

Moderated High-Level Policy Sessions



Tuesday 3 May 2016

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CICG, Room 1

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***.

(standing by).

(standing by, waiting for the caption pod to be loaded in Adobe).

>> Hello, Mary Kay.

(yes, I hear you.)

(okay, thanks very much!)

(standing by).

>> Ladies and gentlemen, I can ask for your attention, please.

(echo).

We would like to invite the speakers to the following session to come to the podium. Thank you.

(very heavy echo).

Ladies and gentlemen, once again, we invite the speakers of the session to come up to the podium. Thank you.

(very heavy echo).

(standing by).

>> Test, test. Test. Test. It's better?

>> Is the sound better for captioning.

(yes, I don't hear the echo this time).

(thanks!)

>> Good afternoon, warm welcome after lunch to the high level policy session number 1, which is action lines, WSIS action lines and the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. I'm Tomasz Janowski, heading the United Nations university unit on digital government. I'm going to facilitate the session.



As you know, the resolution of the U.N. General Assembly on the overall review of the outcomes of WSIS adopted by in December last year called for close alignment between the WSIS process and the 2030 agenda.

The resolution highlighted the cross-cutting contribution that ICT can make to SDGs noting that access to SDGs is both the means and the ends to development.

To this end, however, the resolution also expressed five major concerns, first, that existing digital divides prevail and new divides emerge. Second, that the ubiquitous use of ICT must be based on new levels of confidence and security. Third, that the rise of individuals must be protected equally on-line and off line. Fourth, that the progress brought in by ICT should be measured not only in economic terms, but also in terms of realization of human rights and freedoms that so serve as a development enabler ICT must be grounded in ethical foundations.

It is against this background that we hold the



current session. The first in the series of high level policy sessions in the new format adopted this year by ITU. I'm delighted and honored to welcome our distinguished panel comprising high level government representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, Guinea-Bissau, Russian Federation and Sri Lanka representing the group of 15. I also welcome heads of international nongovernmental organisations, namely the Commonwealth Telecommunication Organisation, and the International Federation for Information Processing and DiploFoundation.

The format of the session is that every speaker will receive two questions, which they are kindly requested to answer within two and maximum two and a half minutes. I will ring a bell, 30 seconds before the end of the allocated time. Finally and provided we are still on time, we will include questions from the audience in this room, and those watching this session remotely. If you wish to ask a question, can you please leave it with the help desk on your left. Note to the speakers, this is a new format for WSIS moving away from traditional policy statements to

policy sessions.

Statements if any should be sent directly to the WSIS Secretariat, and will be published in an outcome document of the high-level track. Following this introduction, let me start with questions. By the way, we are still missing two speakers on podium, so if you can identify yourself, if you are present, and join us on the podium.

First speaker, excellency secretary for transport and communications of Guinea-Bissau. Mr. Secretary, welcome to the session. My first question is, what will the government of Guinea-Bissau do in order that ICT drives the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals including in the areas such as poverty reduction, education, economic growth and inclusive societies.

>> Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. It is really a great pleasure for me to be here today. Sustainable development goal, resilient infrastructure, sustainable is the only one that specifically mentions communications network infrastructure. Yet this infrastructure is clearly required for advancing

progress on the majority of the goals. For example, end poverty, will be greatly advanced if the extreme poor have access to basic financial services, including insurance, loans, microcredit, that help them manage economic shocks and build wealth. Yet the model for expanding these services have only now been proven. They require that extreme poor have and use mobile phone.

The most famous payment service in Guinea-Bissau is mobile money. And along this mobile money and other services are now being offered by commercial banks, loans, microcredit, savings, and financial products. The banks have access to the user's mobile money payment data, cell phone payment data and data on their behavior as a borrowers.

So in our opinion, there are now good things happening and opportunities to happen in Guinea-Bissau. For example, we believe that good health and well-being will be greatly enhanced by the ability to reach the poorest of the poor, and the least healthy in a cost effective manner, understand their health challenges, and turn this information

into adaptive policies that can consolidate progress towards the goals and adjust as needs evolves. Guinea-Bissau as part of the west African health organisation is part of the process of designing a regional health information system that will take full advantage of the tremendous amount of data that's been used, generated over cell phones and SMS application. In our opinion the key issue is to drive down costs.

>> Thank you very much for your answer. My second question is, in the context that you just described, how can an ICT drive innovation and entrepreneurship, and what is the role of businesses and the public sector in achieving these goals, in line with the WSIS action line 7?

>> Thank you again. We believe that as ICTs become more available, cheap and integrated into every aspect of our lives, the opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship only expands. Innovation and microspaces all across Africa where, inventors and entrepreneurs can get their start. Access is expanding. African innovators are showing increasing innovation leadership. Payment and money remittance



services enables many more entrepreneurs to come up. In addition to these examples, it's best to create the spaces and access the technologies that will be needed for innovators and entrepreneurs to do what they are current doing, you know. And we think that the government should get out of the way.

The most important thing here is to create all the legislation, all the rules, and leave the private sector to go forward. We think that government can also help with mobilization of capital for innovation to expand and grow. Recent economic data from Guinea-Bissau show that although the economy as a whole is growing around 5 percent, lending by banks has shrunk. We believe that governments can help with reducing the risk of private lending through loan guarantees and perhaps deposit insurance for savings and providing incentives for commercial banks to get more involved in the real economy, that innovators are seeking to serve.

Lastly, we believe that government can try to create the right funding and incentives for ICT innovators to help come up with new solutions for

public service, such as birth registries, car registrations, sanitation, etcetera, etcetera. Thank you so much.

>> Thank you very much for your answers. A reminder, if you have any questions can you kindly write them down and pass to the help desk on your left. We will given the time available at the end, we will try to address these questions through our panel. Our second speaker is His Excellency the Minister of Telecom and mass communication of the Russian Federation. Mr. Minister, welcome to the session.

>> Thank you very much.

>> My first question is, what measures does Russia take to connect remote areas to the telecommunication networks of the Russian Federation, thus bridging the digital divide, and what role does the legal regulation play in the broadband development, in line with the WSIS action lines 2 and 6.

>> Thank you very much. You know, definitely, when we imagine Russian remote areas, when we imagine our territory, geographic, climate issues, it's really

a difficult task to make that happen. We have huge competition on Telecom market. It is private companies competing there. But they could hardly come to this remote villages somewhere in Siberia, far east or other regions of Russia. That is why there was definitely about legal environment, special federal laws about special initiatives in order to make that happen. In year 2014, our President has signed the special addition to the federal law on telecommunications concerning the universal service fund. The idea was to create the public/private partnership with a final goal to connect with land based fiberoptics, all the small villages, small settlements with a population of over 250 people. It is already in progress. We are ahead of our schedule. The key goal is to connect every such small settlement probably in the upcoming four or five years.

Finally, to give the opportunity for 97 percent of our population to get the very cheap and affordable and high-speed based connection to the Internet. What I mean affordable, I also want to mention that we have set up a special kind of social rate for the Internet



access and today it's about 70 cents per ten megabits connection per month. It is really, really an affordable rate for the basic package of the Internet connection, on relatively high-speed.

It definitely creates a lot of opportunities for providing eGovernment services for creating new jobs in this small settlements, and just making the affordable electronic healthcare, electronic education, many other services that are available.

Once again, the key idea was to create a special legal environment under federal law of Russian Federation under the special presidential initiative in order to have the small settlements to be connected. It is already up and running. Companies continue to invest. The universal service fund continue to support this initiatives with certain funding. In Russia federation, it is 1.2 percent of revenue of Telecom operators that go to the universal service fund.

We use these funds in order to support this initiative to build fiberoptics. In general that will be 215,000 kilometers of fiberoptics that will be put

in, most of them will be put on land, but also have some areas like for example far east, the island, the magaddan region, other regions of Russia where we put fiberoptic cables under sea.

>> Thank you for your answer. Given efforts in infrastructure and connectivity development, you just described, what projects are being implemented in Russia to promote sustainable development through efficient provision of eServices to all citizens in line with the WSIS action line 7?

>> Thank you. Because of this microeconomic infrastructure investments that I've already mentioned, we continuously see the growth of the number of Internet users in Russia. Definitely we want all these users to participate in those eGovernment services and other type of electronic services that are introduced by different public agencies, as well as just the SMBs and the commercial sector.

Today we have developed 60 to 65 percent of population, Russian population that is already using Internet. On the other hand, we have a separate

estimation that about 40 percent of them, 40 percent of all Russian citizens are preferred to use eGovernment services electronically already.

We also have a special indicator set for the government by our President that by the year of 2018 this number has to be grown up to 70 percent. So we continue improving the Telecom infrastructure, especially those remote areas that I've already mentioned, in order to introduce the services as well.

Once again it's all about the necessary legal framework, because if we really want to offer services that are legally accepted, they are fully secure and comply with the federal legislation, we definitely need to create in kind of the ecosystem in order to do that. We have about 25 million Russian citizens that are already registered on the federal level eGovernment service portal website on the special government legally accepted I.D.s.

This is the way how we try to promote that, and to bring the legal acceptance of what is being delivered on-line. Thank you.

>> Thank you very much, Mr. Minister, for your

replies.

Our third speaker is the representative of the deputy permanent representation of mission of Sri Lanka to the U.N. also representing the group of 15. I understand that we will have a statement read right now. Yes, please go ahead.

>> Thank you, Mr. President. I'm going to read this statement on behalf of group of 15. Mr. President, I wish to take this opportunity to review the statement on behalf of the group of 15, group of developing countries that is dedicated to fostering south-south cooperation for the mutual benefit of the membership and working towards commonality of positions on issues of shared interest.

Our group is deeply pleased to be part of the World Summit on the Information Society, the world's largest annual gathering of the ICT for development community.

At the very outset, the group of 15 wishes to acknowledge the organizers of this forum, the ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD which worked in close cooperation with all WSIS action line facilitators, to enable this



event and for being nominated to Chair of the session. The group also welcomes the U.N. General Assembly resolution 7125 of 16 December, 2015 which recognize the necessary forum on a annual basis and called for a close alignment between WSIS and the Sustainable Development Goals processes. The significance as humanity moves towards implementation of the ambitious action oriented framework of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, as endorsed by world leaders at the summit in New York in September, 2015. After years of negotiation and planning, the time for action has now come. The 2030 agenda for sustainable development has once again highlighted the great potential of ICT to accelerate human progress, to bridge the digital divides and to develop knowledge societies. In this regard, it is important to identify emerging trends in ICT. Priorities for advancing the ICT for development agenda while strengthening the impact of ICTs as an enabler of sustainable development. It is also clear that ICT have become an integral part of socioeconomic development especially in the developing countries.



The group of 15 wishes to acknowledge the concerted efforts made by ITU to highlight the role of the ICTs will play in achieving SDGs. Our group has identified the 2030 agenda for sustainable development as a key priority for developing nations and as such bring value to the WSIS Forum as the largest stakeholder annual gathering of the ICT for development community. The G15 values the principles of multistakeholder operation and engagement that have characterized the WSIS process since its inception.

Recognizing the effective participation, partnership and cooperation of governments, the private sector, civil society, international organisations, technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders, especially with balanced representations from developing countries that continues to be vital in developing the information society. On behalf of the G15 I would like to wish every success to the WSIS Forum.

Thank you very much.

