Mr. Chairman, Mr. Secretary-General, and respected colleagues, on behalf of the United States of America, thank you for organizing this High Level Event.

We appreciate the opportunity to join you here as part of our joint preparation for the United Nations ten-year review of the implementation of outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

When the world gathered in Geneva and Tunis a decade ago, those there set forth principles and action lines for activity to encourage the development of a people centered information society. The amount of information people and things are generating and transmitting to each other has grown beyond what anyone could have imagined since then, but the goal of an inclusive, people centered information society remains the same.

Building on the work that was done at Tunis and applying a multistakeholder process for analysis and deliberation, the world again came together recently at NETmundial in Brazil. The event’s host and the majority of its participants made clear that fulfilling the goal of a people centered information society requires the full participation of all stakeholders. That event proved that governments alone need not control this conversation, and that in fact, we may have as much or more to learn than teach.

Ten years after Tunis, the evidence indicates that the community of industry, government, civil society, academia, and activists that live to expand access to communications has done an admirable job in implementing the WSIS vision. In particular, the private sector driven deployment of mobile cellular services and growing access to broadband Internet service are changing the world. And we know now that bridging the divides that WSIS sought to narrow for the creation, access, and use of information requires transparent public policies that ensure no single stakeholder or participant in the flow of information – neither public nor private - can act to strangle or deny access for others.

Much work remains to fulfill the original WSIS mission and fully execute on the action lines issued ten years ago. There are actually still some who refuse to acknowledge what we knew to be true then and remains true today – too many people on this planet lack the freedom to express themselves freely or are barred from achieving their full potential because of unfair discrimination. Before considering new tasks and missions, we should complete those we have already set for ourselves. Before making new promises to the world, we must fulfill those we have already made.

And we are well on our way in one particular area – infrastructure. According to the latest Millennium Development Goals Report, approximately 96% of the global population now has access to mobile cellular communications services. This remarkable achievement reflects the success of public/private cooperation, market and regulatory reforms, technological innovation, and a widespread commitment to fulfil the WSIS outcomes on the part of major stakeholders and national, regional and multilateral organizations – including the ITU.

But despite the impressive gains in access to infrastructure and diffusion of telecommunications/ICTs, too many people in developing countries still lack access and connectivity to broadband services. While in developed countries access has become ubiquitous and is increasingly considered an essential part of modern life, in many developing countries the cost of access to broadband remains too high and people’s ability to use that access to fulfill their potential remains too low.

We believe that this gap in access and capacity is the single most important issue before our community; it was addressed as such at the original WSIS meetings in 2003 and 2005, and we cannot afford to lose our focus on its overriding importance as we enter the WSIS+10 review. We also cannot afford to deny that the challenge is disproportionately real for women and disenfranchised communities. Refusing to acknowledge that reality is in itself and obstacle to overcoming it.

These issues have been at the heart of our work in the Multistakeholder Preparatory Process, where all stakeholders have had the opportunity to review and propose updates to how we move forward to execute the original WSIS vision.

As we have said in WSIS Review meetings, including the MPP meetings, we believe that WSIS+10 review should be about the implementation of the original WSIS outcomes.  When the United States talks about a Vision beyond 2015 we are talking about a new vision for the continued pursuit of the implementation of the existing WSIS action lines, not just some of them, but all of them.. That task is not yet complete. It is incumbent upon us as a matter of duty to complete it before we appropriate new tasks for ourselves.

This event is an important milestone on the path to the larger UN WSIS+10 review. We must work together, and be seen to work together, in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration to agree on a vision for the full implementation of the WSIS vision beyond 2015 and we must be able to trust that the vision is inclusive of the needs of people everywhere.

With your leadership, Mr. Chairman, and the efforts of all the attendees here and interested stakeholders everywhere, I am confident that we can. To you, Mr. Chairman, and to all our colleagues we extend our very best wishes for a successful event.