Commission on Science and Technology for Development
Twelfth session
Geneva, 25–29 May 2009

Draft Resolution on "Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society"

Draft Resolution for adoption by the Council

The Commission on Science and Technology for Development recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

"Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society"

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society,

Recognizing the efforts by all stakeholders to implement the outcomes of the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society while recognizing also the efforts of the United Nations agencies and other intergovernmental organizations in facilitating activities among different stakeholders,

Recalling the agreements of the different United Nations specialized agencies with the United Nations at their time of accession to the system,

Recalling the relevant foundational resolutions of the different United Nations programmes,

Recalling its resolution E/2006/46 of 28 July 2006 on the follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and review of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the mandate that it gave to the Commission,

Recalling Resolution 61/16 of the General Assembly, of 7 January 2007, on Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council,

Recalling also its resolutions E/2007/8 of 25 July 2007 on the flow of information for the follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and E/2008/3 of 18 July 2008 on the assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,

Recalling Resolution 63/202 of the General Assembly, of 19 December 2008, on information and communication technologies for development,

Taking note of the outcomes of the Commission's inter-sessional panel meeting in Santiago, Chile, November 2008, and the report prepared by the UNCTAD Secretariat, contained in document E/CN.16/2009/CRP.1.

Taking note with satisfaction of the 2009 Report of the 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,

Taking note of the respective reports of CoE, DESA, ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, FAO, GAID, IGF, ITC, ITU, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WHO, WIPO and

WMO which were used as inputs to the 2009 Secretary General Report mentioned in the previous paragraph,

A. **Taking stock: Reviewing the implementation of WSIS outcomes**

1. *Reaffirms* that information and communication technologies have the potential to provide new solutions to development challenges;

2. *Recognises* that economic downturn has led to a slow down in investments, but at the same time notes the resilience of the ICT sectors and their potential contribution to speed up global economic recovery;

3. *Notes* that while the digital divide may be shrinking in some areas, many challenges remain. Large disparities in terms of access to ICTs and knowledge, penetration and affordability still exist, both between developed and developing countries and within countries and regions and, moreover, new forms of digital divide are emerging regarding broadband and local digital content;

4. *Stresses* the need to bridge the digital divide and to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies, are available to all. This need poses a challenge for many countries, which are forced to choose between many competing objectives in their development planning and in demands for development funds whilst having limited resources;

5. *Notes* with dissatisfaction that, for the majority of the poor, the developmental promise of science and technology, including information and communication technologies, remains unfulfilled, and emphasizing the need to effectively harness technology, including information and communication technologies, to bridge the digital divide;

6. *Also recognizes* that information and communication technologies present new opportunities and challenges, and that there is a pressing need to address the major impediments that developing countries face in accessing the new technologies, such as insufficient resources, infrastructure, education, capacity, investment and connectivity and issues related to technology ownership, standards and flows, and in this regard calls upon all stakeholders to provide adequate resources, enhanced capacity-building and technology transfer to developing countries, particularly the least developed countries;

7. *Notes* that considerable efforts were undertaken and progress made in 2008 towards the implementation of the outcomes of WSIS, and that numerous activities have been reported by the different entities of the United Nations system, although various relevant activities by non-governmental actors were not reflected by the reporting mechanism in place;

8. *Notes* the respective reports of many UN entities, with their own executive summaries, submitted as inputs for the elaboration of the annual report of the Secretary General to the CSTD and published in the CSTD website as mandated in its resolution E/2007/8;

9. *Notes* the holding, of the cluster of WSIS-related events in an improved format renamed as WSIS Forum *2009* organized by ITU, UNESCO and UNCTAD to

facilitate the implementation of the WSIS action lines while noting that the inclusiveness, interactivity and depth of its discussions on the implementation of the action lines in a multi-stakeholder framework can be further enhanced;

10. *Recalls the importance* of close coordination among the leading action line facilitators and with the CSTD secretariat;

