

**WSIS+10 HL Geneva**

**Policy Statement**

**Tuesday 10 June 2014**

**Delivered by Ambassador Steffen Kongstad, Permanent Representative of Norway**

*Check against delivery*

Mr Chair,

Let me start by thanking the ITU and the WSIS-community for organizing this event.

The WSIS-processes have been important for the development and acceptance of the *global-multi-stakeholder-internet-governance-approach*. The WSIS processes have also proven to yield good results in working towards the aim of bridging the digital divide and providing access to the Internet in the developing world. This is one of the many things that the WSIS-community should be proud of.

However, there is still work to be done. It is still a fact that access to the Internet has developed unevenly throughout the world, causing some countries to fall behind in terms of technological and economic development and growth. Our main goal has therefore not been reached yet.

Within the next 10 years the global community should aim at nothing less than bringing the whole world's population online and thus also increase the participation of stakeholders from developing countries in global policy forums on internet governance. We must continue our efforts and together further strengthen and improve a system based on human rights, democratic values, respect and cooperation, among all stakeholders. Norway, for our part, will do what we can to support such a development.

We need to ensure that the Internet continues to play an essential role in improving the quality of life for all citizens of the world and to be a catalyst for the development of commerce, education, general welfare and simplification of everyday life.

Mr Chair, when aiming to bridge the digital gap even further, we should be prepared to face some serious challenges in the coming years, both on a technical and on a political level. These challenges must be addressed in a proper and proportional way without compromising human rights norms, among them the right to privacy and the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, knowledge and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers. It is imperative that we continue to protect human rights online as we do offline.