

WSIS+10 High-Level Event

Open Consultation Process

Official Submission Form #1 on the Outcome Documents of the WSIS +10 High-Level Event 13-17 April 2014, Sharm el-Sheikh

Background: The WSIS+10 High-Level Event will be an extended version of the WSIS Forum to address the progress made in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes related to the WSIS Action Lines under mandates of the participating agencies, while providing a platform for multistakeholder coordination of the implementation of the WSIS outcomes, with involvement and participation of all WSIS action line facilitators, other UN agencies and all WSIS stakeholders.

The WSIS+10 High-Level Event will review the WSIS Outcomes (2003 and 2005) , in particular, related to the Action Lines with a view to developing proposals on a new vision beyond 2015, potentially also exploring new targets. The meeting will be organized taking into account decisions of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly.

This open and inclusive open consultation process will result in:

- Draft Outcome Documents for consideration by the WSIS+10 High-Level Event, by 1st March 2014:
 - Draft WSIS+10 Statement on Implementation of WSIS Outcomes
 - Draft WSIS+10 Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015 under mandates of the participating Agencies

(Please see the Official Submission Form #1)

- Multistakeholder guidance on the Thematic Aspects and Innovations on the Format of the WSIS +10 High-Level Event.

(Please see the Official Submission Form #2)

Please note that formal submission should be sent to the wsis-info@itu.int not later than **20 September 2013**.

A. Your Information

Title: Ms

First name: Marian **Last name:** Gordon

Organization: Department of State

Organization type: Government **Country:** United States of America

B. Formal Input on the WSIS+10 High-Level Event Outcome Documents

Referring to the background documents i.e. the WSIS +10 Visioning Challenge, the Final Statement and Final Recommendations from the WSIS+10 Review Event Towards Knowledge Societies for Peace and Sustainable Development, the Booklet WSIS Forum 2012 & 2013: Identifying Emerging Trends and a Vision Beyond 2015 and the WSIS Forum 2013 Outcome Document, all WSIS Stakeholders are kindly invited to provide formal submissions and inputs towards the Outcome Documents of the WSIS+10 High-Level Event.

1. Draft WSIS+10 Statement on Implementation of WSIS Outcomes

(Please note that the anticipated length of this Statement is two pages)

Since the two Summits, in 2003 and 2005, WSIS Stakeholders have made every effort in implementing a common vision of the Information Society.

Overall;

- a) What are the main achievements in the area of the information society, in particular, in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines, in the past ten years?

Enormous progress has been made since the two Summits towards building the people-centered, inclusive, development-oriented information society called for in the WSIS Declaration of Principles. With almost as many mobile phone subscriptions as people in the world, for the first time in human history people worldwide can communicate with one another. Mobile technology has helped the world to meet one of the WSIS goals - to ensure that by 2015 “more than half of the world’s inhabitation have access to ICTs within their reach” - and thus have effectively narrowed the digital divide with respect to voice communications. Equally significant is the gain in Internet use since the 2003 WSIS in Geneva. For example, subscription to fixed wired broadband service rose from 220 million in 2005 to 696 million in 2013, a gain of about 15% compound annual growth rate (CAGR). Similarly, the number of individuals using the Internet increased from 1.024 billion in 2005 to 2.749 billion in 2013, a CAGR of approximately 13%. Both developed and developing countries have experienced increased use of mobile broadband technologies and related applications in trade, government, health, environment, and education.

The emergence of new services, including social networks and cloud computing, in the last few years have increased the means to access and distribute information. Social networks have revolutionized the way content is created and consumed. These networks have made it possible for end users to create and distribute content locally that in many instances has significant social and political effects. Cloud computing has enabled end users to access services without investing in hardware, thus reducing the cost of access.

Much progress has been made with respect to enhanced multistakeholder cooperation in Internet governance since 2005. Enhanced cooperation is evolutionary and has been implemented on a broad, global scale. Much like the goals and objectives of the WSIS, enhanced cooperation is an on-going endeavor. Examples of progress include:

