

Thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to present, very briefly, an update on the activities of the United Nations ICT Task Force in support of the WSIS process.

In its most recent meeting, the ICT Task Force reaffirmed its **strong commitment** to helping ensure the success of the Summit. Members agreed on actions that would contribute most tangibly to the common effort of implementing the Geneva decisions, and to preparations for the Tunis phase.

In this context, one major event that we already had was a Global **Forum** on Internet Governance, organized by the ICT Task Force in the framework of its 6<sup>th</sup> meeting in late March. The Forum attracted participation of almost 300 representatives of all stakeholders. One **third** of participants represented governments, 22 per cent were from civil society organizations and academia, and 18 per cent – from the private sector. Among the government participants, over **40 per cent** were from developing countries and countries with economy in transition.

The main features of the meeting were its **open, participatory and interactive** character, its focus on the **substance** of the issues rather than on institutional interests, and a broadly shared emphasis on finding **commonalities** in approaches and perspectives.

The results of the Forum were presented to the Secretary-General and will be forwarded to the WGIG as an input for its deliberations. A compilation of papers and documents submitted to the Forum will be published next month as a 400-page book.

As recommended by the Forum, the Task Force will prepare a comprehensive and up-to-date **matrix** of the current status of Internet governance: **who** does **what**, **how**, and what are the **gaps**. We hope to have this paper before the summer is over.

As a further contribution to the WGIG, the ICT Task Force is also organizing a series of **regional meetings** on Internet governance. The first one - for Asia - was held in May in Shanghai; meetings in Latin America and Africa will be held before the end of the year. The outcomes of all these events, again, will be channeled to the WGIG. **Thematic** meetings are also being planned as a contribution to preparations for Tunis.

The next meeting of the ICT Task Force, in early November, will have as the main theme “**Promoting enabling environment for digital development**”. Among the principal areas of focus will be **financing** for ICT for development, and **capacity building** in ICT policy making. I would like to underline the latter.

The ICT Task Force has been getting a strong message from developing countries that without a consistent and sustained assistance in strengthening indigenous ICT policy making capacity in developing countries and countries with economy in transition, best efforts to foster a people-centered, development-oriented Information Society will have rather marginal practical impact.

With this in mind, the ICT Task Force intends to help launch, within the next few months, a programme for capacity building in ICT policy making. This will be done in collaboration with many partners – both members and non-members of the Task Force. To fund this programme, we intend to use funds provided for this purpose by the **Development Account** of the United Nations, but also leverage these resources by forging dedicated public-private partnerships.

In sum, Mr. President, the ICT Task Force is committed to making a **tangible** contribution to the success of the WSIS process, and, in particular to helping keep **development** at the heart of the Summit.