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**Item 2: Ministerial roundtable 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."**

Introduction of the Report of the Secretary-General by

Ms. Anne Miroux

Director, Division on Technology and Logistics and Head of the CSTD Secretariat

**Monday, 4 May 2015**

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on the Information Society at the regional and international levels

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Geneva, Switzerland  
4 May 2015, Room XVIII

*Madam Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,*

I feel honoured to take the floor at this eighteenth session of the CSTD, in the presence of our distinguished guests, as well as Ministers who are here today on the occasion of the Ministerial roundtable on WSIS. I warmly welcome you to this event, and reassure you as Head of the CSTD Secretariat of our full support throughout the week.

The aim of my brief intervention will be to introduce the thematic elements of the Ministerial roundtable, first by providing a historical background, and then by highlighting key points in the annual WSIS follow-up report of the CSTD, with cross-references to our newly-published Ten-Year Review Report. I would also like to propose some ideas as food for thought for your discussion.

Let me start with the historical perspective and mandate. Following the Tunis phase of the WSIS Summit in 2005, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) was entrusted by ECOSOC, through its resolution 2006/46, to assist the Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up of WSIS outcomes.

Since the mandate accorded by the 2006 ECOSOC resolution, the CSTD has prepared upon the request of ECOSOC and the GA eight reports that track

the progress made in the implementation and follow-up of WSIS outcomes on an annual basis, starting with the 2007 report. In addition, the CSTD secretariat published in 2011 the so-called 'WSIS+5 report', which marked the mid-point between the WSIS Summit and our journey towards the Ten-Year Review Report, which has just now come out of press. All in all, we have now published ten reports on the subject matter, each drawing on inputs from a wide array of stakeholders within the UN system and beyond, across the globe.

Our annual reports have served as indispensable studies that gather information from all relevant sources, analyse this information, and present it in a coherent manner, following the same format each year. These annual reports have, through their accumulated analysis of key trends, incrementally enriched the reflections of the CSTD secretariat on the gradual evolution and progress of the Information Society over the years. In this sense, they contributed and served as eye-openers on new developments that had not been foreseen during the two legs of the WSIS Summit back in 2003 and 2005.

Following these brief remarks on the overall picture of how we got here, I would now like to provide a concise overview of specific issues and trends mentioned in the 2014 annual report. As in previous instances, the report provides detailed information on the eleven WSIS action lines. Please bear in mind that while the report mentions progress specifically for 2014, the Ten-Year Review Report includes a dedicated chapter that synthesizes the developments on action lines throughout the last ten years, in a broader context. For that matter, I encourage you to review both reports interchangeably.

You will see that lots of efforts have been taking place in 2014 at regional and international levels, and that each party has been shouldering its fair share. For example, the annual report mentions a wide array of capacity-building projects of UN regional commissions. Nevertheless, the report observes that the digital divide persists. This is in fact the next point that I would like to address, by presenting you some numbers in connection to the digital divide. Already over 90% of the world population is covered by mobile networks, and half of the global population is expected to have access to ICTs by the end of 2016. However, these are average figures. While 78 percent of households in developed countries have Internet access, the figure is only 5 percent for households in least developed countries (LDCs).

Surely, the rapid pace of technological change has been one factor in the persistence of the digital divide. Trends like datafication, big data, cloud computing, and Internet of things, which have also been covered in various WSIS annual reports and analytical studies on CSTD priority themes in recent years, have made the task of catching up more difficult, both in terms of capacity-building at the local level and adapting policies.

Multi-stakeholder cooperation is becoming ever-more important amidst this fast-changing environment, where technologists need to interact regularly with policymakers towards devising sound and efficient regulation. The impact of such trends is covered more extensively in the Ten-Year Review Report, which also includes a full chapter on multi-stakeholder implementation and cooperation (Chapter 8). We will have a chance to cover all these issues more in detail tomorrow in our dedicated substantive session.

At this point, I also find it necessary to mark some of the key milestones mentioned in the annual WSIS report that took place during 2014:

- Key events during the year included the WSIS+10 High Level Event, hosted by the ITU in Geneva and organized in collaboration with UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP, as well as the annual ITU Global Symposium for Regulators that was held in Bahrain with the theme of capitalizing on the potential of the digital world.
- The Internet governance landscape has continued to evolve in the last year. One key development was the announcement by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration of the United States of America that it intends to transfer the administration of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) function to the global multi-stakeholder community. Following this, ICANN established a Stewardship Transition Coordinating Group under IANA to develop proposals concerning administration of the IANA function.
- The ninth annual meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) took place in Istanbul in September. Discussions took place on the issue of network neutrality, among others, and so-called "best practice forums" were

introduced to collect and document best practices on some key Internet governance issues such as security, child protection, and local content. Meanwhile, the Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group of the IGF continued to implement the recommendations of the CSTD Working Group on Improvements to the IGF in 2014. (Mr. Chengetai Masango from the IGF secretariat will later be available to provide you with additional information on the outcome of the ninth IGF meeting in Istanbul).

- In addition to the IGF, discussions on Internet governance proceeded in a number of fora, both within the UN and in other platforms. For example, the General Assembly noted in Resolution A/RES/69/204 the hosting of the Global Multi-stakeholder Meeting on the Future of Internet Governance, known as NETmundial, by the Government of Brazil in April 2014.

Tomorrow, delegates will have a substantive session on the CSTD's ten-year review of implementing WSIS outcomes. On this occasion, I am pleased to inform you that the CSTD's Ten Year Review Report has now been published, and copies have been made available in the room. The report benefitted from around 100 written contributions, as well as seven open consultation sessions. It has nine chapters that cover various aspects of implementing WSIS outcomes. Tomorrow's session will be an opportunity to discuss this issue. I would now like to conclude with some reflections as food for thought for the Ministerial roundtable: to what extent have WSIS outcomes been achieved, what are the current and upcoming challenges, and what should be the priorities for stakeholders going forward beyond 2015?

We are privileged to have today with us 1) H.E. Adama Samassékou, President of the Preparatory Committee of the Geneva phase of WSIS, who I am sure will provide you with his unique perspective on the evolution of international efforts towards building an Information Society to the benefit of all mankind; and 2) Mr. Janis Karklins, who equally, as President of the Preparatory Committee of the Tunis phase of WSIS, will in a way complete the picture for us, as we try to take a snapshot of the developments during the last ten years in the WSIS context; as well as a number of Ministers and high level officials.

Thank you.