11. *Notes* the results of the last meeting of UNGIS,   which agreed, inter alia, to carry out an open consultation on financial mechanisms as requested in ECOSOC resolution 2008/3*,* and highlights UNGIS' role to facilitate the implementation of WSIS outcomes under the CEB as requested from the Secretary General in paragraph 103 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society;

12. *Calls upon* international and regional organizations to assess and report on a regular basis on the universal accessibility of nations to information and communications technologies, with the aim of creating equitable opportunities for the growth of the information and communications technology sectors of developing countries;

13. *Notes with regret* that more than three years after the Tunis Summit of WSIS, the revised guidelines for UN country teams on preparing a Common Country Assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework still do not reflect the recommendations of the WSIS outcome documents and do not contain a ICT for development component, *and urges* necessary coordinated action for implementation of the recommendations in paragraphs 100 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society;

14. *Reaffirms* the principles enunciated in the WSIS that the Internet has evolved into a global facility available to the public and its governance should constitute a core issue of the Information Society agenda. The international management of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations. It should ensure an equitable distribution of resources, facilitate access for all and ensure a stable and secure functioning of the Internet, taking into account multilingualism;

15. *Notes* the discussions in the IGF as a multi-stakeholder platform on public policy issues related to internet governance which were observed by the UN SG in his report, expresses appreciation for the work done by the Chair, the Secretariat and the host Governments of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), and looks forward to the convening of the fourth meeting of the IGF in Egypt;

16. *Encourages* all stakeholders to contribute to the online consultations regarding the "desirability of the continuation" of the IGF as envisaged in paragraph 76 of the Tunis Agenda and to give consideration of the stakeholders in under-developed areas that could not get connected online and urge the UNSG to take all appropriate measures to consult the stakeholders at a broad basis;

17. *Notes* that paragraph 80 of the Tunis Agenda refers to development of multi-stakeholder processes at the national, regional and international levels;

18. *Recognizes* the contribution of WTSA08 towards enhanced cooperation;

19. *Notes* the conclusion of the UNSG on the basis of performance reports from 10 organizations relevant to Internet Governance, that while the efforts made varied in nature between the different organizations, the performance reports suggest that the Tunis Agenda's call for enhanced cooperation has been taken seriously by these organizations, and requests the Secretary General to report to ECOSOC through CSTD on the progress towards enhanced cooperation;

20. *Notes* that topics that were not centre stage at the first and second phases of WSIS in 2003 and 2005 continue to emerge, such as the potential of ICTs to combat climate change, the protection of online privacy and the empowerment and protection, particularly against cyber exploitation and abuse, of vulnerable groups of society, in particular children and young people;

21. *Notes* that a rising Internet penetration alone does not necessarily guarantee an information society for all, and that information society requires complementary efforts and funds to make access affordable and develop skills to make use of the services and equipment, and develop local content;

22. *Notes* GAID's contribution to the 12th session of CSTD;

23. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by Tunisia , host of the second phase of WSIS; for organizing annually the ICT4All Forum and technological exhibition as a platform to promote a dynamic business environment for the ICT sector worldwide;

24. *Calls upon all States,* in building the information society, to take steps with a view to avoiding and to refrain from taking any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impedes the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries and that hinders their well-being;

B. The road ahead

25. *Encourages* all stakeholders to continue their efforts to implement the Summit vision of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society, so as to enhance digital opportunities for all people in order to help to bridge the digital divide;

26. *Call upon* all stakeholders to assist developing countries in their efforts towards narrowing the digital divide, particularly with regard to access, affordability, speed in broadband, local content and data privacy;

27. *Encourages* all stakeholders to continue to cooperate on and to develop ICT partnerships towards capacity building, technology and knowledge transfer and research and development (R&D);