- The annual review and assessment by the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) of progress made in implementing the WSIS outcomes and Main Action Lines, including a five-year review submitted to ECOSOC and UNGA in 2010;
- The creation of eight annual meetings of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), which have contributed greatly to global, multi-stakeholder dialogue on Internet issues and have catalyzed the proliferation of national and regional IGFs around the world that bring the dialogue on these important issues to the local level.
- The report of the CSTD Working Group on Improvements to the IGF (A/67/65E/2012/48 and Corr. 1) provided to ECOSOC and UNGA in May 2012, and associated recommendations from the report being implemented with guidance from the IGF Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group;
- In 2009, the United States executed the Affirmation of Commitments with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). This agreement provides a model of enhanced cooperation by establishing mechanisms and timelines for the multi-stakeholder review of ICANN's performance of its core tasks. What had once been a unique role for the U.S. government has been expanded to include the participation of the international – and multi-stakeholder – community through review processes.
- In 2010, ICANN and UNESCO signed a memorandum of understanding to support the introduction of top-level Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) in order to offer new opportunities and benefits for Internet users around the world by allowing them to establish and use domains in their native languages and scripts. Currently there are 32 country code TLD IDNs in the root zone files, representing 22 countries and territories and 15 languages.

b) What key identified challenges would need to be addressed in the next 10 years?

While global growth has been enormous, the gains with respect to Internet and broadband have been uneven. Almost two thirds of the world's population, especially in developing and least developed countries, still lack access to the Internet and have yet to realize the benefits of broadband services and information and communication technologies (ICT). For many in developing countries, the lack of last mile coverage, infrastructure capable of supporting both voice and content, affordability and access to valuable education and skills are some of the impediments to broadband access.

c) What do the WSIS Stakeholders envision for an information/ knowledge society ensuring that the youth, women, poor, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples benefit from the enormous opportunities provided by the ICTs?

An enabling environment with adequate market and regulatory reforms would spur competition and improve access to ICTs by making them more affordable. Affordable access to ICTs not only has the potential to transform lives of citizens and communities, but also to help the marginalized persons with disabilities and indigenous people by empowering them and their communities. Enabling women's access to communications technologies and investing in women's access to employment, health, and education correlates with greater economic growth and more successful development outcomes. Access to education and skills development programs are also foundational elements for many of the world's people. Ensuring youth, women, the poor, indigenous people and persons with disabilities benefit from the opportunities provided by ICTs should remain a cross-cutting priority for bridging the digital divide. Cooperation between governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society is often necessary for progress.

2. Draft WSIS +10 Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015 under mandates of the participating agencies (Definition of new priorities and objectives for WSIS Action Lines beyond 2015)

Please note: Participating agency refers to the Agencies tasked by the WSIS Outcomes to lead facilitation of WSIS Action Lines; See Annex to the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society.

- a) In your opinion, what are the **key emerging trends** in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) landscape that should be considered in the implementation of WSIS Action Lines beyond 2015? **Please specify the Action Line you are providing an input for.**

Please note: You may wish to refer to the WSIS Forum 2012 & 2013 Booklet on Identifying Emerging Trends and a Vision Beyond 2015, available at www.wsis.org/review/mpp.

The United States believes that the guiding principles of the Geneva Declaration and associated Plan of Action are as relevant today as they were in 2003. Over the past decade, these broad principles and Plan of Action were able to accommodate rapid and constantly changing information and communication technologies and infrastructure. The transitions from fixed to mobile communications, from “narrow-band” to broadband, from stand-alone to converged networks, from public switched telephone networks to Internet Protocol (IP) based networks, and the emergence of cloud computing have profoundly changed the technology and infrastructure of ICTs. These developments, although not anticipated in the WSIS outcome documents, in many instances have helped to usher in a “people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented information society” sooner than many have expected. We believe any revisions to the action lines based on narrow objectives that favor certain technologies, services, and applications over others may thwart innovation and therefore slow progress. Considering that the WSIS goals remain relevant and that progress is an evolutionary process, the United States believes that all relevant stakeholders should focus on re-doubling their effort to meet the current WSIS objectives and goals in the future.

Though there has been great progress in achieving the WSIS objectives and goals and they remain relevant for all countries today, there nonetheless remains a significant gap in access to broadband technologies between developed and developing countries. It is critical that we work to close that gap, as broadband and ICTs are not only an important measure of progress in their own right, but they are also a critical facilitator for achieving development milestones, as recognized in the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals. The United States therefore believes that increasing access to and use of ICTs, including broadband and mobile services through continued and increasing practical implementation measures, should be the primary focus for WSIS for the next 10 years.

