|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Document CWG-WSIS&SDG-43/11** |
| **8 August 2025** |
| **English only** |
|  |  |
| Report by the Secretary-General |
| WSIS+20 HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2025 OUTCOMES |
| **Purpose**This document provides updates on the key highlights and outcomes of the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025.**Action required**The Council Working Group on WSIS and the SDGs is invited to **note** this document.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**References** [*CWG-WSIS&SDG website*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-wsis/Pages/default.aspx)*;* [*WSIS Forum website*](http://www.wsis.org/forum)*;* [*WSIS review*](http://www.wsis.org/review)*;* [*WSIS+20 review*](https://publicadministration.desa.un.org/wsis20)*; UNGA Resolutions* [*A/RES/70/125*](https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/70/125)*,* [*A/RES/70/1*](https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/70/1)*,* [*A/RES/77/150*](https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/77/150)*; UN ECOSOC Resolution* [*E/RES/2024/13*](https://docs.un.org/en/E/RES/2024/13) *and Report* [*E/2025/31–E/CN.16/2025/4*](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ecn162025d4_en.pdf)*; PP Resolutions* [*172 (Guadalajara, 2010)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-wsis/Documents/Resolution172-PP10.pdf) *and* [*140 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-140-E.pdf)*; Council Resolutions* [*1332 (Modified 2024)*](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0141/en) *and* [*1334 (Modified 2023)*](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0120/en)*;* [*WSIS+10 Statement on the Implementation of the WSIS Outcomes*](https://www.itu.int/net/wsis/implementation/2014/forum/inc/doc/outcome/362828V2E.pdf)*;* [*WSIS+10 Vision for WSIS beyond 2015*](https://www.itu.int/net/wsis/implementation/2014/forum/inc/doc/outcome/362828V2E.pdf#page=21)*;* [*Final WSIS Targets Review*](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/wsisreview2014/WSIS2014_review.pdf)*;* [*WSIS+10 Report – ITU’s Ten Year Contribution to the WSIS Implementation and Follow-up (2005-2014)*](https://www.itu.int/en/itu-wsis/Documents/WSIS%2B10Report.pdf)*;* [*ITU Secretary-General’s roadmap: World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+20: WSIS beyond 2025 – WSIS+20 Roadmap*](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-CL-C-0059/en)*.* |

The WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025, co-hosted by ITU and the Swiss Confederation and co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNDP, and UNCTAD, was held from 7 to 11 July 2025 at Palexpo, Geneva. Marking two decades since the inception of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the Event served as a multistakeholder platform for reflecting on the pressing need for global collaboration, digital inclusion, and leveraging technology for development. It also provided an opportunity for multistakeholder dialogue on 20 years of digital progress and for shaping a shared vision for the future. This year’s Event reaffirmed the WSIS architecture as the implementation platform for a shared digital future.

Together, the Event and the AI for Good Global Summit, which were held at the same time, welcomed over 11 000 participants from 169 countries onsite, with many more joining virtually. The gathering brought together a diverse mix of stakeholders, including 59 ministers and deputies, 56 regulators, more than 60 UN representatives, as well as CEOs, civil society leaders, youth, technical experts, and academics.

The Event laid the groundwork for the United Nations General Assembly's 20-year review of the WSIS, a multistakeholder platform addressing challenges in digital development driven by advancing technologies.

Participants at the Event reaffirmed the WSIS principles focused on building people-centered, inclusive, and development-oriented information and knowledge societies, and emphasized its continued relevance in shaping digital policy and implementation through multistakeholder collaboration.

The Event was chaired by **H.E. Mr Solly Malatsi**, Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies of South Africa. At the closing ceremony, H.E. Malatsi presented the [Chair’s Summary](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Files/outcomes/WSIS20HighLevelEvent2025-ChairsSummary.pdf), capturing the key messages and outcomes that emerged from the programme of the Event.

Key highlights

– Keynote Address by H.E. Mr. Alar Karis, President, Republic of Estonia, on 10 July 2025 as part of the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 agenda. [Watch the session here](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Agenda/Session/545).

– Close to 250 sessions took place across different formats: Leaders TalkX sessions, high-level dialogues, interactive sessions, knowledge cafés, exhibitions, and more.

