

SECOND PHASE OF WSIS, 16-18 NOVEMBER, TUNIS

STATEMENT FROM THE INTERNET SOCIETY

Thank you Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Internet Society, or ISOC, as we are also known, is a not-for-profit membership organization founded 14 years ago to provide leadership in Internet related standards, education, and policy.

ISOC is dedicated to ensuring the open development, evolution and use of the Internet for the benefit of people throughout the world. Our vision is a future in which *people across the world can benefit from the Internet to improve their quality of life*. Central to this is the requirement for standards, technologies, business practices, and government policies to sustain an open and universally accessible platform.

ISOC has provided technical and policy education and training to developed and developing countries across the world in all matters related to developing, and improving access to the Internet. Virtually all of the developing countries that have come online in the last 15 years can be traced to efforts by the Internet Society, our members and our chapters. We now have nearly 80 chapters across the world and over 20,000 members, all very passionate about our mission and the benefits that access to the Internet and information can bring.

Fundamental principles guide all of the Society's activities. These are the beliefs and commitments on which our mission "The Internet is for Everyone" is based. I will mention just a few of those principles here:

- The quality of life for people in all parts of the world is enhanced by their ability to enjoy the benefits of an open and global Internet.
- Well-in formed individuals and public and private policy makers are the essential foundation of an open and global Internet society.
- The genius of the Internet is that its decentralized architecture maximizes individual users' power to choose (or create) and use the hardware, software, and services that best meet their needs; and if the Internet is to continue to be a platform for innovation and creativity, its open, decentralized nature must be preserved.

We are very happy that the delegates meeting here at the WSIS Summit in Tunis have reaffirmed the importance of ICT and capacity building to a nations economic development and future welfare.

Delegates have ensured the continued success of the Internet through their commitment to build on the governance mechanisms and organizations that have so clearly enabled the Internet's incredibly successful growth. This is reinforced by the proposal that the Internet Governance forum would have no oversight function and would have no involvement in the day-to-day operations of the Internet.

We are also delighted that there is now broad recognition of the achievements, the effectiveness, and of course the legitimacy of the organizations that make up the Internet community. These organisations, along with their open, multi-stakeholder, consensus-based processes clearly have a vital role to play in the further development of the Internet, as does the private sector and Civil Society.

We believe that the Internet Governance Forum's success depends upon the fullest participation by all stakeholders and we will continue our efforts to facilitate increased cooperation and information sharing amongst all parties. We look forward to playing a central role in the new forum as is expected of us by the global community and as supported by many governments.

Most of all we are encouraged that the WSIS debate has moved beyond the details of technical administration and on to broader issues that require increased coordination by all stakeholders, and more specifically to those issues that will help bring the Internet to the billions of people not yet connected.

In closing, we very much hope and expect that the Tunis summit will lead to some real and positive outcomes that will truly bring the benefits of the Internet to people everywhere.

Thank you.