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WSIS FORUM
ICT APPLICATIONS, ETHICAL DIMENSIONS of INFORMATION
AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETIES AND MEDIA

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>> MEHWISH ABID ANSARI: We will get started and see if we can finish on time for this one. Good morning, welcome to session 14, ICT Applications, Ethical Dimensions of Information and Knowledge Societies and Media. This is the final high policy discussion and it will be more intimate than others. We have two panelists with us there morning, we have Mikhail, dity director of the Russian state library and professor Khondkar, on rarey professor from the University of Dhaka. Thank you for being here today. The panelists will be discussing works they have done and key trends they would like to highlight on the issue of ICT applications as ethical dimensions.

You will be given 4 minutes to respond to each question and you'll feel free to use all of that time or part of that time. It is up to you.

Once the 4 minutes are up, you will see a yellow card raised, that's the indicator so that you will know that you're done. At the end of the moderated segments we will have time to answer questions from the audience and that includes those participating remotely. Going lieu the moderated session, I highly encourage you all to write down any questioneses and send them to the back where the remote moderator sits and they'll bring them up to me and I'll ask on your behalf. Also note that

the panelists provided written policy statements that elaborate on what they'll be discussing with us during the session. If you're interested in learning more about what we're talking about just keep an eye out for the outcome documents for the high-level track which will be published later this week.

I think with that, we can get started.

I'll start with you, I'm pleased to announce you're a 2017 WSIS prize holder for access to information and knowledge in recognition of your work in setting up a national Digital Library. We will talk a bit more about your project to start.

Tell us about the rationale behind your project.

>> RUSSIA: Thank you for the question. We are champions, not prize winners yet, we hope to get there! I think it is unusual that a library is presented here at this forum at this level at the ITU from -- I will give you perspective on why we're here and how we came to be a part of this forum and environment.

A few years back responding to the challenges of sustainable development Russian leadership initiated information society development strategy. We last year had some results that we discussed widely and in the industry and a few tangible results were launching an E-government that everybody has access to and all of the government services are now available online. We're also having online medicine. Technically every citizen of Russia can get appointments in medical institutions online as well. The other one quite pleasingly to us was the Russian launching the national Digital Library. I'll expand a bit more about that over the course of answering both questions.

This year we signed a new installment on the 9th of May of the initiative strategy, it is the D day for Russia, a day later. Information Society, building an Information Society was proclaimed as one of Russia's key to strategic technological economy and also the strategies say that Russia recognizes that Digital Economy will mean new business models, new infrastructure, including information communication, technologies, of course and new educational system that needs to be built. The primary focus is people as usual and we strive to create a new platform allowing for free and convenient access to all available information in digital form and thus enable new knowledge generation using this knowledge in digital form.

We need to create advanced knowledge extraction tools rather than continuing to use Internet as a fancy entertainment network and I think pretty much everyone agrees to that, that that's more or less how we use Internet especially free time. We hope to change that.

What is the national Digital Library of Russia? It is an information system that unites in all the digitalized, of all of the Russian libraries and we have in total about 100,000 libraries in the country. It is a large country compared to the U.K., for example where they have about 4,000 I think public libraries, we have about 40,000 public libraries in Russia.

You can imagine how big the number is. We have a few school libraries and 45,000 school libraries and we have other libraries as well. In total, about 100,000.

The national Digital Library should form a foundation for the information knowledge space as we call it which should serve as the main means of collecting, storing, disseminating the world's knowledge in Russian language as well as over 50 other languages of our country, there are at least 52 official and national languages. We recognize the need to provide free access for our citizens to the most modern knowledge. It is important. Including international Digital Library not only public domain material but also copies of most up-to-date editions and those dealing with corporate laws know what I mean. Most projects in this area in the world only deal with public domain material which is unfortunately becoming obsolete quite quickly. We decided to do the hard way and we started to include the copyrighted material in our library as well.

We have to do something about that and we actually changed the library law and we introduced quite revolutionarily appropriately for 2017 legal copy law where we collect all the copies of the printed materials in Russia. What we have in the Digital Library right now, we have over 40 million copies of different books and other editions and we have connected about 10% of all of those public libraries in Russia to national, Digital Librariys so that the citizens can have free access to all the knowledge from those libraries and over 95% of our material is available online freely for everyone.

