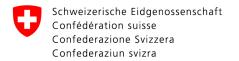**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD), twenty-eighth session**
Geneva, 7-11 April 2025

**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, in particular WSIS+20 review**

Statement by

H.E. Mr. Thomas Schneider
Co-director of International Relations and Vice Director at OFCOM
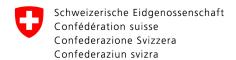Switzerland

Statement by Ambassador Thomas Schneider for the CSTD High-Level Panel 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 Level, in Particular the WSIS+20 Review (April 9, 10:00–13:00)

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

- As we approach the 20th anniversary of WSIS, the CSTD's role is more critical than ever in shaping an inclusive and sustainable digital future.

- The CSTD has long been a backbone of WSIS implementation—reviewing progress, identifying gaps, and guiding policy. But the digital landscape has changed dramatically. AI, data governance, and misinformation now dominate global debates, while billions still lack meaningful connectivity.

- The WSIS+20 review is therefore not just a celebration of progress; it is a call to action to ensure digital technologies serve all of humanity.

- To achieve this, we must evolve. For Switzerland, the way forward is building on WSIS's strengths, a WSIS Plus if you will. WSIS Plus means creating a stronger, more interconnected, and inclusive framework for digital governance and cooperation and integrating the ambitions of the GDC. Rather than creating parallel processes, we must unify them—streamlining governance, avoiding duplication, and leveraging the multistakeholder model that has made WSIS so impactful.
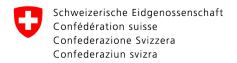
Concretely, we propose:

⇨ A **Joint Implementation Roadmap** integrating GDC commitments within WSIS implementation work, ensuring coordinated action on connectivity, human rights, and emerging technologies.

⇨ An **enhanced UNGIS**, adding ODET and other relevant UN bodies and reinforcing multistakeholder engagement with it, to serve as a holistic steward to digital cooperation, improving coordination across the UN system. UNGIS could serve as a central hub for overseeing the Joint Implementation Roadmap. This would make it easier as well for member states and stakeholders to navigate the complex landscape of digital cooperation.

⇨ A **strengthened CSTD** that would review progress both on WSIS and GDC. By enhancing the CSTD's multistakeholder character and ensuring it receives regular input from UNGIS and other stakeholders, we can create a more dynamic and responsive review process. This would help ensure that WSIS remains aligned with the latest technological developments and global priorities.

⇨ A **reinforced and even more inclusive IGF**, with sustainable funding and stronger interconnections and tangible impacts within the WSIS architecture.

Lastly and very importantly, we need to maintain the spirit of collaboration that has always been at the heart of WSIS. Digital governance is not something that any one country or organization can tackle alone. It

requires all of us – governments, the private sector, civil society, and technical communities – working together towards a common goal.