>> Thank you very much for your answer, for your statement. Our first speaker is the head of the



Commonwealth Telecommunication Organisation, based in London and working across the commonwealth and noncommonwealth states. Welcome to the session. My first question is, how does the CTO plan to contribute to the promotion of ICT for development?

>> Thank you very much. The Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation represents the interests of all the commonwealth countries which are spread over five continents and with a population of over 2 billion in size.

Recently we adopted the strategic plan which was based primarily on the needs of member countries as well as positions taken by the U.N. on sustainable development programme, goals.

Now, let me touch briefly on a few of the goals that we have adopted. One is cyber security. Realize that many countries are battling with cyber crimes, with issues. Two years ago the commonwealth ministers, commonwealth ICT ministers adopt a cyber governance model. That is the model which we have used to assist member countries to develop policies, strategies, and also to implement those policies and

strategies.

Activities are dependent on the status of development of member countries. We have specific projects, one on policy, strategy, implementation. That's been very successful so far with countries like Fiji, Cameroon, Botswana, Nigeria, benefiting from that work.

Secondly, broadband it's a very important issue, the impacts of broadband on development. We are assisting member countries to also ensure that the government policies enable broadband development investment to ensure that they can define broadband aspects to their various regions, and secondly to be able to have projects which address the various sectors of the economy, health, agriculture and so on. Thirdly, we also have projects on, we want to ensure that our member countries have frameworks which are attractive to investments, which provide certainty, and also regulatory frameworks which protects not only investments that the operators, the infrastructure providers put into the system, but also for the consumers.



We also have a programme on e applications, where we encourage countries to apply ICT to the various sectors of their economy. We encourage countries to use ICTs for example in their voting process, in agriculture. There are some countries where just by the power of ICT tools, farmers can have access to prices of their goats which can also empower them. Farmers were not able to access the price of the goats in the cities, but with the use of ICTs they can be enriched, empowered and make them to have even more financial power to invest more in their communities.

These are areas where we have focused on.

>> Thank you very much. My second question is, what role does CTO envisage for international and regional organisations in line with the WSIS action line 11.

>> We collaborate effectively with a number of organisations, the ITU for example, we have done work on cyber security. We have signed a agreement with the IT and other bodies like the World Bank to have cyber security toolkit which can be used across some of the countries.



Secondly, we are very active when it comes to international treaty conferences, like spectrum where we ensure members understand the issues around spectrum and what kind of spectrum will be required for the kind of systems we want to have in the medium term and long term.

We also encourage member countries to be active in the discussions on Internet governance. As you all know, there is a lot of discussions in that area and many of our member countries have been empowered to contribute effectively to ensure that they have confidence in the emerging which are coming to fruition in the months to come.

We are also active with regional organisations that exist within the commonwealth, the Asia Pacific Telecommunity, the African Telecommunications Union, even the CPT where we have a few members from Europe, as well as the sitta and Caribbean telecommunications union. We collaborate specifically on training projects. I will have a hundred conferences run every year that specifically address needs of member countries. We are creating conference on the use of



ICF for development, we have training courses on spectrum management. We have training courses on what kind of regulatory frameworks we require for satellite communications, how do you ensure that your regulatory frameworks also respond to the needs of the markets. Competition, for example, how do you ensure that the regulatory systems you have can encourage competition and try to have prices which are affordable for the communities.

Our training courses are geared towards the needs of the member countries and in some cases there are courses which are held, in the member states and sometimes they are held regionally and other cases they are held at the headquarters of the CTO which is the UK. Several times a year we bring high officials of regulatory bodies to the UK and we interact on those issues which they face on a day-to-day basis.

This is very interactive. It does encourage exchange of views. It encourages best practices to be shared among the countries. The next one we will be having is in first week of July. It will be interesting for those who might wish to benefit. We

focus not only on the commonwealth countries but also countries that are not part of the commonwealth because we believe some of the challenges that are faced are common to commonwealth countries as well.

>> Thank you very much. Our fifth speaker, President of the International Federation for Information Processing, Mr. President, welcome to the session. I have two questions. The first is, what kind of partnerships do you see as a key for success for ICT and what are the conditions for such partnerships?

>> Thank you very much. As I said this morning already, due to the nature of IFIP as a federation of societies, we are already a partnership. We embrace all kinds of partnerships, but in our view, a key factor of success in achieving the SDGs is the strengthening of local capacities, and capacities in our environment means the capacity of ICT professionals and of ICT communities. What we would like to see strengthened is the establishment of ICT communities in those countries that do not have it already. There are many countries that have strong



professional societies that contribute to, like we heard this morning, to sharing knowledge with SMEs, to provide information to SMEs, to provide information to other partners that should contribute to achieving the goals.

So partnerships are necessary, and what I see as a key for that kind of strengthening is the contribution of industry and governments for those countries or regions where they are not yet such powerful societies.

Support in helping to establish them but also support in helping them to be linked with the international communities. That is a key element, even if you establish a society it's not always possible to link with the communities and to make sure they benefit from the knowledge that is available around.

But key element in partnerships is strengthening local, local expertise, local knowledge sharing and local cooperation. Thank you.

>> Thank you very much. The second question, working through such partnerships, can you cover all

SDGs? And if not, how do you prioritize?

>> Unfortunately, we cannot cover all the SDGs, that would be magic. But given the breadth, the width of our work, we work in all the areas of ICT. We could cover many of them. The priorities we try to set is by cooperating with the local communities. If I can give an example, we organise a biannual world IT forum which is hosted by the local government of the country, of the host country. We ask the country what are your priorities, which are the areas where we could contribute most for your purposes and which of the SDGs would then be served best in that particular case.

That may vary a little bit from one country to another. We will do it together with our partners. That is the basic key.

>> Thank you very much. A reminder for our audience here in the room and those remotely, this is the last moments to submit the questions to the help desk on your left if you wish them to be asked to our high level panel.

Thank you very much again for your replies.



Our 6th speaker is the founding Director of DiploFoundation and head of the Geneva Internet forum. Welcome to the session.

I have two questions. One of the basic tenets of the diplomacy is secrecy, and one of the basic tenets of ICT is openness. How is DiploFoundation which brings these two worlds together reconciling these two conflicting tenets?

>> Thank you, thank you for having me today here with you. The short answer is, yes, we need both. I wouldn't say secrecy. I think that's not possible in the modern world. I would say discretion. We need both discretion and transparency, in order to reach diplomatic agreements.

This dichotomy between discretion and transparency is one of the key challenges of modern diplomacy. If you analyze the latest breakthroughs in diplomatic negotiations and we can name a few, Cuba, United States rapprochement, Iran nuclear deal, most of those breakthroughs were made without cameras in the room. Those negotiations require certain level of discretion. I wouldn't say secrecy. Secrecy was



outlawed as we know in 1918 by Woodrow Wilson and authorities they declare the same year the end of secret diplomacy. It means outcomes of the negotiation should be public. In order to answer this question, we have to basically ask the question, what is the purpose of diplomacy.

The purpose of diplomacy is to achieve peaceful resolution of conflicts. If that peaceful resolution of conflicts requires the discretion of negotiation, we should allow that. Sometimes transparency could be counterproductive, because we are discussing the question of compromise, and compromise is not favorable concepts in many cultures worldwide. In comparison with heroic past military victories, compromise is very often on the losing side. Therefore, by having the cameras in the room we would have negotiators basically preaching to the audience back home and preaching to the national stereotypes to grant the history and to do something that can ultimately win the votes.

This is the reason why sometimes we need rooms without Twitter, without video cameras, in order to

reach the, to achieve the key purpose of diplomacy, peaceful resolution of conflicts. The results of those negotiations should be public.

This is a key dilemma of diplomacy, the ways in which diplomacy operates is changing, the world is changing, we need more transparency, more involvement and engagement. But diplomacy has to learn how to serve those ways. Sometimes the voters will be quite -- but diplomacy has been adjusting worldwide to those changes. We can say that diplomacy will have a good future, the world will become more interdependent. Unfortunately there will be more conflicts, and we will need more negotiations engagement and diplomatic solutions.

>> Thank you very much for answering these difficult questions. The second question as an organisation with special consultative status with the United Nations economic and social commission, how is DiploFoundation contributing to the SDG and WSIS processes in line with the WSIS action line 11?

>> Related to the first question, one of the challenges of the diplomacy is to have inclusive



solutions. If you want population worldwide to be engaged and to follow the rules agreed the rules, global rules and climate change, sustainable development, Internet governance, you need engagement. You need some sort of high ownership of what was agreed globally. Therefore, this is the key challenge and what we have been doing, we have been trying to increase inclusiveness of policy processes. It is one of our mission. Here in Geneva, with Geneva Internet platform we have been trying to do something which could be overcoming lost in translation.

We have quite a different languages, not international languages, professional languages between people involved in ICT, diplomacy, economics, and there are a lot of miscommunication between different professional cultures on national, regional and global level. One of the missions of DiploFoundation in Geneva and Internet platform has been to increase the understanding and the more inclusive solution also when it comes to different professional cultures.

One, another important contribution that we have



been trying to make is involvement of small and developing states in policy processes. We still are missing more than 20 countries small island states in Geneva with the full representation, and this is one of the activities which we have been doing with the help of the Swiss government to bring the small island states into the global policy processes, particularly in Geneva.

And that is pro development aspect of making more inclusive global governance and diplomacy is one of our core missions.

>> Thank you very much for your replies. We came to the end of the question session with the high level speakers. We received a number of questions also from the audience, both in the room and those watching us remotely. We have a few remaining minutes to allow our panel to address them. One question is general and two are specific, to specific speakers. A general question is reluctance to sponsor small and medium size enterprises, what should SMEs do in this regard? I understand the question relates to SMEs in ICT industry.

There are also questions, specific questions to the President of IFIP, and the question is, what are you doing to promote ICT communities in developing and to the least developed countries. There is also a question to the Secretary-General of CTO, you have laudable programmes for members, but what are you doing to promote peer review among your members? I would like to invite the members of the panel to offer the responses or comments to the three questions.

>> The general question, please, because I was focusing on the question to me. SMEs. Well, I reflected a little bit on the cooperation between professional societies in ICT communities, and organizing events for SMEs to learn, and usually what we try to do is to make them as at least cost efficient or for free. So that is definitely a small attempt to make it affordable and to help. In terms of sponsoring SMEs, that is for society like ours is of course a bit difficult, because we are a nonprofit organisation.

But in another way, we try to facilitate SMEs to participate in the development of ICTs for their

benefit, and to showcase through events developments that they can pick up and use at a smaller cost basis.

>> Yes, thank you very much.

>> Let me answer from the point of view of a particular development country, about 20 years ago you were guaranteed a job in civil service or Telecom operator or big company out there. Today things are different. The economies are being run by the private sector. Governments have been turned out every year. What is the best way to help them to get to the job markets. What we try to do is encourage governments to have policies in place that will ensure that banks set up say a portion of their loan or financial supports to SMEs as a matter of policies.

Once you have that, you can access loans through an enactment of policy objectives. ICT graduates are beginning to run into billions, in Nigeria there is a company called Jumer and they have a lot of Internet based eCommerce, successful. These are young guys who went to the banks, get loans. If this was done on a consistent basis, in different sectors of the economy, whether it's agriculture or health or education, we



can have access to massive information education for various populations, I think that is one area where SMEs can actually be promoted.

