COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)

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Submissions from entities in the United Nations system, international organizations and other stakeholders on their efforts in 2020 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 24th 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.

The Director
DIRECTORATE FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

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Dear Ms. Sirimanne,

I write in response to the letter dated 22 September 2020 from Secretary-General Kituyi addressed to the OECD Secretary-General. In Secretary-General Kituyi's letter, he 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 was not specifically part of the Tunis Agenda and the Tunis Commitment, and therefore has no formal follow-up commitments, we have always been willing to provide information on our work to enhance co-operation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet. As such, we would like to direct your attention to a few relevant OECD initiatives.

As we report in the OECD 2020 Digital Economy Outlook (*forthcoming,* November 2020), the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation and underscored the importance of reliable, accessible and high-quality connectivity. To support countries in securing digital resilience and promoting a digitally-enhanced recovery, my Directorate has contributed to the OECD's series of COVID-19 policy responses on a range of issues. These include, in particular, policy recommendations for *Keeping the Internet Up and Running in Times of Crisis*, providing measures to address surges in demand for broadband connectivity services in the short, medium, and long term.

In parallel, the OECD has launched the review of its 2004 Recommendation on Broadband Development, expected to lead to a revised Recommendation in early 2021. This review takes into account important technological and policy developments, as well as the need to eliminate the digital divide and ensure network quality. The updated Recommendation could make a strong contribution to helping countries establish quality communication infrastructures to underpin their digital transformation.

Finally, I would highlight the OECD's broadband statistics on the OECD broadband portal. Mobile data usage, for example, is growing rapidly in the OECD area. From January to December 2019, it increased by more than 25% in 24 of the 35 OECD countries for which data were available.

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.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Wyckoff