**Policy Statement by Chairman BTRC for WSIS+10 (High Level Track)**

**Honorable chair,**

**Excellencies,**

**Delegates from Governments & different stake holders,**

**And guests,**

**Ladies & gentlemen,**

Telecommunication & ICT services in Bangladesh have been developed rapidly in terms of geographical coverage, variety of innovations and quality of service. This has been made possible by appropriate legislation and policies along with their successful implementation. Bangladesh being a country with 8th largest population having more than 160 million people is one of the most densely populated area in the world except few city states. Yet, Bangladesh has successfully brought the appropriate technology to the people within their affordability. Government of Bangladesh is committed to turn Bangladesh into a middle income country by the year of 2021 utilizing the power of telecom & ICT.

The national vision is to develop a networked and knowledge based society by the year 2021, which has been declared as Vision 2021 by the present Government. Vision 2021 calls for Bangladeshi socio-economic environment to be transformed from a low income economy to the first stages of a middle-income nation by the year 2021.

In order to develop a knowledge based society, we launched a number of initiatives to explore the benefits of utilizing ICTs for service delivery. The ICT Policy cuts across numerous thematic groups, including Education, Science and Technology, Infrastructural Development, Employment Generation, Private Sector Development, Agriculture, Health including Nutrition, and Small and Medium Enterprises. And all these will be achieved with the recognition that the state must play a key role in sustaining economic development.

**Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen,**

Bangladesh has an exclusive implementation strategy as far as Telecom & ICT sector is concerned. We have an ILDTS policy that allows stake holders at different strata to frame a sustainable network infrastructure to accommodate all types of Telecom & ICT expansions and innovations. The remotest corner of the country is connected to the modern technology and inventions.

We have a long track record of the development history. We could build a robust progress in the field of Agriculture, Education, Health, Business & Commerce, Banking and so on through optimum use of Telecom & ICT platform. However, we are still in the process of looking for continuous achievements in Telecom & ICT sector. And we are thriving for few of the key corners like E- Governance, E-Business, Mobile Financial Service, M-Health etc that are the pondered areas for us.

We have a series of achievements namely, adoption of 3G technology where 05 operators have been awarded 3G licenses, 282 entreprenures have been issued with ISP licenses for providing internet services, Introduced New Gatewasy Licenses, 37 ISPs have been issued with IPTSP licenses for promoting IP based voice communication, Build Nation wide Connectivity, reduced Bandwidth price significantly and so on. We have enormous Growth Rate of Voice & Internet penetration compared to previous years. We have 20~25% penetration in the Internet alone out of which almost 5% in the Broadband usage. We hope to increase it to 35% by 2015 and around 40% by the year 2021. We have more than 116 million mobile subscribers out of that 15% use smart phones for data connectivity.

Keeping in line with MDGs, development priorities of the Government are distilled keeping in view Technical Framework for Achieving Middle Income Country Status, under a digital Bangladesh. The regulator has articulated the Digital Bangladesh vision in certain terms, starting the process of leadership development to realize this vision. To mention, in pursuance of this policy Bangladesh’s ICT sector is growing at an estimated 20% per year. From the perspective of policy reform and development, the Access to Information (A2I) Programme identified over 53 e-citizen services which were termed as quick-win activities.

To mention, Telecom & ICT is a major contributing sector to national GDP which is over 6% consistently over past decade. In this sector, we have the highest FDI operating presently. As we have already earned “Self Sufficiency” on food, we can pronouncedly say that this is because of the impacts of the telecom & ICT services. We also have enormous achievement in regards to ICT services in the health, education, public services sector as well. Around 2.4 million employees are working day-night to nourish and develop this sector with escalated opportunities for more & more free lancers. These all are collectively contributing to the growth of our economy, hence, attributing in poverty alleviation in order to achieving MDGs and WSIS plan of action.

**Dear August Gathering,**

At this point, we need to leverage next generation technologies in regards to Telecom & ICT sector, offer affordable and robust Internet access to public. Thereby, utilizing these technologies to promote innovation and build social impact in order to achieve economic and social development. An enabled environment with Internet, Telecom including Mobile services more specifically ‘broadband’ in rural Bangladesh may play a vital role in this pathway. Therefore, we are consistently trying to identify future challenges, opportunities and develop collaboration among different stake holders in Telecom & ICT sector.

At last I hope that the WSIS 2014 forum will definitely help us all to interact & renew our commitments towards common desire & commitment to build a people-centred, inclusive & development oriented information society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life, premised on the purposes and of the Charter of the United Nations.

With this I would like to thank you once again for having a patience hearing.

Thank you. Thank you all.