In effect the point is that government have to have policies in those countries that enable the banks to put some fund into it. Now to the specific question which I was asked, thank you for acknowledging that we have some laudable programmes. The way we do peer review, we have a framework of north north, south-south cooperation. Two weeks ago we had regulators come to the UK, these are top regulators. They are chief executives, they are members of the board. We allowed them to share their experience, and then we had a visit to the UK to share the experience of the host regulator.

Through that process, the countries begin to see the challenges they are facing and how their counterparts are addressing those issues. I give one example, countries express an interest in OTTs, are they regulated, should they be regulated, are there policies. Operators come to us, big operators, small operators, saying how do you address this. We are

assembling a number of experts from developing countries, developed countries, to address issues in terms of policy, in terms of regulations, in terms of the need for the consumer to have access to Internet services and so on.

Really at the end of the day, the way we encourage a peer review is to bring in various expert from various regions of the world to share their experiences, and I believe this is an example where we have leaders from different parts of the country. Thank you.

>> Thank you very much. Are there any last quick comments from the panel?

>> Thank you. I wanted to make a comment. I think what is great is certainly when we look around the room and everything that we heard this morning certainly everybody here is convinced and understands the tremendous potential that ICTs have towards transforming lives and empowering people, economically, culturally, socially, and politically. And also I think what is great is that the solutions are here from the WSIS prizes, from the prize winners



to all of the interventions that we heard from our panelists just now and this morning, really the solutions are here to meet the SDGs.

And I would say to each and every SDG, ICTs do offer a solution. The SDGs as many have mentioned, it's all about leaving no one behind. I think what we need to make sure we do is that we leave no one off-line. I think it would be helpful as we look towards July and the first high level political forum in New York, when we will be for the first time reviewing progress, I think there is some 20 countries that will be making their voluntary national reports, and the challenge I think with this community has always been that there is sometimes a little bit of a disconnect with other ministries, and so I do hope that those countries that are reporting in July and countries that are reviewing their national development plans to take into account the SDGs, that they keep ICTs at the top of their agendas.

>> Please.

>> Thank you very much. Just to add to what my colleagues have just said this morning, during our

panel, I was talking about collaborative regulation and collaborative policies. We can no longer afford to have vertical policies and regulation. We have started this process, took some steps. In March we organized for the first time the meeting between ministers of ICTs and ministers of education in headquarters of UNESCO so ministers of ICTs can start talking to ministers of education. 23 and 24 of May, this May, we are bringing Minister of ICTs to come and talk to the ministers of health during the world health assembly. I think this is a direction we should be looking at now. Otherwise we are running the risk of talking to ourselves. As my colleague said, in this room here solutions exist. But still outside we need to be talking to people. I would like to invite all of us here to start our solution to others because as you can see today the ICT we can extend the limit of the ICT business, not only to the core business but to other sectors. So just to complement what my colleague was saying. Thank you.

>> Thank you very much. This is a nice conclusion of the session. We are out of time. You



listened to diverse contributions from government and nongovernment stakeholders from Africa, Asia, and Europe, covering issues of infrastructure, services, innovation, collaboration, capacity-building, regulation, and negotiation, the topics intersect in various ways along the WSIS action lines, and SDGs, and constitute rich material for further analysis and insight.

The summary will be provided during the concluding session on Wednesday from 4:30 to 8. At this moment please join me in thanking our high level speakers for sharing their experience and insight.

(applause).

Thank you for your attention. The session is closed. (pause).

>> Good afternoon. Asking our speakers to please take their seats. Thank you.

We will get started in a few seconds here. Good afternoon. Thank you for joining us today, my name is Karen McCabe, with the IEEE. A warm welcome to everyone, I know after lunch it's a little challenging to get back into the flow of things.



I'm honored to be here today, and to introduce session 3, which is focused on the WSIS action lines in the 2030 agenda. I welcome to the session our honorable speakers from the United States, Lao, Mexico and Turkey as well as representative from the OECD.

I'd like to remind everyone that this session is in a new question and answer format, as you have seen from the first session that we just went through. We want to thank our esteemed speakers for providing their statements, that will be published in the outcome document of the high-level track.

In this session, as you saw from the first one, we will be asking each speaker two questions and they will have two or so, three or so minutes to answer each question. This is a reminder, the session has both on-site and remote participants, for those in the room if you have questions please write them and hand them over to our help desk. For those participating remotely, we have an on-line facilitator who will capture them. We will take questions submitted at the end of the session if time permits.

A reminder is that a final summary of the session



will be provided during the high level policy concluding session on Wednesday, May 4, and where we will have brief oral summaries of each of the sessions as well.

Thank you for your attention on those housekeeping details. With that, I'm going to launch into our first speaker and questions, we do have, unfortunately Ambassador Daniel Sepulveda is held up in interviews. We are going to await his arrival but we will launch into our subsequent speakers. With that I'd like to pose my first question to the Minister from Lao, and with that, your first question is, what are your concerns for achieving the 2030 agenda?

>> Thank you for the question. I am of the view that MDGs have a narrow focus, while SDGs are broader, also ambitious. The SDGs address all sectors of country economy, we also recognize that the progress made by the MDGs have been not even between countries in particular area for the N D.C. countries. The question is how does least country developed country like my own achieve the SDGs by the year 2030. This

is the question. Because as we know, the ICT aspect to solutions, but the challenges on bridging the digital divide address inadequately and require investment in ICT infrastructures and services. Also, capacity-building, sharing, as transfer of technology are imperative. Therefore, we should pay more attention to bridging the digital divide in NDCs countries by permitting inclusiveness and by facilitating countries' economic growth through the development and advancement of ICT just as broadband, as well as public access. Yet the ICT can be a key driver for narrowing the gap between countries.

In this connection I call WSIS to assist developing countries to expand broadband infrastructures and enabling more content and local eServices. Thank you.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you. The second question for you is, the case of Lao, in the case of Lao, excuse me, what can ICT contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals?

>> To the second question, I would say that so far there is a widespread agreement that ICTs have

been one of the major factors that have transformed the world over the past 15 years of MDGs. I also believe that it will transform SDG as well. We believe technology is crucial to the Sustainable Development Agenda. Therefore, in our 2030 vision, we have defined that the use of ICT as the tool to transform the country into the modernized country is strongly contributing to the socioeconomic development, ICT is SDGs. We have some programme as follows. First increase Internet use, can reduce poverty and create jobs. However, in my country there is less than 30 present of Internet penetration, while the broadband penetration is even lower than 10 percent. Therefore, efforts are required to improve access to ICTs. On one hand we need to deploy more ICT infrastructures. On the other hand, it's need to make the price lower as much as possible.

Second programs, as my country as a source of economic growth, we have to empower farmers to access to information is very necessary. We have to enhance farmer production. We have mobile phone for agriculture development project. Third, education



nowadays is implemented by the use of on-line resources. We will continue and promote our school Internet and eLearning projects in our country. Thank you.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you so much for your thoughtful responses. With that, I will now turn to the Ambassador from the United States. Thank you for joining us. I know you are having a very busy day today.

In the WSIS framework, as agreed at the world summit in 2003 and 2005, and reaffirmed by UNGA in 2015, relevant to address the use of ICTs for development, including the goals of the 2030 agenda.

>> Yes, during the framework, we discussed ICTs for development and the goals for the 2030 agenda and agreed that at the center of that effort would have to be the promotion of re, reagreed to the promotion of the people centered development oriented information society, so we retained the original action lines, and now we have to look through the prism of the Sustainable Development Goals and reassess the work that we are doing in each of those action lines, to

ensure that we are either increasing education and helping Laos for example get their schools connected or working with Mexico on open data to ensure that entrepreneurs have access to open data and can create new services using the data that governments have available to them, etcetera.

I think that the world ICTs and how we can work together across nations and across areas of expertise in order to fulfill a moral mandate now of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals which are aspirational, we are going to have to work hard and across a large number of different areas of expertise to get them done, but I think they provide an excellent frame, and they give us an opportunity to work with the technical community, with industry, with civil society, with academia, in order to pursue specific targets and goals.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you. The second question is, how can stakeholders add to the collective efforts to achieve the 2030 agenda?

>> I think it's really going to have to be a question of participation. On the one hand,

participation from both commercial and noncommercial stakeholders and governments in a two-way system of information exchange, where we are treating each other as equals. This is a fairly unique area of public policy, in the sense that unlike say schools, for example, which across the world are predominantly operated by governments, the networks underlying ICT infrastructure and the applications that write over them are predominantly rooted in industrial activity and private sector activity.

And how we encourage and leverage that activity has to be cooperative and collaborative. Again, I would pay special attention to the work that our colleagues on this panel are doing across the multistakeholder framework to get that done.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you very much. With that, we will move to the excellency from the presidency of Mexico. The first question I have is, what are the key initiatives that Mexico is undertaking to realize the Sustainable Development Goals, and the WSIS action lines?

>> Thanks so much. The specific actions that



were undertaken, we have undertaken over the last years, and now in support of the Sustainable Development Goals and 2030 agenda, are around overhaul, revamping around reforms. Everything from the telecommunications reform, which was tailored towards a greater competitive landscape, towards of course better pricing, more accessibility, more connectivity in a country where we are rapidly decreasing our digital divide, yet we still have some ways to go.

Of course, that underlines basically the priority to connect our citizens better. On top of that we launched two and a half years ago what we call our national study, was tailored towards improving government's conversation with citizens. Of course not only towards government services but also around how to deploy better education or eEducation services, eHealth, deploying eCommerce sector as well as public safety and what we call public participation and innovation.

So really working with society, in terms of cooperation and cocreation of public policy, and

decreasing that communication gap that we have with the citizens to deploy services better and faster.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you. The second question looks a little more at emerging trends in matters of strategic importance. In Mexico, what are some emerging trends and matters of strategic importance for the development of the ICT sector?

>> What we have seen so far is a very growing response from the citizens towards bringing forward solutions to government. So for example, for the first time we launched a crowdsourced public policy. Ambassador Sepulveda mentioned briefly around open data. We opened up the public policy creation mechanism towards citizens, to citizens. We gathered thousands of comments in which we were able to put those forward in the document that ended up becoming the open data public policy.

On the other hand, for example, we are launching public changes, we understand the issues in many different sectors within government and within the industry, so we are inviting the innovation and entrepreneurial landscape to bring forward the

solutions themselves. What we are seeing is a very, very active competitive landscape.

We are seeing a lot of entrepreneurial sprouts coming from different hubs within the country. And really ends up in more of a public participation, greater transparency of course in terms of the use of budgets, more rapid application of budgets as well, and increasing responses.

We are very happy, for example, very proud that one of the initiatives that we brought forward here ended up being awarded, so eEducation platform, we just launched late last year, has around 600,000 members already within the course of some months.

What this actually creates is a landscape in which we as Mexicans are eager and very hungry to start consuming data services from many fronts.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you very much. We will move to Turkey. I would like to pose this question to the head of information and communication technology from Turkey. In your statement, you have submitted, you emphasize the importance of good regulatory environment to bridge digital divide. What can ICT

regulators do in order to move forward?

>> Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to talk here. I would like to start with stable predictable and transparent regulatory framework is a prerequisite to establish sustainable development in the ICT sector. To this aim, regulators should ensure open and competitive authorization regime and all barriers to entry in the market should be removed. Regulations should be investment friendly, and promote infrastructure based on competition. We know that the development in the infrastructure paves the way for better lower prices. Last but not least as mobile is the main driver of ICTs today and mobile data usage increases, operators should be granted more spectrum in a technology neutral way.

