UN's 75th anniversary in 2020 with a 'Global Commitment for Digital Cooperation' to enshrine shared values, principles, understandings and objectives for an improved global digital cooperation architecture. As part of this process, we understand that the UN Secretary-General may appoint a Technology Envoy.

5B: We support a multi-stakeholder 'systems' approach for cooperation and regulation that is adaptive, agile, inclusive and fit for purpose for the fast-changing digital age.

Proposal

The launch of the report marks the beginning of a global discussion on how to implement the proposed recommendations, and how to connect the dots between existing digital co-operation mechanisms. ITU as a UN specialized agency for ICT and as part of the UN system, should be active on this matter and should offer its valuable assistance in implementing the recommendations and assessing the three architecture models developed by the panel - the IGF Plus, Distributed Co-Governance Architecture, and a Digital Commons framework - which could fill the governance gaps.

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