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**CSTD 2024-2025 priority theme on “Technology foresight and technology assessment for
sustainable development”**

Statement submitted by

ITU

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**CSTD 2024-2025 priority theme on
“Technology foresight and technology assessment for sustainable development”**

Statement submitted by

The International Telecommunication Union

Ladies and gentlemen,

As technology continues to evolve rapidly, technology foresight and technology assessment are critical tools for guiding sustainable development. ITU is at the forefront of leveraging these approaches to ensure that emerging technologies contribute positively to global progress.

First, ITU plays a key role in technology foresight initiatives. For example, the Focus Group on Technologies for Network 2030 brings together over 200 experts from 50 organizations to anticipate future network technologies. These efforts help policymakers and industry leaders plan for the long-term impacts of next-generation networks.

Additionally, ITU’s AI for Good Global Summit has become a platform for exploring how artificial intelligence can address challenges across sectors like healthcare, agriculture, and finance. This initiative facilitates the use of AI to drive economic growth and foster innovation.

Second, ITU is also deeply engaged in technology assessment. It supports member states by offering policy guidance and capacity-building programs. Through these initiatives, countries can assess the societal and economic impacts of digital technologies and implement strategies that harness these technologies for sustainable development.

ITU has also led the way in developing global standards, particularly for 5G and AI technologies, ensuring their safe and efficient deployment. These standards are critical for promoting interoperability and addressing global challenges like climate change and digital inequality.

Third, environmental sustainability is a major focus of ITU’s technology assessment work. The ITU-T Study Group 5 has published over 50 recommendations for reducing the environmental impact of digital technologies, emphasizing the importance of greener ICT practices.

It is important to highlight some of ITU’s collaborations with UN agencies on various initiatives listed in this contribution, starting with the Sustainable Digital Development project with UNEP, which assesses the environmental impacts of digital technologies and has engaged over 30 countries in promoting sustainability within the ICT sector. ITU

chairs the Steering Committee on Measuring ICT for Development, focusing on areas like ICT in health and employment, alongside members such as UNCTAD and UN DESA.

Additionally, the ITU co-chairs the Inter-Agency Working Group on AI with UNESCO, coordinating efforts across 40+ UN entities and conducting foresight workshops for strategic AI planning. In September 2023, ITU hosted a foresight workshop on frontier technologies with several organizations. Together with WIPO and WHO, ITU launched the Global Initiative on AI for Health (GI-AI4H) to promote AI solutions in health ecosystems, aiding in the achievement of health-related SDGs. At COP28, ITU led the launch of the Green Digital Action initiative, collaborating with over 40 partners to integrate digital solutions into climate action. ITU also leads the “Warning Dissemination and Communication” pillar of the Early Warnings for All Initiative to enhance resilience against climate-related hazards.

As the secretariat and rotating chair/vice-chair of the United Nations Group on the Information Society (UNGIS), ITU ensures coordination on science, technology, and innovation within the UN system. Through the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, co-chaired by ITU and UNESCO, it assesses broadband’s impact on education, health, and economic growth, publishing the “State of Broadband 2024” report to inform policymakers on AI advancements and promote equitable access to digital opportunities.

Through the World Summit on the Information Society, ITU continues to work together with stakeholders from across sectors to tackle emerging digital challenges and share best practices.

ITU’s work in technology foresight and assessment is essential for shaping a sustainable digital future. We look forward to working with all to help guide the world toward more equitable and inclusive technological progress.

Thank you.