– Statements from UN leaders reaffirmed their commitment to digital cooperation:

• The United Nations High-Level Leaders' Dialogue with the participation of: ITU, UNDRR, WTO, UNICC, UNITAR, UNJSPF, UNRISD, WMO, ILO, UNESCO, UNIDO, ICRC, UNHCR, FAO, OHCHR. [Watch the session here](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Agenda/Session/131).

• Addresses from Heads of UN organisations: OECD, OHCHR, WMO, UNITAR, World Bank. [Watch the videos here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7ql9Ae4QnE&list=PLh5wUIxznUUVn07ZgBcr27wrj0GiYp8Jr).

– As part of the WSIS Stocktaking process and the WSIS Prizes, the [WSIS Prizes 2025](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/stocktaking/Prizes/2025) celebrated outstanding contributions to digital development. The [full list of winners and champions is available here](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/stocktaking/Prizes/2025/Winners).

• 19 Winners recognized as outstanding projects that demonstrate excellence in implementing the WSIS Action Lines and advancing global goals through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

• 71 Champions honoured as runners-up.

• 270 Nominees celebrated.

– [13 Leaders TalkX sessions](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Agenda/Track/50#agenda) included [high-level participants](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/HighLevel) such as ministers, CEOs, and civil society leaders, facilitated by the High-Level Track Facilitators, providing focused dialogue on topics aligned with WSIS Action Lines.

– More than [50 exhibition spaces](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Exhibition) showcased innovative digital initiatives from UN agencies, WSIS partners, and other exhibitors highlighting digital solutions for sustainable development. The exhibition inauguration set an energetic tone for the week, with interactive photo booths and engaging displays inviting participants to explore and connect around key digital themes.

– The [United Nations Group on the Information Society (UNGIS)](https://www.ungis.org/) reaffirmed its role as an inter-agency mechanism for digital cooperation thereby contributing to improving policy coherence in the UN system:

• UNCTAD assumed the Chair for 2025–2026, taking over from UNESCO.

• Vice-Chairs: ITU, UNDP, UNESCO, and ESCWA (rotational).

 Topics discussed included UNGIS’ input to the WSIS+20 Elements Paper, its contribution at the High-Level Political Forum 2025, reflections for its 20th anniversary in 2026, and ideas for further impact.

– The Ministerial Roundtable, with 56 ministers and deputies, discussed:

• National digital priorities and implementation needs.

• Emerging digital trends including AI, 5G, and space technologies.

• The future of WSIS beyond 2025.

 The outcomes highlighted the enduring relevance of WSIS as a platform for inclusive digital development. Multistakeholder engagement, international solidarity and global collaboration remain crucial to bridge divides, harness emerging technologies, and build the digital future for all. Ministers reiterated the need to avoid duplication of the existing, UN-mandated, multistakeholder WSIS process as the basis for global digital cooperation. The summary is available in the *WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025: High-Level Outcomes and Executive Brief* [here](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Files/outcomes/draft/WSIS20HighLevelEvent2025-HLOutcomesAndExecutiveBrief.pdf).

– The Regulators Roundtable brought together over 50 regulators to exchange insights on three core topics: enabling innovation and mitigating risks in emerging technologies; fostering cross-sectoral collaboration and harmonization of regulatory approaches; and building capacity while future-proofing regulation. The discussion generated actionable recommendations to support agile, inclusive, and sustainable regulatory frameworks, contributing to the WSIS+20 Review —particularly Action Line C6— and informing future GSR Best Practice Guidelines. The summary is available in the *WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025: High-Level Outcomes and Executive Brief* [here](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Files/outcomes/draft/WSIS20HighLevelEvent2025-HLOutcomesAndExecutiveBrief.pdf).

– The WSIS Action Lines meetings were held, each organized by the respective WSIS Action Line facilitators. [See the meetings and their outcomes here](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Agenda/Track/13#agenda).

– The annual [WSIS Action Lines Facilitators Meeting](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Agenda/Session/484) took stock of 20 years of implementation, and contributed to shaping a shared vision and roadmap for the WSIS Action Lines. The annual WSIS Action Lines meetings are held every year at the WSIS Forum to provide information about the implementation activities and to prepare roadmaps in a multistakeholder setup.

– The Permanent Mission of India organized yoga and mindfulness sessions, continuing its tradition from previous years.