28. *Recognizes* the work of the Partnership on measuring ICT for Development, its institutional strengthening and the creation of a Working Group to measure the economic and social impact of ICT's *and recalls* the resolution of July 2008 (2008/31) of the Economic and Social Council, that acknowledges the work of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development to develop indicators and

recommends to consider the creation of benchmarks and impact indicators, for further consideration by the United Nations Statistical Commission;

29. *Notes* the efforts made in developing tools to assess the global digital divide, including inter alia, the ITU ICT Development Index;

30. *Encourages* all stakeholders to continue to focus on pro-poor ICT policies and applications, including the need for access to broadband at the grass roots level, with a view to narrowing the digital divide between and within countries,

31. *Encourages* all stakeholders to increase efforts to implement the ICT accessibility concept as contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 9;

32. *Calls further* on all stakeholders, in the interest of future generations, to give due attention to digital preservation, and commends UNESCO and its partners for their work on the World Digital Library which was inaugurated on 21 April 2009;

33. *Takes note* of the importance of efforts to reduce the environmental effects of the ICT sector and at the same time of the potential of ICTs to reduce environmental impacts in other sectors;

34. *Recognizes* the importance of continuing efforts at national and international levels to address privacy and security concerns in the use of ICT, and encourages governments in cooperation with other stakeholders to develop effective approaches in this regard;

35. *Urges* the UN entities still not actively cooperating in WSIS implementation through the UN system and its follow-up, to take the necessary steps and commit towards a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society and to catalyze the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millenium Declaration;

36. *Encourages* the WSIS action line facilitators to increase their efforts to include all stakeholders in the facilitation process on implementing the WSIS action lines and to further enhance the interactivity of the process;

37. *Encourages* the regional commissions to continue to share best practices among themselves to improve the overall implementation of the WSIS outcomes;

38. *Encourages* all relevant UN agencies including the regional commissions to support the development and implementation of National e-Strategies in developing and least developed countries, whilst encouraging international collaboration, especially South-South co-operation, and North-South partnerships for determining best practices and sharing experiences and resources;

39. *Takes note* of Action Line C 7-18 of WSIS on e-Health and the Millennium Development Goals related to health, as well as ECOSOC's Annual Ministerial Review theme for 2009 on "implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health";

40. *Encourages* governments to strive to use ICT to achieve the health-related internationally-agreed development goals by increasing multi-stakeholder coordinated efforts at national and international level;

41. *Encourages* the development of identified national health priorities, a National e-Health Policy and Strategy that brings together the health and ICT sectors to articulate ICT implementation policies and plans for public health;

42. *Encourages* further that the WHO, the ITU and other UN agencies and bodies should coordinate their activities and work closely with relevant stakeholders to develop guidelines for data exchange which is essential to the successful implementations of health ICT applications and the infrastructure that support them;

43. *Invites* the international community to make voluntary contributions to the special trust fund established by UNCTAD to support the review and assessment work of CSTD regarding WSIS follow-up;

44. *Recommends* mainstreaming ICTs in the economy as a driver of growth and sustainable development and encourages all stakeholders to continue engaging in people centred partnerships as an effective way forward;

45. *Encourages* collaboration between, on the one hand the WSIS action line facilitators and moderator concerning the action line C3. Access to information and knowledge, C7- 22. E-science action, C7-18 E-Health, and on the other hand the CSTD in the context of its traditional mandate;

46. *Requests* the CSTD, during its 13th session which falls at the half-way point to the 2015 overall review, to organize a substantive discussion on the five year progress made in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes including consideration of the modalities of WSIS implementation and follow-up, and invites all facilitators and stakeholders to take this into account regarding their contribution for this session;

47. *Requests* the SG to submit to this Council through the CSTD an executive summary on the implementation of the Summit outcomes by each UN agency and program;

48. *Urges* all UN bodies to contribute to the executive summary mentioned in the previous paragraph, listing their relevant organ decisions and resolutions and their relevant plans and activities;

49. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, on a yearly basis, a report about the implementation of the recommendations contained in the ECOSOC resolutions on the assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.