Thank you.

>> MEHWISH ABID ANSARI: Thank you very much.

So what's the expected impact that you see?

>> RUSSIA: We have to turn back again to the strategy that I discussed earlier and also actually yesterday the led of the Russian Federation Dell guys also mentioned that. If you listen to that, you will learn more about it.

The main goal of the Information Society development strategy is establishing a knowledge society in Russia. It is quite a turning point for Russia, as you can imagine, and I think it is good that in 2017 we openly state that we're going to build a knowledge-society.

To do that, we must ensure Russian people right to access to objective proven and safe information that will allow for unlocking human potential, improving intellectual capacity, providing for life-long learning, obtaining new competences and broadening one's horizons. This will serve as the knowledge base that will be formed by fostering science developing modern educational projects including online, distance learning and creating a digital system of linked knowledge that's a huge task that we're facing and we're confident that we can manage that.

These online resources must help us to overcome consequences of information overload leading to clear mentality everybody is talking

about right now and inability to adequately apprehend messages bombarding us through mass media and social networks. This has become a major threat as manrents world political events indicate. I hope many people in this room ahad agree to that . Further advancements in the legal system are inevitable, we need to attend to our museum and archive laws to offer more objects to be included in the Russian Digital Library. This will help complete the information knowledge space as this is a system of collecting, storing, providing access to our vast scientific and cultural heritage not only in Russia but also all over the world and while we analyze the places from where people access our Digital Library it is over 100 countries now all over the world.

I need to say that Russian Digital Library is already serving as a test bed for the newest information in communication technologies. We aim to create Russia's own search technologies and show advancements in big data, artificial intelligence and cognitive search. Without all those things we wouldn't be able to create modern knowledge extraction tools which is what the knowledge base is really about if we talk about knowledge spaces.

Ultimately, we want to see Russia emerging as with one of the world's leaders in the areas that formulate the technological basis for the current innovation cycle of sustainable development.

Summarizing I had like to mention three areas where we should see direct effect as a result: First, development of Russia's intellectual potential, the main target of the strategy that I was talking about through free online access to the most up-to-date scientific, cultural, educational resources, creating solid bases for Russia's Digital Economy, contributing to integration of the knowledge society and last but not least as I said already earlier we need to improve Russian legal system including I think the copyright law which is a big thing in every country and is difficult to do anything about corporate law but we'll have to do something about it to make it normal and more up to date to allow for effective knowledge collecting and dissemination.

(Audio issue).

>> UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA: Give a man a fish, you feed him for a day, teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime. Combine that with our own original observation that machines are vital equipments for the healthcare were developed more than 100 years back. If you look globally, you still see the 70% of the global population living in the third world, they don't have -- they don't get the benefit of the two devices which were invented 1 # hundred years back. This is a very -- this cannot be accepted. This is unacceptable situation. If you go in the causes, actually because of many factors are not -- I'll expand on this in this short time -- there is a huge technology disparity globally in the last few centuries causing a huge economic disparity and we see that around us.

Now coming to this technology E. health, if we use equipment, we

had thousands of eHealth devices in each country. If we get the devices from foreign countries which are well developed which is current practice, what happens, the devices fail in a short time. We experience it every day. Because of our whether, power line abnormalities, they -- they fail within 6 months of importing the product, it can fail and because there are a lot of plastics used which cannot be locally made, because of the trade secrets of the manufacturerring and which has been enhanced by the recent embedded software-based devices, it is virtually impossible to repair and maintain a product in a third-world country which is important for a developing country. What happens, you're increasing waste of money, resources and increasing eWaste. I look for that we should -- we can take a clue from our world and you look at Internet and Android operating system and had they been Patented the whole world would still belong behind in the digital era. Just think on it. Had Internet been Patented by some people most of us would not be here today for this business and in healthcare we need IOT enabled devices and software and you need thousands of these devices so that we need to develop capability in each country. That's what my point was.

