

SECOND PHASE OF WSIS, 16-18 NOVEMBER, TUNIS

**Statement by Hon. E. Sinatambou,
Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunications of Mauritius
17 November 2005**

Mr. Chairperson
Your Excellencies, Heads of States and of Governments
Colleague Ministers
Mr. Secretary-General International Telecommunication Union
Heads of Delegations
Distinguished Guests
Ladies & Gentlemen

I first wish to thank the Chair for the opportunity given to Mauritius to address this august assembly in the context of the Second Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society.

Let me at the very outset, congratulate and thank His Excellency President Ben Ali, the Government and people of Tunisia for the excellent organisation deployed and the kind hospitality extended to all of us, during the hosting of this Summit. It goes without saying that the tremendous efforts of the International Telecommunication Union operating under the aegis of the United Nations in implementing the first and second phases of the Summit will go down memory lane as landmark events in our endeavour to create a globally inclusive Information Society.

Mauritius holds the view that the designation of a neutral and widely acceptable body is of paramount importance in resolving issues arising out of Internet Governance. In the final consensual model, we are convinced of the determining roles at different levels that Governments, the private sector, civil society and international bodies will have to play in addressing the wide range of multifaceted and multilayered issues involved within the Internet Governance paradigm.

We acknowledge the fact that the main challenges ahead will depend largely on ICT enforcement measures to be deployed by individual countries. With the phenomenal growth of the Internet and the continuing digitalisation of society, we need to gear our efforts towards enhancing our e-readiness for the Networked World. In this respect, and in line with the Declaration of Principles and WSIS Plan of Action, Mauritius has implemented the following major projects with a view to bridging the digital divide:

- Bringing forward the date of liberalisation of the telecom sector which has become a reality since 2003;
- Reviewing the existing ICT legislation to allow for the interplay of competition policy along with sector specific legislations;
- Implementation of the Mauritian Internet Exchange Point (MIXP);
- Provision of free broadband Internet access to all secondary schools and public libraries in Mauritius;

- Institution of the Universal Service Fund to support ICT projects to promote access to ICTs, in areas of market failure.

At the regional level, Mauritius also promotes the development of regional ICT infrastructure, including Broadband capacity to backbones and interconnection of existing Network Access Points with root servers, mirror servers, and traffic exchange points. We do advocate the creation of sustainable schemes and models for ICT penetration as well as ICT assessment frameworks in the different countries of our region.

Mauritius does recognise the utmost importance of the security, continuity and stability of the Internet and at the same time we firmly believe in the setting up of an international participatory Internet Governance model whereby both policy and technical issues are dealt with in full transparency for the benefit of one and all.

Today, we are duty bound, as the global networked community, to ensure that the modus operandi that comes out of this Summit paves the way towards the emergence of an equitable Information Society.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairperson, I would like to reiterate the urgent need of clearly and adequately mapping out the responsibilities of Governments, the private sector, civil society and international bodies in Internet Governance. The expected end result is an Accessible, Affordable and Secure Internet for All which is central to economic growth and quality of life.

Thank you.