In spite of big steps taken in the field of ICT recently, digital divides still remains as a significant obstacle. It's a broadly accepted fact that a sound legal and regulatory framework helps bridging the digital divide. In this regard I firmly believe that cooperation and exchange of knowledge and

experience between regulators will improve regulatory capacity and thus contribute development of the ICT sector.

Mobile technologies are the main driver for digital innovation all over the world. In Turkey 5G is one of the hot topics in our agenda. We want to become one of the first countries to pass to 5G technology, we are willing to participate in global platforms and contribute to national and international studies to get the new generation technologies into our country.

In this regard, we have successfully concluded IMT advance authorization tender in a very open and transparent way in Turkey at the end of August last year. The tender has been the biggest tender in the sector for the last ten years, total cost is more than 4 billion Euros, and for the 365 megahertz, the operators started to provide the service at the beginning of April this year. This enhanced further value added mobile service and applications in Turkey.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you. The second question I have is, all governments are taking steps for secure

and safe ICTs, however although national efforts are necessary, they are not necessarily sufficient. Within this understanding what could be done to ensure a safe and secure ICT environment at the international level?

>> As we all know very well that cyberspace has no boundaries. A criminal from our country can commit a crime in any other country through Internet. This borderless interconnected and complicated structure of ICT networks necessitates the international cooperation to prevent illegal use of ICTs. Moreover, nowadays we have observed the use of Internet and social media by terrorists for communications, propaganda and recruitment. Investigation of these crimes and these offenses is not possible without cooperation between governments and private sector.

Hence, operators and international ICT companies must cooperate with the governmental agencies to combat against cyber crimes. Private sector should notice that more secure and safer ICTs environments will also contribute to the digital economy. A safe and secure ICT environment is not only desirable but



also a necessity. In this context, will build trust and confidence, comes from the WSIS action lines. Without a safe Internet, ICT industry would not make its potential contribution to economic and social welfare of the world.

We don't have one identity in the on-line world. We are professionals, parents, users, and gamers at the same time. We should feel safe and secure on-line with all these identities. To achieve this, I invite all stakeholders to be active in their respective roles and responsibilities. In October, this year, Turkey will host empowering citizens in cooperation with ITU. We hope that such activities should enable closer dialogue between all stakeholders in order to reach a common understanding. In this context we are very happy that ITU and WSIS also takes more action in having safer and secure Internet, and we would like U.N. to be more active in these issues, because when you, these contributions and collaborations are done best under the U.N. umbrella, when we have the -- otherwise we have to deal with single countries, and sometimes you cannot reach an agreement

with those.

So U.N. gives us the opportunity to make this cooperation.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you very much, very insightful. Before we go on to our last intervention, I want to remind everyone in the room and remote, who are watching remotely that we are accepting questions. For in the room, if you have a question, please hand them over to our help desk. We will be more than happy to hopefully get to them at the end of the session.

So from the representative from OECD thank you for joining us and welcome to the panel. Your first question is how is the OECD contributing to the 2030 agenda and the WSIS action lines?

>> Thank you, Madame Chair. I'd like to echo what previous speakers said before, that the key word among the WSIS action lines, the Sustainable Development Goals is really partnership, cooperation. It is really important to involve all the different stakeholders, government, the business, the civil society, the Internet technical community and so on,

in order to achieve this objective.

The OECD has been among the contributors to shaping the 2030 agenda, and believes very strongly this is the right framework in order to achieve the common goals that we are all pursuing. Last year as the ministers confirm the commitment and we also engaged them to an action plan in order to put the agenda into action.

These action plans is built around three main points. The first one is to, for the OECD to help countries to measure where they are, where they stand in the progress towards the sustainable, achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. The second point is pretty much to build on the expertise on the technical competence of OECD in promoting development of these objectives in different countries.

The third is also to make use of the wealth of instruments like peer reviews, which the OECD is known for. There is a strong commitment in this sense.

As part of this commitment, there has been making a key contribution in particular to the partnership on ICT for development providing the statistical

expertise, statistical background in order to help countries to measure their progress along the WSIS action lines.

The digital economy is a powerful catalyst for growth, for social inclusion, for innovation. It is really a way to promote more sustainable inclusive growth, focus on well-being and on equality of opportunities, where people are empowered with education, skills, and enjoy confidence.

On the 21 of June, OECD and stakeholders will meet in a meeting in Cancun in Mexico in order to push forward the digital agenda. I take the opportunity to thank Mexico for hosting this meeting. The OECD ministerial meeting will be a milestone towards the goals of the 2030 agenda and the WSIS action lines. And I'd like to invite all participants to this session. We look forward to your participation in this event.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you. The second question for you are what policy areas does OECD regard as a priority for the international community?

>> OECD identified four broad policy areas which



are also those that are going to be the main issues for the ministers in June. The first one is the Internet openness, Internet openness is a powerful enabler for innovation, for trade, for social well-being. But at the same time, arise a number of issues and calls for policy to strengthen privacy, security, children on-line, and intellectual property.

The second policy is global connectivity. It is important that we further develop the policy framework where the Internet can continue to play its role as a platform, global platform then enables new services over high-speed connected networks, in particular those that are related to the Internet of Things.

The third priority item is clearly with the consumer protections, and with security and trust, digital security and trust. This is of course creating these conditions is important for development of eCommerce, international trade, to foster the growth of the digital economy in society. There are two recently revised recommendations that could provide a solid basis, sound basis for this action.

Finally, it's important that all stakeholders,

government, business, trade unions, are able to face the new challenges in the labor market, the digital economy is bringing forward. It is important that we help the new jobs enabled by digital economy to grow. We speed up the growth of this new job opportunities, that we accompany workers towards these new jobs, and also that we ensure job quality in the digital economy. Skills of course is going to be an important pillar of this strategy.

There is an increasing demand for a broader set of skills which are not only ICTs, and when you look at the data, the evidence, you see that many, too few people in many countries do not seem to have the right skills for that. We need to foster the capability of the skill development system to meet the new demand for skills, in the digital economy. And also take advantage, build on the opportunities that ICTs, digital technology are creating for learning in terms of on-line courses, also open access to resources.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you very much. I want to thank all our panelists for their thoughtful and insightful responses to the questions that I posed



today. We have a question from the audience for the panel.

Raise your hand if you want to take it first. Is there any relevance for peer reviews among states, regional organisations, towards the achievement of the WSIS action lines in the 2030 agenda? Thank you, Ambassador.

>> I think that the term peer review is a formal term. But we are informally engaging in peer reviews right now. That is kind of what the WSIS Forum is intended to do.

But I would remind folks that it's not just states that are responsible for bringing along the creation and development of an inclusive information society. It's the responsibility of all stakeholders and it's something that we need to do together.

I want to reiterate that this year, the next very few, very important conversations that are going to occur, the OECD conversation which will deal with the digital economy in this space and also Mexico is doing too this year, the internet governance forum as well will be in Mexico, but one of the things that I wanted

to ask Victor was as the chief information officer for your country, if you were giving advice to another country setting up a chief information officer, what are the two things you would tell them they should think about when they construct the office.

>> Thanks, Ambassador. The relevance for us three years ago we created the coordination unit and then the office was to be able to gain visibility for the agencies. The visibility came as to learning what we are doing for ICT deployment, and ICT strategy, within each of the, each and any and all ministries, at the federal, state and municipality levels.

That gives us first the purpose and the information to then gather and aggregate more and more knowledge, and then deploy public policy based on more and more information.

Three years later, for example, after launching the ICT policy at the federal level, we were able to gather information for 5,000 ICT investment projects, that basically gave us information at a very detailed level as to where the budgets were going, and what are we doing on investment, are we doing X, it's a work in



progress. But definitely it's gaining momentum and gaining value as we go along.

The other one really is about thinking better what the role in government is for certain policies that are newer, for example Internet governance and what is the role within the multistakeholder approach, multistakeholderism. That is the reason why we asked to host the IGF this year and the United Nations was kind enough to grant us the opportunity.

The reality is that we still need to strengthen the ecosystem in Mexico, but this actually gives us the opportunity to do so at a very quick pace, and to gather the different stakes or the different holders of those stakes, and increase capacities and increase knowledge and increase transparency around the governance model. Within that of course, you are all welcome. We are very happy to host the governance forum starting December 5 this year. It sounds far away but it's really very short time frame for us.

>> KAREN McCABE: Be here before we know it. I believe our WSIS Action Line Facilitator had a response.

>> Now it's working. I wanted to get back to the question on the reviews actually in the area of ICT. I wanted to say that there is a mechanism for national reviews of implementation on the Sustainable Development Goals and those would be conducted in the high level political forum on sustainable development in New York. The member states decided it wouldn't be peer review actually. They would be a review that is conducted at the national level, under the leadership of the government.

There is an insistence that they are voluntary, and give accelerated implementation through the exchange of experience that will happen. As my colleague from ITU was saying it would be actually important to use those reviews to so reflect on the strategies that governments are using for the Sustainable Development Goals, form of ICT to realize SDGs. And what ambassador was saying on the need to so review the engagement of other stakeholders beyond governments, there is also a provision in this high level forum that civil society, private sector, can volunteer to review their own contribution to progress



on the SDGs, and then there will be a discussion among the member states.

>> KAREN McCABE: Thank you very much. We are nearing the end of our time for this session. But before we close, I wanted to ask our panel if there was any last closing remarks or statements you would like to make.

With that, thank you very much. I hope everyone enjoyed the dialogue. We look forward to the next session. Thank you.

(applause).

(pause).

>> Good afternoon. Welcome to session number 5, on bridging the digital divide. To refresh your memory on how this works, each analyst -- you can hear me, welcome again to session number 5 on bridging the digital divides, which is about inclusion and is one of the subjects that has been of great concern during the WSIS process.

Before I turn over to the panelists I want to remind you about how this works. Each panelist is going to get two questions, which I request them to

answer in two and a half minutes. After we have been through the panel, we will come to audience questions and to remote questions.

Anybody in the audience that has a question, you can submit them to the help desk on my right.

I would like to begin with our first speaker, His Excellency, Minister of communication and information technology in Ethiopia. My first question to you is, what is the state of the digital divide in Ethiopia, where does the gap lie?

>> Thank you very much. I'd also like to thank our audience for being here. Coming to the point you mentioned, we have been hearing a number of issues regarding the digital divide by today. So in relation to our context, I want to mention two main issues of concern in regards to my country.

Of course, where there is an issue it will be also raised but less raised in our case, one is access. Access is still a serious issue, access in terms of physical networking. Dimension of access, we have the problem about this quality, be it computers and gadgets who can help the people to surf the

available network, for another dimension of access devices as I said. The other thing that we can, the convention is about the bandwidths that is available for person. This can be taken as access, quality about bandwidth divide. A major concern with access, people cannot afford them, they cannot use it. Of course the issue is still another issue that we have to address.

The other major issue is use of network. When we say use it's about knowledge and skill, through the information that are available on the network. This also is expressed in many forms. One is about understanding the available materials on the Internet. This is about education. It is about also language. This is also a hurdle for the people to make use of what is available. This is part of digital divide, called knowledge divide. We need skill, skilled knowledge, not only access, not only network but also knowledge, use the information to add value to your life. At the end of the day it's about poverty allegation, so these are the major issues we raise in our country, the digital divide.

