

**COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT  
(CSTD)**

**Twenty-seventh session  
Geneva, 15-19 April 2024**

**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system, international  
organizations and other stakeholders on their efforts in 2023 to  
implement the outcomes of the WSIS**

**Submission by**

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

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 27<sup>th</sup> 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.

**The Director**

DIRECTORATE FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Ms. Shamika N. Sirimanne  
Director, Division on Technology  
and Logistics  
UNCTAD  
Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

2023.STI.DO.004

24 October 2023

Dear Ms. Sirimanne,

I write in response to your letter dated 26 July 2023 from UNCTAD Secretary-General Rebecca Grynspan to OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann. The letter requests a contribution from the OECD towards the report to be submitted to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD).

Although the OECD is not specifically part of the Tunis Agenda and the Tunis Commitment and therefore has no formal follow-up commitments, we remain willing to provide information on our work to enhance co-operation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet. As in previous years, we would like to take the opportunity to direct your attention to a few relevant OECD initiatives since our last correspondence, which may inform your update on progress made in 2023 in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels.

As indicated in last year's letter from my predecessor, Andrew Wyckoff, the OECD's Committee on Digital Economy Policy held a meeting at Ministerial level on 14-15 December 2023, hosted by Spain. It brought together over 600 participants from 47 delegations, including countries, intergovernmental organisations, and stakeholder organisations. Under the theme "Driving long-term recovery and economic growth by building a trusted, sustainable, and inclusive digital future", high-level participants reflected on digital transformation from four perspectives: economy, society, people and technology. The event concluded with multiple outcomes relevant to advancing international public policy cooperation on Internet governance, including:

- Adoption of two Ministerial Declarations to support OECD countries and beyond in shaping a human-centric, rights-oriented digital transformation: the Declaration on a Trusted, Sustainable and Inclusive Digital Future [[OECD/LEGAL/0488](#)] (the "Canary Islands Declaration") and the Declaration on Government Access to Personal Data Held by Private Sector Entities [[OECD/LEGAL/0487](#)]. The Canary Islands Declaration, in particular, sets the path towards promoting a safe, secure, inclusive and sustainable digital environment, underpinned by an open, free, global, interoperable, reliable, accessible, affordable, secure and resilient Internet, and by respect for the rule of law, human rights and democratic values.
- Announcement of the OECD venue for in-depth, international and multi-stakeholder dialogue to foresee and get ahead of long-term opportunities and risks presented by technology. The OECD held the inaugural event of the Global Forum on Technology on 6 June 2023, focusing on two emerging technologies (immersive technologies and synthetic biology) and three cross-cutting policy perspectives: human rights, climate change, and technological divides.

- Launch of four new OECD Recommendations in the area of digital security, (on [Risk Management](#); [National Digital Security Strategies](#); [Digital Security of Products and Services](#); and [the Treatment of Digital Security Vulnerabilities](#)) and an accompanying [Policy Framework on Digital Security](#)
- Launch of the French and Hebrew versions of the OECD Going Digital Toolkit, a comprehensive interactive platform to measure digital transformation across countries, dimensions and policy themes (since then, the platform has been made available in Arabic as well).

As always, the OECD continues to regularly release broadband statistics via its [Broadband Portal](#), a publicly available resource updated every six months (last updated July 2023), with a recent publication on [Enhancing the security of communication infrastructure](#).

The OECD also concluded in 2022 the third phase of its horizontal project, *Going Digital*, which focused on data and data flows as a driver for growth and well-being. Phase III culminated with the release at the OECD Digital Economy Ministerial meeting of the report, [Going Digital to Advance Data Governance for Growth and Well-being](#) and the [Going Digital Guide to Data Governance Policy Making](#).

Now in its fourth phase (2023-2024), [the Going Digital project](#) is looking at digital transformation and the policies to guide it from the perspectives of digital divides, alignment with climate change goals, and responsible technological development. The digital divides pillar will focus on analysing approaches to measure subnational spatial connectivity divides and developing policy recommendations to bridge them, especially in the context of rural-urban divides.

I am further pleased to note that the OECD Science, Technology and Innovation Directorate has organised and participated in multiple sessions in the recent Internet Governance Forum, including on immersive technologies, privacy-enhancing technologies, and artificial intelligence.

Looking ahead, next year, we will hold a Ministerial Meeting of the OECD Committee on Scientific and Technological Policy (April 2024), focussing on sustainability transitions and governance of emerging technologies. We will also hold a Ministerial Meeting of the OECD Committee on Consumer Policy (October 2024) that will consider policies to empower and protect consumers at the centre of the digital and green transitions.

I hope this information is useful in the preparation of the annual report. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the materials referred to above or our work on digital economy policy.

Kind regards,



Jerry SHEEHAN

Director for Science, Technology and Innovation