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**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
level**

Statement by

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The United Republic of Tanzania



TALKING NOTES BY HON. Eng. MARYPRISCA MAHUNDI (MP), DEPUTY MINISTER FOR INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, DURING THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD) 15TH – 19TH APRIL 2024, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, my delegation would like to thank the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) secretariat for the outline of the WSIS+20 Review.

Without forgetting appreciating all the effort to make this event a success, I now take this opportunity to provide an update of Tanzania`s implementation of the *World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) action lines*

- The United Republic of Tanzania is implementing new policies and regulations to increase broadband penetration and access, create ICT workforce, and encourage digital innovation and cross-border digital integration. This has resulted in increased employment opportunities for young people.

- Tanzania has invested, and continues to invest, in digital infrastructure (National Data Center, Optic Fibre and submarine cable) that has increase access to internet service that has transformed digital online platforms for business and public service delivery. This has helped the Tanzania and its neighbouring countries moving faster towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- The transformation of business and service delivery to digital platforms has enhanced work efficiency and quality of service delivery to meet the needs of the public in a responsive and transparent manner. In this regard, several digital platforms have been deployed in all sectors of the economy (heath, education, tourism etc). These platforms enables identification of citizens, promotion of ecommerce and online payments for government fees and services.

- Tanzania is also taking steps to develop a population with digital skills to meet the expectations of digital transformation and ICT human capital, through hiring ICT professionals and training them in digital skills. A framework has been developed to identify priority areas for industry and vendor-based trainings, as well as academic and research institutions. Furthermore, the Government is in the process of establishing the Digital Training Institute (DTI) to cater the existing gap of trainings in emerging technologies, focusing in industrial needs and linkages with national and other global training institutions with similar focus.

- Tanzania is also prioritizing developing a robust ecosystem for digital entrepreneurship and is investing in centers for ICT startup

acceleration to inspire society to be innovative in digital technologies. These centers will support digital and digitally enabled innovations, ICT start-up companies, and digital entrepreneurs' readiness for entry to market stage.

- Tanzania has enacted the Personal Data Protection Act (DPA) for the protection of personal data and establishes the principles guiding and conditions for collection and processing of personal data. The DPA is expected to play a vital part in ensuring the security of data hence increasing user confidence while in the cyberspace. In ensuring that this act is operational, the Government has established Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC).

With these developments, it is important to highlight how the ongoing trends and emerging technologies, particularly AI, enable or hinder the realization of the WSIS vision:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) has gained increasing priority on the policy agendas for governmental institutions, at both national, regional and international levels.
- Applying AI to areas such as education or healthcare can facilitate access, overcome staff shortages, and reduce risks and costs. On the other hand, concerns are growing about increasingly automated and autonomous AI systems widening the technological, economic, and social gaps due to the lack of basic infrastructure and human capacity capable of exploiting this technology, especially in countries with a large proportion of low-skilled or unskilled labour.

- It is not a secret that, we have all realize the scale of AI potential, both positive and negative, but we have yet to come together to consider the issues, much less to collaborate on identifying risks and agile ways of mitigating them.

- Further, the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) should interact with other United Nations (UN) processes through stronger international and regional cooperation and partnership. The development of a Global Digital Compact that would set out principles, objectives and actions for advancing an open, free, secure and human-centred digital future, one that is anchored in universal human rights and that enables the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will certainly, need a multi-stakeholder digital cooperation that will shape a shared vision on digital cooperation and collaboration by providing an inclusive global framework. A framework that will hold and guide States to overcome the digital gap and ensure that all national work hand in hand in this Global Digital Compact.

Last but not least, Tanzania cordially invites you all to join our initiatives to build a digitally enabled society in Tanzania and even outside our borders in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Thank you all!