>> Thank you, sir, it's a compelling answer. If I can follow up what are the government's plans to bridge the digital divide?

>> As I mentioned briefly, the issue are not only technical, at the end of my statement I said it's about poverty allegation, so address digital divide, address poverty at the same time. We have to look for employment so that people can get income to use the network. Of course those are dependent. Cannot simply work on poverty but have to work on digital divide, so you have to have a plan, have an understanding of the situation. We are also reviewing to address digital divide by developing a new broadband plan, national broadband plan. With this we will work on our infrastructure. However going forward as I said there is still a gap. The proper infrastructure has to expand to more areas. The most challenge for us is rural because more than 80 percent of the country is rural populated. It is a big country, in size and population. Infrastructure development is one of our intervention, broader access in many forms as I said but we have to have some

community centers in the villages, because any farmer, or any poor cannot own smart phone. Also supporting the private sector, developing some plans so people can get with low cost, and another plan is to import low cost appliances and subsidize by the government so that the poor can be able to pay. We are working on the access side in many forms.

At the same time we are establishing special community centers. These centers are used, this is working intermediaries for the poor, so the skill gap, the knowledge gap is being addressed by such intervention. But at the end of the day, you have to provide education. But it will take some time. There is no easy and magic bullet to treat all the barriers in digital divide. We are going step by step. So there is a short term, midterm and there is agenda is long term. You cannot addressing by simply establishing infrastructure. So this comprehensive approach, but divided into different categories and time line. Thank you.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you, sir, my next question is to His Excellency from Gabon, Minister

from Ministry of digital economy and posts. My first question to you, sir, is what are the policies implemented by Gabon to bridge the digital divide?

>> Thank you. As my colleague from Ethiopia just said the digital divide is a real issue in Gabon. The digital divide means the exclusion of large proportions of the population from the use of ICTs, and their applications, and from all of the opportunities offered by ICTs. Gabon has adopted a number of strategies to reduce the digital divide. The first thing which was done was to draw up a plan which is called digital Gabon plan.

It is a systematic plan aiming to equip the country with a broadband infrastructure, on a large scale to allow the use of broadband. So at the moment in Gabon, we intend to construct a fiberoptic network which is going to enable the progressive provision of all of the services, particularly in rural areas, because we see the digital divide particularly between rural and city areas. So what we can do is offer to remote areas all of the technologies which are provided via fiberoptic.

At the same time, the private sector is contributing a great deal to assisting government in these efforts. This is how in Gabon, for example, the level of mobile Internet penetration is 67 percent whereas the level of mobile penetration is around about a hundred, 180 percent. So there are already opportunities for us to further improve the situation with ICTs once the infrastructure is in place.

But what I will say is that private enterprises are doing a great deal to assist the government in this, and they are progressively moving on to 3G and 4G standards.

This allows us at the moment, as I said, to further develop the use of mobile Internet. But the state would also like thanks to universal service to go beyond this, and to very swiftly progress in bridging this digital divide in order to assist people in the areas not covered by technology at the moment, to allow them to benefit from ICTs.

So they have the establishment of a broadband infrastructure together with assistance from the private sector. That is what we have in Gabon in

order to enable us to progressively address the digital divide.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: You have answered this in part but if I can ask, what are the incentive regulatory measures that you are using in Gabon to concretize this digital potential that you describe, and to incentivize conducting of discussions to bridge the digital divide in Gabon?

>> Can you repeat, please?

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: If I can ask, you touched upon this in your answer, what are the incentive regulatory measures that you are using to incentivize?

>> Please, my translation is not good.

>> Could you please repeat the question?

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: My apologies for the technical trouble. I was asking, what are the incentive regulatory measures that Gabon is using to concretize this digital potential that you just described?

>> The first thing that Gabon is doing is to bolster investment, so that we can contribute better to the sectors, and to bring investment to those sectors, Gabon is first planning to set up a legal



framework, a regulatory framework that is stable in nature. That's what the government has done in fact over the past few years.

So now we have robust framework with a regulatory authority, and the state has moved to a situation in which the environment is very stable and predictable one for investors. Another thing we have done besides developing infrastructure, is to establish a network in which digital businesses can flourish, and we have the e Gabon project. This is a systematic project which seeks to develop a number of different applications, eEducation, eHealth, and alongside that economic operators are developing applications which are very widespread now, mobile banking, mobile money have already been mentioned. And we can pay bills now in Gabon through our mobile terminals, water bills, electric bills. This is a positive step and something which is quite unprecedented in our country.

In the near future, we are going to create another which will allow us to move towards a single telecommunications market, and we will also offer universal service which will be of great interest and

very useful for the population.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you. My next question will be to His Excellency, Vice Minister for policy coordination, Ministry of Internal Affairs and communication, Japan.

My question for you, sir, is in what way should we effectively use technology to bridge the digital divide?

>> Thank you very much. In order to bridge the digital divide it is important to put the result of the recent ICT innovation to effective use. The speed of advances in wireless communication technology as represented by 5G and the Internet of Things, is particularly remarkable. It is essential to harness these technologies in order to put in place ICT infrastructure at low cost.

In the wireless communication technology there is a tendency to focus on developing and providing advanced services. However, from the point of view of bridging digital divide, we should accelerate effort to use technologies to their full potential. Today, I'd like to introduce three initiatives in this area

from Japan. First, the first is use of TV white space. In order to redress the advance of information access in rural area in collaboration with Indonesia and the Philippines, we have been carrying out the experimental implementation of wireless broadband systems that make use of the unused frequencies of TV broadcast.

The second is a use of mark up wireless technology, using the technology developed by national institute for ICT research and development, in the collaboration with Cambodia, Japan has been implementing an experimental method of providing rural area with a kind of solar powered environment that enables high-speed data sharing.

The third initiative used wi-fi technology, Japan has been promoting a pilot project in Nepal to provide wireless Internet access to schools and medical clinics in mountainous regions. This project continues to provide the target area with Internet access. These are just some examples of initiatives that we have been undertaking. We believe that sharing, verifying and implementing the best practices

of each country will contribute greatly to the bridging of the digital divide. Thank you very much.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you. It's great to hear of these innovative approaches. If I can follow up, how should we double up human resources in order to bridge digital divides?

>> Thank you very much. The development of human resource is most important in order to continuously address the issue of bridging the digital divide. This is currently under way in many countries. But we need to implement practical programmes with clear goals of how many human resources should be developed, in which field and by when.

It is also very important to use that BDCA cycle, Japan has been preparing programmes for human resource development including the deployment of expert, primarily for the Asian region, but these cannot be said to be comprehensive at this point. While the development of human resources takes time, ICT innovation continues to advance at remarkable speed.

So the question of how to carry out human resources development, that takes such technological

advances into account is an issue that needs to be addressed. From this point of view, we believe it is essential to take action to create comprehensive programmes that count for technological progress, including ICT education, training, to be professional and deployment of ICT expert.

As such programmes reach beyond the scope of single country implementation, and can be used on a global level, one way of proceeding could be for all countries to pool their knowledge with the aim of developing programmes that can be used universally. Thank you very much.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you for that. My next question is for Secretary-General of ASIET. What is the situation of the Latin-American region in the context of the digital divide?

>> Thank you very much. I will speak in Spanish. Latin America has undergone a massive social, economic and technological change over the past 50 years, and today, thanks to mobile technologies, practically all homes in Latin America have telephony which is something that a very short while ago was the preserve

of the privileged few. Internet users have increased very quickly. There are many more bandwidths now and prices are low in real terms.

The number of people who are connected is much higher. However, in spite of all these steps forward, there are still many swaths of the population which aren't connected. More than half of Latin-Americans don't use the Internet. More than 60 percent of homes have no means of connecting. And there are major disparities between the regions' different countries, within each country access to Internet is highly correlated with income and level of urbanization. This is unacceptable.

So while some Latin-Americans are living in the 21st century, the other half, the poorest are still in the 20th century. The digital divide is in fact the divide of inequality. So all of us, governments, regulators, companies, and civil society, need to work together to close this gap over the next ten years. It's not easy to face this challenge.

We need huge amounts of investments in telecommunications infrastructure. More than

\$400 billion over the next 7 years according to our estimates. In fact costs in the region for many services is low but there is a high level of regulation. This can sometimes lead to increases in costs. Spectrum allocations are still lower than what the ITU recommends. And taxes on the sector are increasing by the day, in spite of lower prices restrictions on family's incomes, particularly the poorest families' incomes are preventing them from taking out Internet contracts.

We need to go to the bottom of the pyramid, and set up new initiatives to make all of these technologies more affordable, while also ensuring that investment in the sector is sustainable.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you. That is very concrete. These initiatives that you describe that might be helpful, would you be able to tell us a little bit about them?

>> Well, there are two things that are very clear in Latin America. The first is that we have a ethical, moral, economic and social imperative to close this digital divide. That is something that we



need to tackle right now. The second thing to mention is that this is not easy. The first step in our opinion is to understand the complexity of the challenges that we face, and ensure that government policies, all of them, not just sectoral policies, but all policies, are consistent with that overall goal.

We believe that the priority in government policy should be focusing on those who aren't yet connected. There are many legitimate interests here, and some of those are held by those who are already connected. But we need to focus on those people that haven't yet got connected. It's a matter of priorities. If those who are already connected can't make progress, those who aren't certainly won't be able to. We need to create a environment of trust which will allow companies in the long term to forge greater stability and certainty. We need coherent regulatory framework with technological neutrality, which avoids unfair competition. We need to ensure that telecommunications infrastructure is rolled out at low cost, often government policies in Latin America don't foster this type of environment. We also need to make

sure that telecommunications contribute strategically, and that that is not based on tax revenues.

We need to focus on social aspects and economic aspects, and base all of this on a connected society. Unfortunately, the powers that be in the financial areas of our countries don't always realize this. We have very high taxes of various different types. Base prices for tenders, for radio electric spectrums don't help with these goals. It seems that in many countries there is a preference for high tax revenues from spectrum, rather than investment in lower prices. So the priorities are wrong.

When people say that in Latin America, telecommunications are expensive, we forget that it's because of the state that that's the case. We also need to facilitate trade flexibility, commercial flexibility, so that we can combat all of this.

Pay as you go has been a massive contributor to making mobile telephony more Democratic. That is something that we could bring to the Internet sector as well. We often import debates from the first world, when we are talking about areas where the

digital divide is already being closed but we need to take a different approach in Latin America.

We also need to look at terminal prices. Tariffs have a great role to play there as well. We need to work with manufacturers to reduce those costs. We all have responsibility in all of this. Companies need to innovate and compete. Internet providers need to offer good value for money. And government policy can prioritize the closing of the gap.

We need to face this challenge together with leadership and a sense of urgency. That should be our number one priority in Latin America. Thank you.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you. I want to remind the panel that we have roughly twelve minutes left and we already have some questions that I want to make sure to ask you. If I can request you to keep your responses brief. I know it's awful being towards the end of any panel. Our last speakers are.

(microphone feedback).

Bigger picture approach to this, the next speaker is Mr. Alex Wong, senior Director and head of the future of the Internet initiative at the World



Economic Forum. If you could tell us what factors contribute most to the digital divide globally.