– The second edition of the ITU Network of Women (NoW) Ministers and Leaders in ICT breakfast welcomed over 100 participants to leverage and strengthen the work of women leaders in bridging the gender digital divide, especially in new and emerging technologies.

– Daily WSIS Knowledge Café sessions created interactive spaces for WSIS+20 consultations, addressing key critical themes (i) Youth building the digital future - WSIS+20 Review and Beyond 2025; (ii) Two Decades of WSIS: Advancing Digital Cooperation Through Action Lines; (iii) Strengthening Multistakeholderism; (iv) Sharing Stories on the Ground; and (v) Towards a Vision Beyond 2025. Participants engaged actively, highlighting the importance of the multistakeholder approach, the strengthening of the WSIS Forum and IGF and the need to sustain and build upon existing frameworks.

– The [WSIS Photo Contest 2025](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/PhotoContest) received 246 submissions worldwide, with 43 finalists selected and 10 winners awarded for their exceptional visual storytelling. A ceremony was held to recognise the winners.

– WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 featured different special tracks, including digital skills, media, WSIS+20, ICTs and accessibility, smart sustainable cities, emerging technologies, youth, and women and girls in digital.

– More than 300 youth participants engaged actively in the Youth special track, contributing through high-level dialogues, knowledge cafés, interactive sessions, and exhibitions. [See all the sessions here](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Home/Youth). There was a strong call for youth to continue being a key component of the WSIS Forum and for the Youth special track to continue.

– WSIS+20 Co-facilitators, H.E. Mr Ekitela Lokaale, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, and H.E. Ms Suela Janina, Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations, were present and actively engaged with participants. Consultations with the Co-Facilitators took place ahead of the WSIS+20 Overall Review by the UN General Assembly in December 2025, including:

• [WSIS+20 Overall Review multistakeholder consultation with co-facilitators](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Agenda/Session/455), 9 July 2025, 1645-1745 (UTC+02:00)

• [Charting the Path Forward for the WSIS+20 Review: A conversation with the WSIS+20 Co-Facilitators](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Agenda/Session/539), 11 July 2025, 1500-1530 (UTC+02:00).

 Summaries of these sessions are also available on the respective session pages.

– A High-Level Dialogue, jointly organized by ITU and IPU, focused on the role of parliaments in shaping our digital future, emphasizing their critical role in advancing digital governance and supporting WSIS Action Lines. The outcomes emphasized the importance of continued engagement with parliamentarians through the WSIS Forum, including a dedicated Parliamentarian Track. ITU and IPU will conduct a series of capacity-building sessions for parliamentarians on emerging and digital issues. Details of the session and its summary are available [here](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Agenda/Session/476).

Key figures

– Nearly 250 sessions took place throughout the week, including high-level dialogues, Leader TalkX sessions, interactive sessions, knowledge cafés, exhibitions, WSIS Prizes and other ceremonies, a ministerial roundtable, a regulator roundtable, WSIS+20 celebrations, social events, and more, featuring approximately 1 000 speakers.

– Over 11 000 participants from 169 countries walked through the event halls that week, with many more joining online from around the world for the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 and AI4G Global Summit.

– The Event brought together 59 ministers and deputies, 56 regulators, more than 60 delegates from UN entities, alongside CEOs, civil society leaders, youth, and representatives from international organizations, the technical community, and academia.

– Participation reflected a strong gender balance, with 44% women and 51% men.

– Over 900 participants actively used the imeetyouatWSIS networking app during the event. Through the app, more than 5 000 connections were made. The top 10 most active users were highlighted on the engagement leaderboard.

WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 Sponsors

The success of the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 was made possible through the commitment and generous support of various partners:

– WSIS Long-Standing Partner: United Arab Emirates

– Platinum Partner: Malaysia

– Gold Partners: Saudi Arabia, South Africa

– Silver Partner: Japan

– Contributing Partners: CAICT, EY, ICANN, IEEE, ISOC, TakingITGlobal

– Supporting Partners: Rwanda, United Kingdom, Wallonia-Brussels in Geneva, Afnic, IFIP, ICNM-World Summit Awards.

Further details about the highlights and outcomes of the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 are accessible at: <https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2025/Home/Outcomes>.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_