A focus going forward on advancement of ICTs is consistent with the sentiment reflected by Ministers at the WSIS Forum 2013, where the Ministerial Roundtable concluded that “[t]here is an urgent need to ensure that development angle of the WSIS remains at the central point of discussions paving the way for accelerated implementation of the WSIS objectives.” (Report on Main Outcomes by the Chairman of the Ministerial Roundtable at the WSIS Forum 2013.)

There are some impressive and important trends and accomplishments in the Action Lines that represent both progress and areas for further work. We provide here some examples of those efforts that are meant to be illustrative, though not exhaustive.

- C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
- C2. Information and communication infrastructure
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
- C3. Access to information and knowledge
 - Since the adoption of Tunis Agenda, the co-facilitators of action line C3, ITU and UNESCO, have had six "facilitating meetings." These meetings covered topics including open access, ICT and Gender, ICT and persons with disabilities, and open access to scientific information. Separately ITU has organized several workshops, symposia, and tutorials on a range of C3 topics including accessibility and contribution of international standards, telecommunications relay service for persons with disabilities, audio visual media accessibility, making Television accessible, and making mobile phone and services accessible.

While statistics alone do not tell the whole story, they do tell of the impressive gains the world has made in advancing access to information and knowledge over the last ten years. The world today has nearly 2.5 billion Internet users. Worldwide, mobile phone subscriptions exceeded 6 billion in early 2012, with three-quarters of those subscriptions in the developing world. There were 589 million fixed broadband subscriptions by the end of 2011 (most of which were located in the developed world), but nearly twice as many mobile broadband subscriptions at 1.09 billion. We believe this growth will continue by focusing on market-based solutions instead of global regulation, and by creating enabling environments of further liberalization and competition that encourages private sector investment.

We also believe that access to information and knowledge will flourish in environments that enable investment and innovation, which in turn ensure that international telecommunications networks remain open to the global exchange of information and ideas. In addition, governments, consumers, citizens, and society benefit significantly when all market players have the flexibility to innovate and develop new services in competitive markets, in response to consumer demand. Telecommunications markets that are structured in this way attract investment, fuel technological advancement, and are efficient in delivering services to consumers.

Policy choices made by the United States have mirrored the C3 Action Line. Our government has worked to promote digital literacy, and to encourage the expansion of broadband infrastructure and the construction of community computing centers. We are also working on making more of our spectrum available for mobile broadband.

- C4. Capacity building
 - The United States agrees with the primary intent of the principle that "every person should have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge in order to understand, participate actively, and benefit fully from, the Information Society and the knowledge economy." We support private-public initiatives as well as initiatives taken by national, regional, and international agencies to build physical and human capacity. This action line primarily offers opportunities to the United States to work cooperatively with developing countries and to build bridges across regional, cultural, and political divides.

Conventional wisdom is that capacity building for the Information Society primarily involves skills training. However, development of an effective regulatory framework, implementation of electronic commerce and e-government, and policies to maintain skills to keep up with changing technology and markets are also essential to capacity building. Moreover, access to

and efficient use of ICTs, dispute resolution, coordination of spectrum and avoidance of interference, fostering communication and consultation and ensuring sharing of data and information are also important topics to be included under the rubric of capacity building. This broader perspective on capacity building covers both institutional and individual capacity building. We therefore, believe that both individual and institutional capacity building are important to building the Information Society and to meeting the demand of constantly changing ICT technology and markets.

The United States, through aid programs and with input from expert agencies, participates in a wide range of human capacity building activities, including regional and international training, workshops, and distant learning opportunities. The United States also participates in ITU-sponsored regional "Connect the World Initiatives" to mobilize human, financial, and technical resources for the implementation of WSIS objectives.

- **C5. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs**
 - At the WSIS, governments and stakeholders recognized that building confidence in the security of ICTs is critical and that cooperation is needed to foster a global culture of cybersecurity. The United States acknowledge the vast amount of effort that many agencies, organizations including the ITU, countries, companies, and non-governmental organizations have undertaken to work on the security of ICTs and to help others understand the complexities of the technical and the policy aspects of cybersecurity.

We believe an open, reliable, and trusted Internet is valuable and sparks innovation. We also believe that the focus on the future of the Information Society should be on ways and means to assist and enable the developing world to bring the economic and social benefits of ICTs directly to local populations that are currently underserved or inadequately served. This might include such topics as achieving affordable broadband service, removing barriers to access, increasing local content, and building capacity in important areas such as improving cybersecurity and combating cybercrime.