>> Thank you very much. We actually, I'll start by saying that ten years ago the World Economic Forum had an initiative called the global digital divide initiative. Some of you probably were involved, and I'm dating myself because I was involved with that, and I have some gray hairs now. I think ten years later we are at a moment where we can't lose the opportunity again to transform ICT Internet for all, connect the unconnected, next 1.5 billion, ITU initiative on 2020, unprecedented opportunity to take a different approach because I will say openly ten years, 15 years ago, the attention to closing the digital divide was not successful.

Statistics have shown over the last ten years that the rate of Internet access and adoption is slowing down, not increasing. Furthermore, the data is showing that those that do have access to the Internet are the ones that are economically prospering and those that do not, the gap is rising. This is a critical issue and at the forum, we have made a lot of



noise about the fourth industrial revolution, that is undergoing yet, how can we talk about that when 60 percent of the people are not on the Internet.

Our approach therefore in a initiative called Internet for all, last year has been to assemble the thought leaders and thinkers and doers in the space, over the last several months, to produce first of all a framework that says that this time around we have to approach this through an ecosystem and we address a variety of issues at the same time.

His Excellency Minister from Ethiopia alluded to this in his speech. We have simplified the framework into four main barriers, that have to be addressed by policymakers, by private sector, by civil society at the same time if we are going to move the needle. That is around first of all infrastructure, having the physical infrastructure in place to allow connectivity to take place. The second is affordability. Making this affordable so people can as per the ITU guidelines less than 5 percent of their monthly income should be spent on ICT. That affordable means under 5 percent of monthly income.

There is a variety of ways to do that through both regulatory and other measures. The third being skills and awareness. There is a lot of people who don't even understand what the Internet is or not even know what the internet S. people need to be trained and people need to understand what are the benefits of the Internet. Finally relevant content. So people have a reason to go to the Internet and not necessarily surf Facebook or trade what's up messages.

Those are the four elements that we hope this time around we can work together to take a more comprehensive approach to achieving and closing the digital divide.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you. That is very helpful. You have already answered this question somewhat but if you had to prioritize particular steps that governments and other stakeholders have to take, what would you prioritize?

>> I will take a different perspective. Equally at the same time, and it's the nominal that we have so many people, organisations, now working on this issue, so it's a hot topic, again, and donors and foundations

are looking at this issue again and for governments, this is now a unprecedented opportunity to leverage the momentum to get the resources to make the difference.

I would say another critical element that has to occur this time around is better coordination. If you are a Minister, not to have 20 different offers from 20 different companies and governments to do a bit of your solution, when you don't have necessarily the time or capacity to handle those all, and on the global level we also have to get our act together, so we are globally also at least trying to adhere to the same story line and try to coordinate where we can.

I would say the second element that we have a tremendous opportunity to as we start this new phase of opportunity is how can we improve global coordination, global regional level and how can we make sure our governments and the people that we are all trying to serve therefore can benefit by having a much more efficient collaborative approach to how we address the issue.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Our next speaker is from



Eurolinc. Should local (off microphone) Be usable on line.

>> I'm going to speak French. I can see that our organisation is on the screen. So we have skipped the speaker according to what was announced in the original list. So I'll tell you what EUROLINC is, it's a nonprofit organisation, it was created slightly before WSIS to lobby, so that natural language can be used on the Internet. Before, everything had to be written in the American, alphabet and there were restrictions but there is still a great deal to be done. Eurolinc lobbies in this area. We have nowhere official authority but we seek to ensure that the enter alternate can be recognized in native languages and the idea spread very quickly. Why should natural languages be used? Children begin by learning the native language, that is what they first speak and then writing is the second stage, and for many people around the world, written language is more difficult to understand than the spoken word.

Obviously, education is key to this. But it's always going to be more difficult to understand the

language that is not a natural one, even if someone is familiar with foreign languages.

Anyway, the idea of being able to speak so to speak to the Internet is not without its complications. Obviously, the Internet can speak. That's been the case for some time. But if someone wants to speak to the Internet, that is a bit more difficult, because the Internet might not understand what they are saying. There might be misunderstandings and the Internet isn't always necessarily able to respond to your question if it doesn't know the answers.

So that is where the needs that we lobby for arose. These are very key problems to tackle, and a lot of research has yet to be done on this. In my opinion, however, it's a crucial area of research, if the Internet is to penetrate all those areas of the world where unwritten natural languages are used, and where the local populations aren't necessarily trained in other types of communication.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: I'm going to move on to our final speaker from the Africa ICT Alliance, the

Chairman. I was hoping we could save your question for the audience if that is because we have so little time that the audience won't get a chance to interact with the speakers at all, if that is okay with you.

>> Okay. Second question is also interesting. But I'm waiting for your questions.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: I'll ask you the second question. Is a centralized authority sustainable? No? Okay. I apologize. That is the question, in case anyone wants to ask the question.

What steps should be taken to bridge the digital divide?

>> Thank you very much. Let me first and foremost appreciate the WSIS action line agencies of United Nations, ITU for their active role in this space. In fact, the efforts has brought about the Africa ICT Alliance four years ago, we started with six countries. Now there are 25 countries that have small businesses and ICT players. This is part of bridging the digital divide, bringing the local players together, sharing information, towards the shared goal of fulfilling the promise of the digital



age for everyone in Africa.

Well, the speakers have spoken before me, they have actually tackled the topic, many have done excellent work. But I'll emphasize a few points. Number one, the multistakeholder approach is very key in strategy formulation, in implementation, policy development. In fact with this delegation, we have for the private sector digital allocation so the multistakeholder approach is taking place across Africa. Recently, the National Security Council formed in Nigeria asked all stakeholders as members, so it's really good because you can get all the best ideas through this approach.

The second point is about e strategies. I recall the past ten years there were this e strategies developed across Africa or developing countries engendered, I think this needs to be review as an approach. We need to bring it upstream. The other point is the issue of a peer review. We talked about at the last session. It is very important. We need to participate in this forum. We need to be involved, even across regional group, because by comparing

notes, we can easily see what we still need to do.

Indeed, I recognize the roles being played by Japan, by the United States, and many other countries in this regard.

We need to engage more. The other point is regards to cooperation and collaboration. A lot of speakers emphasize this. We need to do that more across regional organisations. The issue of expansion of ICT skills has been mentioned. Upgrade of school curricula, that has been mentioned. And also creating a universal access, and drop down in prices. The richest man in Africa said something recently, he said that countries need to be creating jobs, and the environment for people to come, investors come, but now you begin to slam taxes upon them. So we need to remove tax barrier like 11 countries did in East Africa, promoting one network, removing barriers of communication. That has increased participation of citizens in East Africa. I want to encourage all Africa countries to join this initiative to make life better for everyone.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you so much. I'm going

to ask you a second question, because in particular because it relates to Mr. Pouzin's question, in view of advances in technology what can be done to avoid the digital divide?

>> Absolutely. New advances are welcome every time but the solution is continuous engagement. Continuous training and capacity-building. We need to provide skills that people need, but it takes time. We need to work on it consistently, developing the skills of the people. WSIS action line leaders continue the process of engagement. Thank you.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Coming back to you about your second question, is centralized Internet authority sustainable?

>> Yes.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: That is a very short answer.

>> You are asking the room or asking myself?

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: I was asking you.

>> Should I state the question, all right, the question was, is a single authority in charge of DNS sustainable in Internet. You know the DNS, domain name system, it has to do with languages of course,



because it's supposedly helping people to remember.

So of course the domain names are names. When we use names they mean something to people. They obviously are going to be conflicts, conflicts of name too similar or just identical.

The DNS doesn't handle that kind of condition. Actually DNS is managed by a monopoly. As you know, monopoly are more in the business of making money than providing services that users really needs, especially when the names are common to a particular language. For example, Hindi, for example, Arabic and so on and even French. It doesn't make it easy for the computers.

But it could be handled anyway. But the problem is that it takes a lot of bureaucracy to get some new names in the domain name system. For example, it took something like five or six years for Bulgaria just to get its country code in Cyrillic. Furthermore it's very explicit in the Tunis agenda that no country should be interfering with the way a country has their own specific domain names.

That is a problem with organisation in which no

control is possible.

Now, the costs are much too high for small countries, or for let's say small businesses. That's it. Now, the companies need some more flexibility. They need to have the ability to use their own specification of names. In other words, they need the freedom to create names that are applied to their own organisation, to the way they handle their clients, their businesses and so on. So that is the kind of thing that is to be developed in the future.

Actually, having independent DNS happened before, it started in 1975. But so far it remains a discrete business. Another exception is China. More than 7 billion people who speak some kind of Chinese, there are several Chinese languages, they are totally independent of the monopoly. You also have extranets which are independent systems which are created by company for their own users. That is a lot of reasons for having independent system within Internet. Thank you.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you. We have a question for His Excellency the Minister from Ethiopia. When

you go step by step to address the digital divide, how do you decide what issue to address next?

>> Well, when I say step by step, the starting point is the infrastructure. Without the infrastructure, there is no ICT access at all. And you cannot cover usage. But I mean there must be a synchronization of the different activities. There must be step by step flow of activities in bridging the gap. But it doesn't mean you develop one and you continue with another, a new one. There must be a overlap of activities. There must be synergy. But infrastructure development will be given access, otherwise you can't do anything. Education takes its own course, it takes a number of years, in comparison to education, infrastructure is just short of term but education we cannot. We have to provide a solution for that. As I mentioned in our experience we have two intermediaries. You can do some work but it takes years. So in comparison to infrastructure education will take long.

There must be intermediaries who help support until they are educated by their own, by themselves.

Affordability, as I said it is linked with poverty evaluation. We have to improve the standard of living. The poor in particular have to have some more money to invest or to use to buy packages necessary for the connection. Until then, there must be again as I said some intermediary steps that we have to follow. In our case we have to establish this. We have community centers so the poor can be served by the centers. There are different mechanisms that you can do as the first stage but you have to build. Analysis at the end of the day, the main points to underline is unless you address poverty you can't simply address digital divide. You can go some step but we need to address poverty, considering the poor which is the most important, when you say there is a digital divide. The poor, in terms of countries and population as well, so to address that, at the end of the day it is you have to address. This requires a comprehensive approach and step by step approach. You cannot decisively address digital divide in one stroke. That is the point.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you. The final question

from remote participant is directed to all the governmental representatives on the panel. I'll read it out to you. If you would like to go in order depending on who would like to take it from the Chairman up to myself, starting from that side, then I think that might work.

Natalie wants to know why no one is mentioning the effort made by Facebook and Google to bring the Internet to the most remote and underserved areas of the planet. Is there an opposition to these projects in government circles?

>> Thank you very much. I can speak to that question. There are multiple initiatives trying to use private sector solutions to bring digital access to unconnected individuals, that Google Loon initiative was one that was mentioned as well as the Internet.org initiative out of Facebook. But one web and space sets and a number of other parties, Microsoft with white spaces projects, there are, there is a real incentive for those who have come out of the blessing of being connected to the Internet as original first comers to bringing everyone else on to



the network. There are network benefits for everybody on the network to add, additional users to the network. I'm heartened that this panel has focused on both Africa in particular because there is a immense amount of potential in Africa and Latin America, and I think that our colleague from Japan just returned from the G7, where the G7 has made a joint commitment to refocusing on connectivity and our colleague from the World Economic Forum has also brought to our attention the joint initiatives that are starting to occur from the private/public, to public/private mechanisms for connectivity.