In fact, the capability exists in all countries, we have scientists, we have electrical, but they're not taught how to design equipment. They're taught how to install the equipment, how to maintain the equipment. There lies the twist. We need RND sort of approach in every country and we have to train these people and it means a very small amount of effort and here we can give leadership from our Bangladesh experience. As I said, we have been 35 years, we have been working on enabled devices and we have a championship here and we're not patenting any products and we want to spread to the third world and welcome anyone from the third world to use our tele medicine, we will give the technology to your scientists and engineers to free to your center and we're setting up an international center for technology equalization.

Thank you very much.

If you have any further questions, if you want to talk to me regarding establishing a transfer of technology and we'll teach your scientists and engineers and we'll collaborate.

Thank you very much.

>> MEHWISH ABID ANSARI: Thank you.

The follow-up to that, you had talked about innovation briefly in your first question.

How important is it to regulate different eHealth innovators and service providers? Should we focus on providing minimum conditions and broad guidelines?

>> UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA: Thank you very much. This is another area which I have brought up from my own personal experience in a third-world country.

In most of the countries what you see is the government governs and regulates every activity of the citizens.

Now, this concepts of governing has become very overriding in the third world. Much more than you experience in the developed countries because most of the third-world countries have the colonial leaders, they're not there to enhance the life of the local people but to grab the local resources and use it for their benefit but the political of most, the mindset, it still remains and, in fact, it has intensified. This policies of regulation and governance, it has local innovators, in Bangladesh a lot of our people have innovation but they're inhibited in their manufacturing and marketing of the products and this also blocks the enhancement of the quality of life of the common people because the people at the top, they get equipment for the lifestyle, for their conditions or whatnot and good hospitals but the people in the village,s they don't have a doctor, they don't have any electrical fan, nothing.

That's why I said that local -- since we need local manufacturing and locals and that goes against a country like ours, if you say how to ensure the quality, unless there is a regulator, now the traditional regulation concept works in the developed countries but not in the third-world because of various effects. Again, I don't have time to elaborate. You can see I think the experience from everyone from the third world that corruption has increased to high-level and that is because of the governance -- it's power of the -- the power of the government and that led to low-quality products. A person with a low-quality product will get it in the market and in health sector, that's a -- that's a dangerous thing in healthcare. We're getting a lot of products that are not up to the mark and they're sold in the country with a mark of standard by the government.

What do we want? My question is, do we uphold traditional practices irrespective of the results or do we find solutions that will give a better outcome? I propose an alternative, to take a queue from our own life, a child is born free. He's not in a prison. He's born free. We teach him some social norms that these are good things, bad things, we have to do the good things, not the bad things. On becoming an adult, if he breaks the norm we put him into -- we take him to judiciary to find out whether he has broken the norms and if proved, then he's put into prison.

Similarly, if we think in terms here that we have WHO, World Health Organized that can prepare specifications of minimal quality for medical products from every conceivable medical product, particularly essential ones and these specifications, if world health spreads to all the third world countries, they should have an expert Committee and they should ratify this with minimum specifications in their own laws.

After that, treat this as guidelines and every person or group that wants to set up or market a product, they sure you had have a brand and when marketing a product, every citizen, if they find support they should test it by an experts and they can apply to the judiciary and there will be a warning and punishment depending on the severity. The point is individual freedom and judgment should be put high and I think that would

give a real solution to get a better quality product rather than regulation in the third-world country. I'm talking particularly in respect to the third-world countries.

Thank you very much.

>> MEHWISH ABID ANSARI: At this time are there questions from the audience? If there are -- would you mind raising your placard so I can recognize you?

>> Thank you for giving me the floor. I'm from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

My concern and question is to the two speakers, one from the Russian Federation and the other from Bangladesh. The specific projects which have been developed, are these integrated within a national development plan, framework, or do they stand alone? Perhaps they can give us more information on this national framework if such a thing exists.

Thank you.

>> Could you repeat the question?

>> My concern is this, since the beginning of the session we are speaking a lot about projects on eHealth, this, that, on national libraries, my concern is with regards to the planning of what we want to do because we want to do many things in our different countries but we have not addressed the development of the plan, implementation of the ICTs, for implementation of the SDGs with regard to the WSIS action lines in the countries are there national development plans in the countries? Is there a national development plan in the countries with regard to ICTs? Thank you.