We would like to note that in addition to the annual WSIS Review meetings, the ITU has held a number of meetings that focused specifically on the C5 Action Line involving other organizations. During annual WSIS Review sessions, the outcome reports consistently highlight increased international cooperation, importance of partnerships between various stakeholders, the need for creating an organization able to assist and support Governments and the international community on issues related to the protection of ICTs and the available instruments, policies and tools to avoid escalations of cyber incidents.

We would also like to note that building confidence and security in the use of ICTs is occurring in many venues dedicated to international cooperation, including Internet Governance Forum, UN Governmental Group of Experts, OSCE, ASEAN Regional Forum, Organization of American States, UNESCO's Global Cyber Ambassadors for Peace program, UNESCO publication "Freedom of Expression: Freedom of Connection" (2011), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) publication of "Guidelines for the Security of Information Systems and Networks: Towards a Culture of Security" (2002), Council of Europe "Budapest Convention on Cybercrime" (2001), International Organization for Standardization, Internet Engineering Task Force, Forum of Incident Response Security Teams, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) "Data Privacy Pathfinder to achieve accountable cross-border flow of personal information within the APEC region (2007) through a Cross-Border Privacy Rules (CBPR) system consistent with the 2004 APEC Privacy Framework.

- **C6. Enabling environment**

- [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **C7. ICT Applications:**
 - **E-government**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - **E-business**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - **E-learning**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - **E-health**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - **E-employment**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - **E-environment**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - **E-agriculture**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - **E-science**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content**
 - The United States strongly supports UNESCO's work on Action Line C8, particularly UNESCO's partnership with the International Cooperation of Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to promulgate additional country-code top level domain names.

When the first phase of the WSIS Summit took place in 2003, English was the predominant language for Internet content because most of the technologies that underpin the Internet were developed in the United States. Internet usage became more prevalent around the world starting in the mid-1990s. Content on the Internet today is available in every conceivable language. It is estimated today that English speakers represent only 27% of Internet users, a share that is continuing to fall as Internet use proliferates around the world.

Fostering rich multilingual content has been recognized as a priority for the implementation of WSIS. One means to achieve this objective is through organizations specialized in the area of languages working together and utilizing a multistakeholder approach. For this reason, the United States applauds UNESCO's work with the International Cooperation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).

- **C9. Media**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society**
 - Action Line C10 has been facilitated by UNESCO. Discussions in the action line have been primarily concerned with means of promoting universal values and principles for the Information Society and of preventing abuses of ICTs. UNESCO's own work in this area since WSIS has included the organization of a series of Info-Ethics Conferences in Africa, Latin America, Europe, and the Asia-Pacific region. These events have helped to establish criteria for assessing ways of enhancing discussion and decision-making at national and regional levels, and for measuring developments in the field of information ethics. UNESCO has also organized training workshops for government officials in Information Ethics and e-Government and believes that it is mainly through such activities and initiatives that the Action Line C10 objectives can be reached.

UNESCO's "Information for All" program has set up a working group to consider a possible code of ethics for the Information Society, and it has organized training workshops in

relevant issues for Government officials. In 2010, UNESCO sponsored an international conference on information ethics in Africa, which focused on research and on the future development of African information ethics curricula. Human rights dimensions of the Information Society, which are central to the questions raised within this action line, have been widely addressed by international non-governmental organizations such as the Association for Progressive Communications, and have been extensively discussed within the Internet Governance Forum (IGF). Child protection aspects of the Action Line C10 agenda have been particularly prominent in these discussions.

The U.S. supports an Internet that facilitates the exercise of freedoms of expression, association, and assembly - what we call Internet freedom. The U.S. is engaged in pro-active measures to combat intolerance without banning speech. Our strong constitutional protections for, and belief in, freedom of expression do not mean that we sit idly by as individuals and groups seek to spread toxic expressions of hatred. Rather, we deploy an array of policies to reach out to affected communities, provide conflict resolution services, and enhance dialogue. And we do not sit idly by when such hateful expression transforms into acts of discrimination or violence. Our civil rights and other laws deter and punish those who go beyond speaking and engage in acts of discrimination and violence. Such outreach and actions - as opposed to bans on offensive speech - are the types of measures that promote tolerance.