But we believe there is going to be a need for a immense amount of experimentation in this space, and there are going to be people who will not be able to afford connectivity to the Internet on their own. We have to start talking about models that enable either the subsidization or for the sender to pay for the access to that content. What we need to ensure that human rights are preserved, the openness of the Internet is preserved that innovation is preserved, while we have multiple challenges going on at any one



time, we should encourage as many different efforts as possible throughout the world. Thank you.

>> Thank you very much. I think this is pretty much interesting in the sense that the discussion should be also taking into account the debate between universal access and digital divide, but having said that there are many organizations that are trying to promote universal access in the sense that they would like to provide for free Internet connectivity. But the question is, if I have got my data and it becomes part of the big data, and the provider of connectivity is going to use that for market entry, and getting some return on investments, without probably my consent because the data is traded across the world, and individuals and communities who may not have the education to determine what will happen with their data, when they give it to a child and post it on Facebook, and then it becomes a profiling criteria and so forth. The issue of the rights in terms of privacy law is critical in this element.

I think there is a fear of the unknown, particularly in rural communities where the literacy

level is not that high. And there is no legal framework, policy framework and regulatory framework to manage the technologies particularly when you have things like the Internet of Things, communication, convergence of that with big data and also with intelligence. This is reality today.

Education, capacity-building, initiatives on the part of government is critical. Thank you.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Would anyone else on the panel like to respond?

>> Thank you very much. Though the question was addressed to the government, but permit me to provide this input. Well, I think from business perspective, there is always value, there has to be value for investment. But what is key is that when we make demand for transparency, there has to be accountability in the process. We must not lose sight of the benefits. We want to have people connected but we can also set standards. There is a government that said the Council, eLearning, close all of them down, so instead we should set some standard. We should set up processes to ensure you get the maximum benefits



from this because we want to bridge the divide and we want to get people connected. We want to achieve the information society of our dream. Thank you.

>> I just had two ideas. The first one is that the perfect is the enemy of what is merely good and therefore what we need to do is try to have a flexible environment for innovation, without any preestablished dogma, where there is initiatives can be developed. As Ambassador Sepulveda indicated without any rigid structure, so as to ensure that this flexibility can take place. That is what I wish to say.

>> CHINMAYI ARUN: Thank you very much. I'm afraid we are out of time. So I have to thank you for a really interesting discussion. We will be summarizing this tomorrow afternoon in the computing session at 4:30. Thank you so much for your patience and thank you to all the speakers and all the panelists.

(applause).

>> Can I invite all the speakers for our final closing panel on enabling environment to come and take a seat. Apologies to everyone in the room for us

running late. Don't leave. It will be worth staying.
This is the most important action line of all.

>> Ladies and gentlemen, if you can take a seat, please don't leave the room. Welcome to this final session of the day. I was serious when I said earlier that all action lines are not equal. Enabling environment is the context, is the action line that underpins everything else. And also the one that ensures the sustainability. And for us going forward, after the WSIS+10 review, this action line of enabling environment now also has the challenge of integration with the Sustainable Development Goals.

I will introduce myself, you will have it up there, I'm Anriette Esterhuysen, from South Africa. I'm from civil society. I've been involved in the WSIS from the outset. My organisation, associations, progressive communications, has been involved since 2000.

I'm not going to introduce the panel. Even though it's an extremely esteemed panel, but we don't have time. The organizers have made all the information available.



The format you are now used to the format, we won't have speeches. We won't have inputs or written statements or read statements. We will have questions.

I'm going to plunge in, and ask the first question of the private sector representative from Nokia. From your perspective, as a representative of the private sector, what does enabling environment mean to you? Enabling environment for connecting, everyone, connection for all, but even more broadly, enabling environment for an effective information society that is inclusive as well as sustainable.

>> Hello, is this working? Yes. Thank you. Enabling environment, I think we all get into connected mode and if you look at it, it radically changed the way we are living and working. We have a lot of examples. We heard today about the way that eHealth can improve the well-being of people at lesser cost. We heard about eAgriculture, eEducation all use cases that can be enabled by this connected society. What is underpinning this is broadband. The fact is not everyone is connected. We need to make sure that

we get into an enabling environment to enable investment in infrastructure, because that is the basis of everything. When we talk about enabling investment in infrastructure, we talk about policies, we talk about making sure we have a transparent and investment incentive for the private sector, but also reduction of the deployment cost of broadband is important. And policies around tax. We can talk about, for instance, the way to share infrastructures in areas where it would not give internal investment to invest price. There are other things like for instance public/private partnerships which are important as well and as investments model, and other things like spectrum.

We know that spectrum is very important. We need to make sure that spectrum is allocated in the right way. These are examples of policies which needs to be looked at to make sure that broadband actually gets everywhere. But as I said it's not only that. Then you have all the data policies on top of it. If you do not have a data friendly environment, then having a broadband infrastructure is not helping. Those are

two examples of what enabling environment can mean.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: The challenge of it, that it requires an integrated approach, it requires regulation and policy. It requires vision and it requires a broader framework for which involves the free flow of information, human capacity development. But would anyone else on the panel, from your perspective, either as a Minister or from a regulatory agency, what do you feel in a nutshell, what does having an enabling environment for an inclusive information society in place mean to you? First to the mic. Then for the sake of gender, not because I'm a South African but because she is the only woman on the panel, I'm going to have the deputy Minister from South Africa respond first. Then we will have Singapore.

>> Thank you very much. For us, really creating an enabling environment is also about bringing about certain for all stakeholders, from the private sector, government, civil society, and creating what brings everybody together to focus on the value of the collected society.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Thanks, good, short and to the point. Mr. Leong, what is your view? They work when you start talking. Have faith.

>> 1, 2. Actually, I thought enabling environment is broader, in a sense that if you are looking at particularly about information society, I will say enabling environment is not just government, nation to some extent but really it is working together with many parts of the machinery to make sure that you create an enabling environment, so not just from infrastructure, not just from policies but I think also other goals which information society will require like healthcare. You need to work with other parts of the healthcare, education, etcetera.

I think it's a much bigger enabling environment that we will need in order to create a true information society.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: This is open to anyone on the panel. Has this been challenging for you, developing countries and all countries tend to struggle with issues which require coordination and cooperation and integration between different



ministries and departments. Here we also have the need for integration and cooperation with other stakeholder groups, working with the private sector, and involving the technical community and civil society. This is challenging. Is there anyone on the panel who would like to share how you have experienced this challenge? And maybe what lessons you have learned from overcoming the difficulty of achieving this kind of vertical and horizontal approach.

>> I can take an example, on the organisation of spectrum at the international level. The way this is done is actually coordinating all the ministries and all the operators, all the players in every country, and then in every region, and then in all countries and regions on the world. That is against the challenging approach. What I would also like to encourage when we speak of spectrum which is of course a key enabler for the development of broadband, what is important as an enabler is that we give the certainty of tenure to the people who are going to invest trillions of dollars every year in building networks. We need to give them the assurance that

these networks are going to be protected in the long run, that rules are not going to change after two or three years, where we need 20 years to get the return on investment.

That is the way I think the ITU is coordinating all the countries in the world to ensure that the rules on the user spectrum and the international level are predictable and stable over the years, that if they are going to change, then this is done in a consensus manner, which will not affect the investments which have been made.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Thank you. I would hope there is also some spectrum available on a unlicensed basis for community use and creative experimentation. But I agree. It also requires to be predictable.

Still staying with this -- sorry, we have so little time, but I'll come back to you. I wanted to ask the minister from the Maldives, small island state, very specific problems, how have you approached this challenge of taking the country forward, and trying to establish this type of integrated enabling environment we are talking about?

>> Thank you so much. Maldives being a small island state, it is the most highly dispersed as a nation in the world, 380,000 people living over an area of 90,000 square kilometers. So islands are divided and people will have to travel in between. Digital economy, ICT, Internet is so important for our development, that we adapt a policy of enabling, we enable the environment so that private competitors can come in and do work and make a business out of that. We as a facilitator, the government gets off the back of the private industry. We regulate only so that the private sector can flourish.

I think this policy has so far worked pretty well and this strategy has been in the implementation stage for a long time. We have seen the benefit. We have seen the fruit. We have 200 percent mobile penetration. We have 100 percent 3G coverage to the entire nation. In an enabling environment for me, for the Maldives, is that we give the private sector enough room for them to maneuver. The government coming as a facilitator, as a regulator only and we regulate only areas where there is competition. That

is what we do to enable the environment.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Do you find that rules to protect the public interest and address issues of exclusion, is that the role that you would play in your facilitation?

>> Yes. We do interventions only in extreme circumstances, only that is when the competition is unfair. When we let the competition do the business, and we only intervene to make sure that there is competition only. The players, the industry takes care of themselves. The government is off their back.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: That sounds I think industry likes to hear that. I'm not sure everyone -- anyone else want to respond to that? Is there a general agreement that that is a good way to go?

I wanted to ask Cote d'Ivoire, you have invested a lot in building a information society and also in establishing cooperation. Minister, do you want to share some of your experiences? What are the measures, what are the key measures that you have adopted and how have they worked? How would you

assess and reflect on their effectiveness?

>> Thank you for your questions. In Cote d'Ivoire, we have 93 sector which is developing very quickly at the current time. But we set off in the premise that we shouldn't see ICTs as the end, ICTs are the means and the end should be improving the population's living conditions, bolstering wealth, creating value for the country and so on and so forth. Once we reach that conclusion, all our thinking revolved around everything that could possibly pose an obstacle to achieving that goal of improving living conditions.

Now, in Cote d'Ivoire we have a strategy for this, and it's based on five different pillars. The first of those is the legal and regulatory environment that needs to be sufficiently encouraging for companies, as some of the previous speakers have said. But it also needs to protect users. Next we need to ensure that connectivity is everywhere.

So in Cote d'Ivoire we aim to connect all the departmental capitals, so the economic hubs in the country to the Internet. Next we need to ensure



access, access to facilities and equipment and there are two sides to this, individual access. We have reduced tax by 75 percent and we also have the presidential project called one citizen, one computer. That's been led by the head of state himself. We have another aspect of access which is community access, because we believe that not everyone will be able to have their own smart phone necessarily, but we have this community element. 5,000 cyber centers have been set up all around the country, in urban areas, villages and so on, to allow citizens to have access to those technologies.

Then we move to content. We need to ensure that there is sufficiently interesting and attractive content for users. Users need to want to go to this content which exists. We can't impose that upon them. That is the first thing. The second thing is to make sure that this content is relevant, for instance, a farmer wanting to plant cocoa needs to be able to read about techniques that can help with that. The state needs to save money. Each different user might have a different goal.

We really focus on this aspect of adding value.

The fifth pillar is human resources. For that, we need to ensure that the entire value chain for ICTs has technicians, manpower, people who can build the networks, people that can train users, people that can help with problems, people that can fight cyber crime and so on and so forth.

So, from one end of the chain to the other, we train people, and we have introduced ICTs into primary schools to ensure that all the pupils have access to them. We have done the same thing in secondary schools. We have also set up tertiary education center so that we can ensure that enough people are trained in these technologies. That is part of the broad effort to do that. That is the summary I can give you of what we are doing in Cote d'Ivoire at the current time.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Integrated version. Who in government holds that vision, who is responsible for assessment for maintaining it, and for ensuring that there is sufficient

(no audio).

Sufficient buy-in from other stakeholders, but also from the different sectors of government.