>> RUSSIA: That's a good question. We were asked that yesterday as well. We're getting there. That's good news. The strategy I was talking about it mentions the goals and specifically references to all of the events that take place in ITU and the United Nations. We take that into consideration. We're now at the stage where we create the national strategy and a good thing, a bad thing, Russia started to think about strategy a few years back, we're gaining our momentum. This year we'll be converting that in concrete plans much like what you were talking about. We don't have that but the good thing is that there are two ways of approaching things. I -- it is funny, I found myself in this capacity of deputy general manager of Russia state library, I have been in business most of my life, about 24 years. There are two ways of approaching business, you either plan for a very long time and then at some point in the future you implement something. Or you do both at the same time or probably in -- you have the American approach, it is not popular in Russia, but you should start actioning of where -- where you think you should action right now rather than wait for a plan and implementation. Nevertheless, that's why we have three projects that are mentioned and it is a foundation, the way we're going with ICTs and the policies and stuff. This year, it is a very important year for us. We'll be converting this strategy into concrete plans into different areas and we'll define the

ministries responsible for executing that with those plans and this will be done this year as well. We'll look more like what you're talking about. We don't have that yet but we're getting there.

Thank you.

>> UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA: I can take that from the last few sentences. (Disconnection). You we can send the sound right across the Internet and (audio issue). So we're improving and learning. This learning process, it has to go on for another 5, 10 (audio issue). Compared to a third-world country. Thank you very much.

>> I want to jump in as well. A very good point that you made. I just remembered that, you know, it may look like Russia's national (audio issue).

>> We're on different planets, but if you think in the libraries, they realize the potential of digitalizing all of the knowledge, actually it was talked about in 1934, if you read about world brain, it was talked about, storing technologically outside of books all of the knowledge, he was talking about microfilms. In 2004 guys in the Russian libraries, three national libraries, they realized we have computers, that's how it started. Now we have a national project that's being -- that there is now -- it is now included as part of the Information Society development strategy. That's an example of the initiative of the field effectively, how it was funneled back up.

Thank you.

>> MEHWISH ABID ANSARI: Thank you very much.

It is excellent to have you two talking to each other. That's exactly what this is meant to do.

We now have a question from a remote participant. I will lend the floor to the remote moderator to ask it.

Thank you.

>> It is from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Most African countries are also facing the same issues as Bangladesh. The fact that local people with a lot of innovations are not given resources they need to produce innovations, local innovation labs have less attention from the governments. So the question is, what strategy do you suggest for innovators to do in order to make the products known? Sometimes they're not even recognized by WSIS.

>> UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA: It is a difficult situation. We face the same thing. I have been working in Bangladesh for 40 years. My innovations, I couldn't convince -- I sort -- for many years, we're getting this.

My strategy would be to create a critical mass, say a lot of our young people, they're now getting attracted, say I have students who could go to U.S.A. with their GPAs, their grades. When they saw that we're doing something for the people and they can learn things, they had to fight with their parents, no, I will not go to U.S.A., I'll go work for Bangladesh. That's things that are coming up. When you have a critical

mass, say our present government has been putting in a lot of resources into ICT and that's actually a positive thing which we have found and still the hardware sector is still negligent. I think gradually what the young people, they're coming up, they're getting new ideas, no, we need to develop -- the government needs to work as a facilitator, it will need some time. When you have a critical mass of people and when they start saying things to newspapers and the media, they come up with success stories, I think that the government will at the end bow down and accept this. It will take some time. You -- you have to think in terms of 10 years, 20 years, not in any instant solution. If you don't do that, even after 20 years you will be in the same point. We should start right now.

Thank you.

>> MEHWISH ABID ANSARI: Raise your placard so I can recognize you if possible.

>> I have not, so maybe I'm not supposed to raise question.

>> MEHWISH ABID ANSARI: That happens fine. I'm credited with the U.N. system.

Continue.

>> First I saw in the heading of this session media, I can see, I can hear, I can smell the media, what happened to them.

