

SECOND PHASE OF WSIS, 16-18 NOVEMBER, TUNIS

STATEMENT BY H.E. DR. SOFYAN A. DJALIL, MINISTER OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

Mr. President,

Liberalization of regulations on the information and communication sector can become an effective mechanism in any country for enhancing competition and providing the best services to the people utilizing the services. However, we have also to acknowledge that the same mechanism of liberalization can become detrimental if it is implemented unwisely without the necessary preparatory measure of building entities with equal or similar strengths.

Many developing countries, including Indonesia, have been successful in creating a competitive environment for developing second generation mobile cellular networks and services. However, we still face the challenge of liberalizing the fixed local networks without hindering the future development of the information and communication network. This is a problem not only of developing countries but also of developed ones, particularly those committed to a fair and healthy competition in the provision of local fixed network services.

Moreover, Mr. President, most private companies and new entrants, both local and foreign, tend to invest in new technologies for the urban areas, leaving the rural areas behind, widening the existing digital divide between the urban centres and the rural areas where most of the population live.

Mr. President,

I hope that in this second summit we will be able to set for ourselves the worthy goal of giving fifty percent of the villages access to internet or ICT services within the next 10 years. It is a very ambitious goal as most of the village people have not acquired the knowledge and capability to use these services. It is not just a matter of putting the facilities in place. The village people have to be educated and thereby prepared to benefit and create demand for ICT services in their rural communities.

As part of Indonesia's effort to increase the level of ICT penetration in schools and community access points, Indonesia has had substantial progress. For example, we have been able to provide basic telephony services to more than 5.000 unserved villages under the Universal Service Obligation or USO programme. In light of the convergence of technology, we are also including Community Access Points or Internet Kiosks as part of our USO programme through the promotion

of public-private partnership models. We are also vigorously promoting and supporting the one-school-one-laboratory programme and e-learning programme. Our key objective is to rapidly reaching a critical mass of Information Society members. To increase capacity, our government is preparing a national-wide high capacity backbone using submarine optical fibre around the Indonesian archipelago, stretching around 40.000 kilometres.

Mr. President,

In relation to our deliberations in this Summit, my delegation reaffirms our recognition that building an inclusive Information Society and bridging the digital divide and ensuring harmonious, fair and equitable development for all requires new forms of solidarity, partnership and cooperation among governments and other stakeholders. It also requires a strong commitment by all of us.

My delegation would also like to lend its full support to the continuous role of the ITU, the UNDP, the UNESCO and other UN related organizations that have tremendously contributed to the growth of ICT in developing countries.

Mr. President,

I was gratified indeed to learn that this Tunis Summit was finally able to reach an agreement to mark the historic achievement of the WSIS process. This means, we could be certain about a brighter future development of the ICTs. Therefore, I must not fail to give high commend to all parties who have graciously shown their wisdom, hard works, and tolerant approach to make this Summit successful.

I sincerely wish that the second phase of WSIS will provide a strong basis for the smooth implementation of all political commitments to the Geneva Declaration. Furthermore, it is only realistic to expect that this Summit will also be able to lay down a monitoring mechanism for both the Geneva and Tunis Plans of Action, which will also serve to provide overall guidance in coordinating international and regional activities.

Finally, I join previous speakers in citing this Summit as an important stepping-stone to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

I thank you.