

# ***CSTD INTERSESSIONAL PANEL***

## **SESSION ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION, ICT AND THE SDGs**

### **REMARKS BY MR. BRAHIMA SANOU**

**DIRECTOR, TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BUREAU  
INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION**

Mr. Peter Major, Chairman of the 19<sup>th</sup> session of CSTD,

Distinguished panelists and participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All protocol observed,

- It is my great pleasure to join this panel on the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the implementation process of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Coming from a technical organization such as ITU, one would expect me to talk naturally about, optical fiber, wireless, satellite, gigabyte or zettabyte.
- Let me start by saying that for me ICTs are less about optical fiber, zettabyte, satellite, 4G, 5G or whatsoever.
- But ICTs are about streamlining Government processes, bringing education to the neediest people in order to create better understanding and economic growth.
- ICTs are about extending health services to rural and remote areas.
- ICTs are about saving lives when natural disasters strike.
- Above all for me ICTs are just about people.
- The tremendous development of ICTs will accelerate the attainment of the Sustainable Developments Goals through e-education, e-health, e-agriculture, smart grid and smart cities just to mention a few.

- The number of mobile-cellular subscriptions worldwide grew from 2.2 billion in 2005 to an estimated 7.1 billion in 2015.
- Mobile access, including satellite mobile, will be the first way to access broadband enabled services. 4G access technology, and soon 5G, coupled with the decrease of the price of access devices such as smartphones and tablets is putting an unprecedented computing power in the palm of ordinary citizens.
- All these new developments in ICT sector are opening huge opportunities for pursuing sustainable development.
- The utilization of big data, open data, cloud computing, and the development of Internet of Things or Internet of Everything, are opening other doors of opportunity for accelerating the attainment of the SDGs.
- A report of McKensy estimates that the Internet of Things will have a total potential economic impact up to \$11.1 trillion per year in 2025, which would represent 11per cent of the world global GDP. It is anticipated that nearly 40 per cent of the value created by the Internet of Things will be generated in developing economies. Examples of the use of IoT for development are in the areas of health, climate change, disaster management, water and sanitation, agriculture and infrastructure. What a huge opportunity for developing countries and SGDs.
- The ICT sector continues to broaden and to converge with other economic sectors. For example, ICT policy and regulation are not enough to regulate e-Health, e-education or e-banking. We therefore need to put in place new policy and regulatory frameworks that will embrace the new ICT ecosystem.
- We need to move from vertical policy and regulation to collaborative policy and regulation.
- We are also witnessing more and more convergence of Science, Technology, Telecommunication and ICTs reinforcing the role of CSTD as the perfect setting to continue the conversation on research, applications and innovation for development.

Ladies and Gentlemen

- The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals is an important milestone for strengthening the strategic role of ICTs as accelerator of socio-economic development.
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, states that “the spread of information and communications technology and global interconnectedness has great potential to accelerate human progress, to bridge the digital divide and develop knowledge societies.”
- It is now up to all stakeholders to ensure that the transformative power of ICT is properly integrated in the implementation of the SDG framework, building upon the outcomes of the overall review of WSIS.
- As you may all know, on the occasion of the WSIS+10 Overall Review the UN Chief Executives Board recognized the WSIS Forum, that gathers on the annual basis more than 1500 stakeholders from more than 140 countries, as an efficient mechanism for multi-stakeholder implementation of WSIS action lines.
- All Heads of the UN system agreed that the WSIS Forum will serve as a key forum for discussing the role of ICTs as a means of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, contributing to the global follow-up mechanism of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- In this regard it is my pleasure to inform you that necessary preparations by the WSIS Action Line Facilitators have been already initiated to let the Forum evolve in order to strengthen the synergies between the WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs, and provide clear evidence and competency based reporting to the UN follow up on SDGs.
- WSIS Stocktaking and WSIS Project Prizes will continue to serve as an important tool for reporting on the ICT for SDG activities.

- The 2016 WSIS Forum, hosted by ITU and co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP, in collaboration with all UN agencies, has been scheduled for 2-6 May 2016 in Geneva. I look forward to seeing you there.

Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- ITU remains fully committed towards strengthening the implementation of the WSIS Outcomes with the aim of unlocking new opportunities for achieving the SDGs.
- Science and technology in general has an important and unique contribution to accelerating the achievement of the SDGs. We have the noble task to make science and technology work for people.
- Let us do it and do it together by synergizing our complementary mandates and cross-fertilizing our wealth of expertise.
- For all this to happen, all stakeholders, governments, regulators, ICT service providers, academia and research community, consumers and civil society need to change the way they interact with each other in order to create a new enabling ecosystem.
- Therefore, we all need to not only think innovation, but more importantly to innovate our way of thinking.
- Thank you Mr. Chairman of CSTD for inviting me. Thanks to the Government of Hungary for hosting this important meeting.
- I thank you!