Second, the question to the professor from Bangladesh, India in the 1980s, maybe even earlier, it brought them a lot of luck by hosting IBM and it was the start of their computer performance. How do you analyze this case and also a question which is really addressed as far as medical -- let's say IC Ts for health is concerned. It is a challenge to the medical as such.

>> UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA: I'll respond to the first question first.

India, it was bright leadership with a science background, actually that helped India to come up and to help India stand on its own feet and they actually expelled a lot -- their policies actually are in effect providing support to local entrepreneurs and not only IBM but many other foreign companies that are out of India because they founded the local companies and they're given more protection.

In most countries like Bangladesh, we actually -- we have done the opposite. We have done the opposite. We encourage foreign imports rather than local production. I have firsthand experience on these issues and I have been trying to change the policies, but I have failed so far.

Most of the third-world countries, they don't have science, background people in the had high political level. That's an important issue. The modern society is based on science, technology. If you don't understand science and technology and where the country should lead to, we have to focus and he or she, they make a wrong decision and that's happening in Bangladesh, the tax policy was done in such a way in 1998 that all of our electronic industry, they were just destroyed and I have been trying for this for a long time but I couldn't convince them. They were not scientists or sometimes the vested interest, the corruption is

there. These things, you actually need scientific, technological leadership for a country to make proper policies.

In fact, there is another -- in Bangladesh in 1985 there was a government -- of course it was a government that made a good point, it made a new medical policy, a medical draft policy and that actually encouraged those in Bangladesh to produce and now they're exporting to more than 100 countries. Bangladesh medicines.

A lot of foreign multinational groups are out of the groups and they have not done that in technology and ICTs. I have zero tax on things, if you import a tax, you make it locally, it is actually the same colonial tax policies that are still remaining. This is a place where we have to address and think a and we have to think in terms of the government gradually and we cannot just protest -- if we protest. Will no the work.

You have to grow and the ideas have to be spread first among the young people and we have to think in terms of medical quality and pros, we find that most of our -- we have a Bangladesh standard testing level --

>> My question, it is that in the end, the medical corp could be challenged by new technology the same way as all other industries have been challenged banks are going bankrupt because of new technology, they don't need technologies and with media, we need -- we don't need journalists and doctors, medical doctors, they think that they are special Devine nature with other knowledge connected to the heavens, but it is maybe that doctors will also suffer an incredible social crisis in the coming 20 years.

>> If I understand your question right, well, the point -- the thing is, I'm not talking against new technology, I'm inviting new tick knowledge. What I'm saying is that our scientists within the third world, they should be trained in such a way so that they can bring the new technology and improve on it so that they can give it at a low cost in a sustainable manner to all people. That's the vital thing. Computer ICTs, the latest technology, we're using it, we're using it for tele medicine, they don't have doctors, so we have 22 centers now in villages and doctors are living -- we have enough doctors in cities, all of the doctors, they live in cities, they won't go to villages. 70% of the village -- of the national people, the population, they don't have access to a doctor within 10 kilometers.

So we have doctors so that you're using new technology but this -- my point is many government bodies, other people, they're trying to get foreign technology, they're searching out for foreign products and ultimately it was so expensive that they couldn't do it.

Our effort from the University of Dhaka, we have started in a very small way and we're coming up and we have the last few year, we have the maturity with our technology and board certification from our Director General of health and we're now poised to spread our technology to other third world countries. We invite anybody from any third-world country and we're open, we're not patenting, we would like to train people and we need funds for that. That's if there is an organized that will come up to

give us funds I think we can bring a change among the third-world countries in this aspect in getting modern technology in the quality of life in ordinary people.

Thank you for the question.

>> MEHWISH ABID ANSARI: Thank you very much.

I think we're just out of time.

I want to thank the panelists for all of their insights. It was wonderful to hear both of you speak. A round of applause for both panelists.

>> [Applause].

>> MEHWISH ABID ANSARI: And a big thank you to the WSIS organizers for having the high-level policy session and to everyone that's helped putting this together, including the translators for all of their hard work.

Thank you very much. The concluding session for the high-level policy track will take place at 4:30 today.

Please stick around for that and see all of the summaries of all of the sessions that took place over the last two days.

Thank you very much.

>> UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA: I have a session at 2:30 and I'll discuss our program. Thank you.