UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation

Contribution to the guiding questions agreed during first meeting of the WGEC

Submitted by

Iran

Submission by

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Response to the two guiding questions of the Chair, agreed upon during the first meeting of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation, held on 30 September, 2016

Q 1: What are the high level characteristics on enhanced cooperation?

The concept of "enhanced cooperation" is crucial for the promotion of information society across the globe and should have the following major characteristics:

1. Any policy and measure under the enhanced cooperation must contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 17 Goals are supposed to cover, as an umbrella, our activities and direct the deliberations, decisions and measures of the international community until 2030. Although "cooperation" and "information technology and knowledge" are among cross-cutting issues and do not fall in a single or two goal(s), it seems that the Goals 9 and 17 are the most relevant ones. Goal 9 addresses the promotion of inclusive and sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation, in general and information and communications technology, in particular (9c). The Goal 17 refers to science, technology

development and transfer, and capacity building as means of implementation which play crucial role in achievement of the 2030 Agenda

Moreover, the Geneva Declaration of Principles, Geneva Plan of Action, Tunis Commitments as well as Tunis Agenda for Information Society are the other internationally agreed documents and guidelines which should direct our deliberations in the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation.

2. The Working Group is a body for deliberations and exchange of views among all States as well to increase the common understanding of the international community with regard to the appropriate ways and means to remove the barriers, while promoting the information society, as well as increasing cooperation between governments at regional and international levels.

3. Paragraph 69 of the Tunis Agenda stipulates that, enhanced cooperation shall enable governments, on equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities in international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet.

4. There are serious concerns regarding the digital divide between the developed and the developing countries while there are closer and closer relationships between the two in all walks of life. While progress has been made in terms of closing the gaps and differences in some areas, a considerable technological divide still exists between and within countries. Such divides often act as impediments in harnessing the potential of science, technology and innovation for the ongoing processes, such as the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. To overcome this lasting gap, technology development and transfer and capacity building has crucial role.

5. Internet governance is an important component of the information society, and should be accomplished in an appropriate way. As referred to in the Geneva Principles, all governments should have an equal footing to carry out their roles and responsibilities in the international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet.

6. It is highly expected that the Working Group would contribute pursuing the implementation of the mandate and the common understanding about enhanced cooperation which could be acquired through relevant paragraphs of the Tunis Agenda. In this regard, paragraph 68 and 69 of Tunis Agenda provides a division of functions among different stakeholders. It clearly articulates that policy authority for Internet-related public policy issues is the sovereign right of states. They have rights and responsibilities for international Internet-related public policy issues. Para 68 of the Tunis Agenda further clarifies this right, role and responsibility. Based on that paragraph, all governments should have an equal role and responsibility, for international Internet governance and for ensuring the stability, security and continuity of the Internet.

Q2. Taking into consideration the work of the previous WGEC and the Tunis Agenda, particularly paragraphs 69-71, what kind of recommendations should we consider?

1. Bearing in mind the past deliberations of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation and the final report, the new WG should consider ways and means for ensuring transparency, inclusiveness and diversity of views, including by being open to active participation of all Member States and Observer States of the Commission. Furthermore, it should

aim to adopt its report and recommendations by consensus, reflecting different possible options and opinions.

2. It is of great importance that WGEC be engaged in constructive deliberations, based on the provisions of the relevant internationally agreed documents, and to consider the establishment of a mechanism which will be conducive to the implementation of enhanced cooperation. Every effort should be made to treat countries, both the developed and developing ones, on an equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities with respect to the international policy issues pertaining to the Internet.

3. The Working Group is highly expected to come up with concrete proposals and recommendations which will be beneficial to all sectors and societies and help governments and other stockholders to cooperate better with the information and communications sector.

4. The new WG members should have a vision to the future and bear in mind the fact that collaboration and coordination between the developed and developing states is essential. It is worth noting the undeniable need for the collective efforts of all the relevant stakeholders to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Innovation is essential key in this new digital era and affordability is crucial for realization of the Sustainable Development Goals.

5. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is very ambitious and WGEC will play an important role in achieving the SDGs and other parts of the Development Agendas. The 2030 Agenda as well as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda have made repeatedly several direct and indirect references to science, technology and innovation (STI). Bearing in mind paragraph 69 of the Tunis Agenda, the Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that the WGEC should pave the way to materialize the

access to technology by developing countries in order to play their role on equal basis.

6. The members of the WG in their final recommendations should highlight the need to respect the cultural diversity, local languages, ethical concerns and useful traditions, based on which many societies continue to live and enrich herewith the civilizations across the globe.

7. To this end, the national efforts of the developing countries for creating, improving, and expanding capacities to allow their involvement in all aspects of the global information society should be facilitated by other governments and institutions. This could be done through, inter alia, sharing knowledge and experiences, enhancing capacity building, creating an enabling global environment, and transfer of technology.

The I.R. Iran stands ready to provide further details, if necessary, and make its invaluable contributions to the work of the Working Group on Enhanced Contribution.