- **C11. International and regional cooperation**
 - Action line C11 states that "International cooperation among all stakeholders is vital in implementation" of the WSIS outcomes. UN stocktaking efforts point to numerous discreet projects that advance the stated goals of regional and international cooperation. The work of CSTD to address enhanced cooperation in a multi-stakeholder setting constitutes notable progress.

b) What are areas that have **not been adequately captured by the framework of the existing 11 WSIS Action Lines** and would need to be addressed beyond 2015? **Please specify the Action Line you are providing an input for.**

- **C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **C2. Information and communication infrastructure**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **C3. Access to information and knowledge**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **C4. Capacity building**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **C5. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **C6. Enabling environment**
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **C7. ICT Applications:**
 - E-government
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - E-business
 - [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - E-learning

- Click here to enter text.
- E-health
 - Click here to enter text.
- E-employment
 - Click here to enter text.
- E-environment
 - Click here to enter text.
- E-agriculture
 - Click here to enter text.
- E-science
 - Click here to enter text.
- C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
 - Click here to enter text.
- C9. Media
 - Click here to enter text.
- C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society
 - Click here to enter text.
- C11. International and regional cooperation
 - Click here to enter text.

c) In your opinion are there any priority areas that need to be addressed in the implementation of WSIS Beyond 2015.

The United States believes that increasing access to and use of ICTs, including broadband and mobile services through continued and increasing practical implementation measures, should be the primary focus for WSIS for the next 10 years.

3. Ensuring accountability of the WSIS Action Lines beyond 2015 (Targets and Indicators for an open and inclusive information/knowledge society for all beyond 2015)

Please note that information provided under this point will be relevant to the second physical meeting of the open consultation process on WSIS+10 High-Level Event.

a) How can the **monitoring and evaluation** of future implementation of the WSIS process, in particular, the Action Lines be better enabled?

As a general matter, the annual cycle of activities and meetings directed at implementation of WSIS outcomes and Main Action Lines assigned to DESA, FAO, ILO, ITU, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO and WHO, has been constructive, particularly as it involves a multi-stakeholder process, and should be continued with appropriate governance and oversight that respect resource and budget limitations. The annual review and assessment by CSTD of progress made in implementing these outcomes and Main Action Lines has constructively complemented this cycle of UN activities. It is called for each year in ECOSOC and UNGA resolutions and should be continued as a formal CSTD responsibility. Collectively, these Action Line activities and related monitoring and evaluation have evolved well, and can be better enabled by being institutionalized beyond 2015. To that end, the 2013 ECOSOC resolution on WSIS progress requests the CSTD to collect inputs from all facilitators and stakeholders and to organize a related, substantive discussion during its seventeenth Session in 2014, to report through ECOSOC to the UNGA on its findings, and to submit after its eighteenth Session in 2015 a ten-year review of implementation progress as it makes an overall assessment of the WSIS outcomes in 2015.

- b) What are the **priority areas** that the post-2015 WSIS process should focus on and which goals and targets could monitor the new vision for WSIS beyond 2015?

The United States has joined other nations and stakeholders to support the entire UN system in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), anticipating major deliberations in 2015 to identify a next phase of global sustainable development. Throughout this process, we have continued to affirm that science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, are essential enablers and drivers for the achievement of the MDGs and the promotion of the three dimensions of sustainable development, as well as poverty eradication. We have also continued to recognize that access to information and communications technologies and broadband connectivity is critical for science, technology, and innovation to flourish and provides new solutions to development challenges. Thus, more collaboration and sharing of best practices is needed to bridge the digital divide, including related infrastructural constraints in areas including, inter alia, energy and electricity production and use, food and manufacturing, transport, health services and government and other e-services, that can limit access to and use of information and communications technologies. Building on the WSIS Main Action Lines, these priority areas, as well as new mobile services and applications, including m-agriculture, m-health and m-finance, for example, should be central features during the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda, the role for ICTs in development, and monitoring of associated goals.

4. Any additional comments or suggestions

We note that multiple processes are underway in the United Nations to develop the post-2015 development agenda. For example, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon established a High-level Panel on a post-2015 agenda, which met several times and submitted a report to the Secretary-General in May 2013. The Secretary-General will consider that report in developing his own report to the UN General Assembly in September 2013. At the same time, an assessment of progress under the MDGs is underway in the United Nations, with the final update to be completed in mid-2014. In addition, the June 2012 Rio+20 Conference agreed to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015. Output from these efforts and others will form the basis of intergovernmental negotiations that will decide the post-2015 development framework and agenda in the United Nations. It is essential that the ITU's assessment of progress under the WSIS and the ITU Vision for WSIS beyond 2015 be closely coordinated with the United Nation's overall development agenda.