

COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)

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**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system and elsewhere on their efforts in
2013 to implement the outcome of the WSIS**

Submission by

UNCTAD

This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the UN Secretary-General on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (to the 17th session of the CSTD), in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2006/46, to the UN Secretary-General to inform the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS as part of his annual reporting to the Commission.

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

UNCTAD input to the annual report of the Secretary-General to the CSTD on the implementation of WSIS outcomes during 2013¹

Action Line C7 (e-business)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Activities during 2013 related to the action line C7 (e-business) have further helped to increase awareness, expand the use of ICT-enabled market analysis tools and enhanced the international profile of relevant issues. UNCTAD, ITC and UPU completed an online consultation process to allow stakeholders to share their opinions on the facilitation process related to e-business. [ADD MORE]

2. ANALYTICAL OVERVIEW

A. Achievements

UNCTAD's *Information Economy Report 2013: The Cloud Economy and Developing Countries*, contributed to the implementation of C7 (e-business) through analysis and policy recommendations directed to developing-country governments, but also to development partners and other stakeholders in the information economy. The IER 2013 was presented at a series of press conferences and special research and policy events dealing with ICT for development, including in collaboration with several regional commissions of the UN.

The IER 2013 emphasized that options for cloud adoption in low- and middle-income countries look different from those in more advanced economies. The report advises developing countries to raise their awareness and understanding of the cloud's opportunities and risks in order to be able to make informed policy decisions. The report stressed the importance of addressing legal and regulatory concerns related to cloud use. While there is no imperative to develop specific laws or regulations on cloud computing, key reform areas include privacy, data protection, information security and cybercrime. About 100 countries – 40 of which are developing economies – have data privacy laws in place, but there is no harmonized international privacy framework regulating data transfers across borders. Development partners can contribute to the financing of cloud-related infrastructure; the establishing of appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks; and the building of capacity in relevant areas.

A study entitled *Promoting Local IT Sector Development through Public Procurement* was published in early 2013. It includes three country case studies (Kenya, Senegal and Sri Lanka). It was jointly produced with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and presented at the Business Africa Week in Germany, at the WSIS Forum 2013 as well as during the Global E-Government Forum in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

Meetings and conferences represent an important way of raising and focusing awareness among relevant stakeholders. ITC, UNCTAD and UPU jointly organized an open consultation on the e-business

¹ This report should be read in conjunction with the report submitted by ITC.

action line. A wide range of stakeholders, such as trade bodies, international organizations, businesses, governments and civil society across the globe took part in the consultation. The results were presented at a session on “Facilitating e-Business – lessons from first 8 years” during the WSIS+10 Review Meeting at UNESCO in Paris on 25-27 February 2013. The session was used by the president of BASIS, the Bangladeshi IT association, to promote their local industry in the framework of an ITC project (NTFII Bangladesh), making the link between a vibrant ICT sector and a strong usage of ICTs by the various stakeholders in developing countries and developed economies alike.

At the WSIS Forum 2013, the e-business facilitation meeting focused on e-commerce and development. The interactive discussion featured the views of panelists representing governments, international organizations and the private sector, as well as comments from the floor. The session considered opportunities, barriers and challenges to domestic and cross-border use of e-commerce for trading both goods and services by SMEs.

In the area of ICT and law reform, UNCTAD (with funds from the Government of Finland) in 2013 continued to build capacity aimed at supporting the creation of cyber-legislation and a more enabling environment for electronic and mobile commerce. For example, together with the ASEAN Secretariat it published a Review of e-commerce legislation harmonization in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. A new project was also launched to support the implementation of existing legal frameworks on e-transactions, cybercrime and personal data protection in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

In April 2013, a special briefing session (Yaoundé, Cameroon) was organized by UNCTAD, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation for parliamentarians from Australia, Cameroon, Namibia, Nigeria, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Republic of Tanzania. The session examined international and regional best practices on key legal aspects of electronic commerce and cyber security. In August 2013, the East African Community (EAC) Framework for Cyberlaws (Phase II) was approved for implementation by the 10th Meeting of the Sectoral Council on Transport, Communications, and Meteorology (TCM).

At the request of the Governments of Cuba and Ecuador, UNCTAD organized (together with ITC and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung) a two-day seminar on E-Commerce, SMEs and Development in February 2013 aimed at raising the awareness of Latin American government experts and officials on the development dimension of e-commerce, including the legal issues.

A joint UNCTAD-ILO project (with funding from Sweden) to revise the ILO framework for assessing women entrepreneurship development policies and better reflect the ICT dimension was completed in 2013. A practical guide entitled "Empowering Women Entrepreneurs through Information and Communication Technologies" will serve as a resource to support the formulation and implementation of evidence-based policies empowering women entrepreneurs through ICTs.

UNCTAD continued to actively support member States’ efforts to improve the availability of ICT statistics, especially with regard to ICT use by the business sector and to the ICT sector itself. UNCTAD undertook a number of training and capacity building activities. Such activities are based primarily on the

organization's *Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy*, which has now been translated into Portuguese (and will soon be available in Russian). A training workshop was organized for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama City, Panama and another training course was held in Maputo, Mozambique, for Lusophone countries.

Together with the ITU, UNCTAD led the work of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development to enhance the availability of gender-disaggregated ICT indicators and data. In 2013, work also began on developing better measurement of international trade in ICT services and ICT-enabled services. A Partnership Task Group led by UNCTAD was established. UNCTAD commissioned a first study which will take stock of the current landscape as regards measurement of trade in relevant areas. The work involves close interaction with the Interagency Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services.

B. Obstacles

See 2012 report.

3. INNOVATIVE POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

- Joint UNCTAD-ILO project to support ICT dimension in Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED)

With the financial support of the Government of Sweden, UNCTAD and ILO ensured that the ICT dimension is better reflected in the ILO's WED framework. A revised framework, guide and training material was completed at the end of 2013.

- Joint UNCTAD-GIZ-WITSA work to improvement measuring of IT sector

Following a proposal in the IER 2012, GIZ and the World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) teamed up with UNCTAD to develop a new survey tool aimed at help national IT associations measure the ICT sector. The joint work was presented during the Global Policy Action and Trade Summit in Sao Paulo in November 2013. This should facilitate access to essential data for informing policy-making on how to enable the growth of the ICT sectors.

4. FUTURE ACTIONS OR INITIATIVES

None.