>> But it also works hand in hand with the private sector. We have made sure that the government isn't a competitor for the private sector, that they work together. The government defines and sets up policies and implements plans. We have a very specific and precise plan for the next decade. For instance, relating to the coverage level across the country, the high-speed Internet coverage, centers and so on and we set up those plans in the governmental level. But private sector entities then have contracts with very specific terms of reference, to accomplish those goals.

So we review these on a regular basis. We put right what is wrong with them. And we move forward like that. This year for instance we set up a guideline law which will, as it were, ensure that the state has to achieve certain results, and that private sector entities have to achieve them as well. So there will be obligations on their part towards the population. For instance, we need to ensure that the

state can't ask the population for certain documents anymore, but that needs, that requires a whole process behind it. We need to set up the infrastructure for that to be possible.

This is a policy which we will try and set up which will allow us to achieve these long term goals that we have. The logic behind all of this is results based. We want to be able to measure progress at any time. We have very clear and specific goals so that we can be efficient about it.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: The interpreters will stop working in five minutes. We will continue. I'm hoping we can finish in about ten to 15 minutes. But there won't be any interpretation. Just for those of you that are relying on. Will the captioning continue, Secretariat? Will the captioning continue?

(yes, it will!)

Okay, so the captioning will continue.

Just jumping to Zimbabwe, one of the challenges that developing countries face is this constant catching up. And how do you feel we can in developing countries first strike implementation of WSIS goals to

bridge the divide, do you think it's possible to catch up? And what is your view on that?

>> Thank you very much. I've been attending a number of seminars and conferences. There seems to be a pattern when it comes to less developed countries. But we pay attention, but when we come back home we don't seem to implement what we learned. And then comes the following and it continues. I think the other speakers made the same observation. One lady said she has been attending eight WSIS meetings and to come out with the same thing but with no implementation.

That is what is in Zimbabwe. When I think about it, perhaps if we were to set up some kind of adjustment, I don't want to use the peer pressure, those are some political negative connotations but some peer inducement to spur less developed countries to implement what they learn. Perhaps if we were to take some of these countries and we move together to see what other countries have done in, they can be spurred to move forward and implement.

I also heard one speaker talk about, I think the



President of the confederation of nongovernmental organisations making the observation that there is no effort to get all the stakeholders responsible for supporting the implementation of the WSIS action lines. I also made that same observation. We talk about government, the private sector, the civil society, and the international organisations. As they are and there are many others, we can get a lot of synergies if we are to be systematic in approaching them collectively, to implement the projects in the less developed countries.

The money is there. We are prone to say the money is there but it's not taken up as they might want. This is further evidence that while less developed countries, yes, there is no money, most of them depend on aid. But the money seems to be there according to the President of the confederation of nongovernmental organisation. What is required is really to harness it. And then get all the stakeholders to come in and play.

Allow me to talk about awareness. Awareness is another major problem. If you analyze this audience,

your professors in ICT, doctors, but we have less of legal people. There are other ministries that must actual implement these ICTs when we get home. After talking to each other as we do, when we get home they look at us and say, come back, what do you want to do, and detail is there.

I think again, Mr. Brahim raised the point, let us bring in other ministers to learn what we learn. They are the ones that are supposed to implement.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: That is a key point. One of the most powerful innovations that emerged from the WSIS outcomes is the idea of Internet governance forums and while in the Tunis agenda it's mentioned as a global forum but at a national level it's a very powerful instrument. I know actually it's not coincidence, Cote d'Ivoire has a national IGF, Zimbabwe, you had a successful national Internet Governance Forum last year. I think that can be one mechanism which the visionaries who drafted the Tunis agenda anticipated for that type of awareness raising.

The Minister from Zimbabwe mentioned the need to bring different stakeholder to the table. In

Singapore, you have been successful in maintaining a vibrant ICT industry and having very effective state-of-the-art infrastructure -- vibrant ICT industry. What is it in your regulatory and development approach that has managed to achieve that?

If you can try and be one minute in response.

>> The interpreters like to inform you interpretation has to cease at this point. Thank you.

>> In Singapore, in the context of small country, so it is easily replicated in larger countries. But one of the important approach that we took in the development of nationwide fiberoptic network to every household, at one megabit per second for 30 U.S. dollars is not entirely government driven. It is putting together a set of toolkits including regulations, including incentives, including specific outcomes where we do this.

I think it's, to my earlier point of a whole of X approach, in other words if you want to achieve some of this global or large at a national level it's insufficient for any regulator, any single regulator, any single Ministry to get a crack at it, you need to

have a whole of X and X is not just government but including industry. That is a very important point that I'd like to make.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Thank you. I wanted to turn to deputy Minister from South Africa, and I think one of South Africa's unique characteristics is that it's so unequal and that is one of the legacies of apartheid but also colonialism that South Africa still has to address. It is one of the countries in the world along with Brazil and Jamaica with the highest gap between richest and poorest. How have you approached that, internally, in terms of driving an inclusive digital agenda, that tries to bolster the opportunity presented by this but address this huge gap between those who have and those who don't have in your digital agenda.

>> I think over years we struggled with the question of legislation and different policy perspective but over the past six months, I must say we have consolidated ICT policy review which is generally acceptable not only to government but the private sector, people in academic institution and

these high level discussion now about the digital revolution, which we have not had for a long period of time.

But also, the deliberate leadership which tended to focus on how do we ensure that we roll out broadband or promote natural connections in the deep rural areas which in terms of our history it is a majority of people who are not really included in anything.

In that way, if we roll out programme to schools to help clinics, we have been paying particular focus to those young people in rural areas, and within the school laboratories where teachers are trained and health workers, a special focus has been on rural areas, but also I think what we have seen happening recently really like in the education system, where the educators are moving ahead, we register children on-line now. Ministry of interior, we can issue the identity cards on-line in cooperation with the banks so we see a kind of revolution which is closing the gap between people in rural areas and urban areas.

Also in terms of our own agencies now, we are

streamlining them in such a way that that is special focus on E literacy, so that people who have access to gadgets they can be able to utilize them efficiently and to do things like focusing on their economy which is a measured thing.

The last thing, communication with other government departments is at a different level. This operation is really per se remove all the barriers to education, we use ICT to make sure that you improve your educational outcomes, health, so we talk at different levels, away from the fragmented approach where we cannot engage as government departments. Also our Minister chairing the ICT infrastructure feeding into a broader presidential infrastructure commission.

ICTs seem to be another center of the whole development regime that is inclusive.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Thanks a lot for that. Before we get to our closing remarks, what do you feel from the African Telecommunications Union, you have a big picture perspective of the continent. What do you feel has changed since the WSIS? What do you think

are currently, in terms of bridging the digital divide, what do you think is the primary challenge in Africa at the moment?

>> Thank you. If you look in Africa we will just say that, yes, ten year before there is a lot of things to do. But now, we are not the best, but also we are not the worst. But however, if you look some area, there is area we have to focus very well and especially when you look what now people say about the broadband. It's where Africa is, really needs to do a lot of effort. I'm happy that there are many ministers here. I know they directly implement many broadband policy in African countries. As Africa telecommunications union our work today is to focus on to see that most African country adopt this policy, and we work together with them. Second, we as African organisation, we are looking to be sure that those resource to introduce broadband space awareness in Africa is mostly developed because we don't have anything, so it means that we need a lot of spectrum issue. I'm happy that the BR speak about that. Our role is to be sure that also when we take the Internet

engagement it be good to African country to implement it because it's also a kind of enabling environment because we have to focus on the implementation of the international decision and this is big issue for us, but we are working together all different country, to be sure that resource, while it's not only money but some resource we need and we have to be sure that those existing service will give us a way to do the new service. But also this application I think is not only to do broadband, but what is application. We have to focus on ICT, be sure that application is there. What is application? I think it's really important to focus on the application, and also to create innovation. We have to be sure that our young people use this to create new application and also our regulation should not block initiatives, I think what I want to say that. Thank you.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Thanks very much.

Well, I'm so sorry we don't have more time, and that we don't have time for questions.

But I think the panel has touched on the key issues. There is a need to ensure enabling

environment. You need an integrated approach. You need to look not just at infrastructure and market regulation but also at other policies, both on the demand side and the supply side.

The issue of predict ability is extremely important in order to ensure investment, and I think over the long term, I think the other issue that stood out is the need for a vision.

It's a vision that is, and I can never say these words enough, of a people centered, inclusive information society, that respects human rights and furthers human rights.

We have really good text in our WSIS documents. That is also part of the enabling environment.

Then the need for implementation and application, I think absolutely important. I think an environment that only focuses on opportunity but that doesn't actually analyze where there are measures or regulatory context are successful or not is not going to be a enabling environment.

I would like to ask the representatives from the Action Line Facilitator of the ITU and the Chair, do

you have any closing remarks for us?

>> Thank you very much. The discussion was very fruitful and productive. Let me say that the ITU is really closely following what is going on with the technology and the regulation, and enabling environment is tightly linked with the development of technology. New stage of the regulation is collaborative regulation. It is the future of regulation. We used to have regulation that regulated monopoly and defeat the monopoly, then opened the competition and opened markets, and really good for the end consumers. Consumers got a myriad of different kind of services, applications and content.

I think that any more we in ITU, we think that it's not about infrastructure anymore and Secretary-General also mentioned that. It is now more about the applications and the content. That is reason why the ITU started some initiatives to work to increase the level of cooperation with the member states from different sectors to boost the cross sectoral cooperation. It means ICT sector, health sector, educational sector, agriculture, to find the

best way how the ICT can be used to fully develop the community and society for the benefit of the all citizens. Thank you.

>> Yes, I would like to emphasize one aspect, which I think is important when we speak of the use of spectrum and mobile broadband. What has changed in the last ten years is the fact that people realize that in order to develop broadband infrastructure in the country, and provide at an affordable price, broadband mobile, they need to rely on global harmonization and regional harmonization.

What I see has improved a lot in the last ten years is the role of regional organisations to ensure that we get the best possible organisation of spectrum. We can see already the results of that.

>> What is heartening for me is to hear a, both a positive tone, not just to some of this panel but to many others and a commonality of approach, a focus on ICT not as a end but as a tool by which people can develop themselves and develop any sector in which they have a passion for being competitive or is their particular interest.

I think this commonality of ideas of being an enabling force for the private sector which is really who is driving investment in infrastructure and development, and also investing force in people's skills to use that connectivity, those kinds of commonalities that are coming throughout all of the panels are really critical, and I'm really heartened by it, particularly because I think it marks an evolution from where we have been historically, where this, there really isn't a tone of debate. There is more of a tone of, we know that there are these certain problems and we have to bring different skills and expertise to bear on solutions.

>> ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Thanks very much. I think yes, I think that the vision of an integrated approach to people say developing information society is very difficult to realize, when the infrastructure gap was just so vast, and when access was just so unequal.

Access is still unequal. But there is enough access now, I think in most countries, particularly if you also use the approach that Cote d'Ivoire has



talked about, public access, access in communities to really talk about this and applying this integrated approach to development.

So thank you very much. I want to just remind members of the audience that all the excellent people on this panel have also produced written inputs which will be in the brochure. We will also be extracting some of the really good concrete suggestions and that we have, that's been shared, about how to achieve this enabling environment. Thank you very much to everyone for staying. My apologies that we weren't able to come to you with questions.

Thank you very much to the panel.

(applause).

(end of session at 1735)

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