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Economic and environmental questions: science and technology for development

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 23 July 2024

[on the recommendation of the Commission on Science and Technology
for Development ([E/2024/31](#))]

2024/13. Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society,¹

Recalling also its resolution 2006/46 of 28 July 2006 on the follow-up to the World Summit and review of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the mandate that it gave to the Commission,

Recalling further its resolution [2023/3](#) of 7 June 2023 on the assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit,

Recalling General Assembly resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution [70/125](#) of 16 December 2015, entitled “Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society”, in which the Assembly reaffirmed the World Summit vision of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life, premised on the purposes

¹ See [A/C.2/59/3](#) and [A/60/687](#).



and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respecting fully and upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,² and assessed progress made to date, identified gaps and challenges and made recommendations for the future,

Recalling further General Assembly resolutions [77/150](#) of 14 December 2022, in which the Assembly looked forward to the development of a global digital compact to strengthen digital cooperation through an open and inclusive process, and [78/132](#) of 19 December 2023, on information and communications technologies for sustainable development, in which the Assembly recognized the important role of information and communications technologies for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, [78/160](#) of 19 December 2023 on science, technology and innovation for sustainable development and [78/265](#) of 21 March 2024 on seizing the opportunities of safe, secure and trustworthy artificial intelligence systems for sustainable development,

Taking note of the report of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, entitled “The age of digital interdependence”, and the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Road map for digital cooperation”,³ as well as the establishment of the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Technology, one of the purposes of which is to facilitate the coordination of the development of a global digital compact that will outline shared principles for an open, free and secure digital future for all,

Recalling General Assembly resolution [77/160](#) of 14 December 2022 on entrepreneurship for sustainable development,

Taking note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit at the regional and international levels,⁴

Expressing its appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for her role in helping to ensure completion of the aforementioned report in a timely manner,

Taking stock: reviewing the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

1. *Welcomes and urges* the full implementation of General Assembly resolution [70/125](#);
2. *Welcomes* the constructive and diverse inputs from all stakeholders in the overall review of progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society;
3. *Reaffirms its commitment* to the full implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit and the vision of the 10-year review of the World Summit beyond 2015;
4. *Reaffirms* the 2005 Tunis Agenda for the Information Society,⁵ in which was recognized the special and specific funding needs of the developing world, as referred to in paragraph 16 of the 2003 Geneva Declaration of Principles,⁶ which faces numerous challenges in the information and communications technology sector, and that there is a strong need to focus on the special financing needs of developing

² General Assembly resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

³ [A/74/821](#).

⁴ [A/79/62-E/2024/3](#).

⁵ See [A/60/687](#).

⁶ See [A/C.2/59/3](#), annex

countries in order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Sustainable Development Goals;

5. *Also reaffirms* the commitment made in General Assembly resolution [70/125](#) to bridging the digital divides between and within countries, including the gender digital divide, through efforts to improve connectivity, affordability, access to information and knowledge, multilingual content, digital skills and digital literacy, acknowledging specific challenges facing persons with disabilities and specific needs, and those in vulnerable situations;

6. *Welcomes* the emphasis placed by the Commission on the Status of Women on the critical role of women's participation and leadership in science, technology and innovation;

7. *Encourages* close alignment between the World Summit process and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁷ as called for in General Assembly resolution [70/125](#), highlighting the cross-cutting contribution of information and communications technology to the Sustainable Development Goals and poverty eradication, recognizing the World Summit on the Information Society-Sustainable Development Goals matrix developed by United Nations World Summit action line facilitators to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and noting that access to information and communications technologies has also become a development indicator and aspiration in and of itself;

8. *Reaffirms* its understanding that the success of the 2030 Agenda will depend on increasing universal, meaningful and affordable access to information and communications technology;

9. *Recognizes* that the World Summit has proven to be a dynamic process that has evolved over the years and is continuing to address the impacts of new and emerging technologies, as well as digital cooperation;

10. *Also recognizes* that information and communications technology infrastructure is fundamental to achieving the goal of digital inclusion and that digital divides persist across income groups, age groups, geography and gender groups, and therefore recalls its commitment to the 2030 Agenda, target 9.c, which aims to significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strives to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020, and in this regard notes the importance of the Connect 2030 Agenda for global telecommunication/information and communication technology, including broadband, for sustainable development;

11. *Welcomes* the remarkable evolution and diffusion of information and communications technologies, underpinned by the contributions of both public and private sectors, which have seen penetration into almost all corners of the globe, created new opportunities for social interaction, enabled new business models and contributed to economic growth and development in all other sectors, while noting the unique and emerging challenges related to their evolution and diffusion;

12. *Notes with concern* that there are still significant digital divides, such as between and within countries and between women and men, which need to be addressed through, among other actions, strengthened enabling policy environments and international cooperation to improve affordability, access, education, capacity-building, multilingualism, cultural preservation, investment and appropriate financing, acknowledges that a gender digital divide exists as part of the digital divides, and encourages all stakeholders to ensure the full participation of girls and women in vulnerable situations in the information society and women's and girls'

⁷ General Assembly resolution [70/1](#).

access to new technologies, especially information and communications technologies for development, including by combating technology-facilitated gender-based violence, such as exploitation, harassment and abuse against women and girls;

13. *Encourages* the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to continue to give due consideration to the impact and challenges of key rapid technological changes and the opportunities to utilize these technological changes to deliver the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals within the respective mandates and existing resources, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [77/150](#);

14. *Acknowledges* that, in its resolution [77/150](#), the General Assembly recognized the critical importance of expanding the participation of all countries, in particular developing countries, in the digital economy, and further noted that the Commission on Science and Technology for Development could explore the connection between data and sustainable development, including data governance, while taking into account the multiple dimensions of data, and invites the Commission to explore these issues;

15. *Welcomes* the holding of World Press Freedom Day, celebrated annually on 3 May, proclaimed by the General Assembly and led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

16. *Also welcomes* the holding of World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, celebrated annually on 17 May and led by the International Telecommunication Union;

17. *Notes* the ongoing implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit, emphasizing, in particular, its multi-stakeholder nature, the roles played in this regard by leading agencies as action line facilitators and the roles of the regional commissions, regional World Summit review initiatives and the United Nations Group on the Information Society, and expresses its appreciation for the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in assisting the Economic and Social Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up to the World Summit;

18. *Recognizes* the value and principle of multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement that have characterized the World Summit process since its inception and that are clearly recognized in the 2030 Agenda, and notes that many activities that support the objectives of the World Summit and the Sustainable Development Goals are being implemented by Governments, international organizations, the private sector, civil society, academic and technical communities and multi-stakeholder partnerships in their respective roles and responsibilities;

19. *Underscores* the importance of and encourages continued collaboration between the follow-up and review process of the World Summit and the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, including its multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals;

20. *Takes note* of the reports of many United Nations entities submitted as input for the elaboration of the annual report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and published on the website of the Commission as mandated in Council resolution 2007/8 of 25 July 2007, and recalls the importance of close coordination among the leading action line facilitators and with the secretariat of the Commission;

21. *Notes* the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit at the regional level facilitated by the regional commissions, as observed in the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up

to the outcomes of the World Summit at the regional and international levels, including the steps taken in this respect, and emphasizes the need to continue to address issues of specific interest to each region, focusing on the challenges and obstacles that each may be facing with regard to the implementation of all goals and principles established by the World Summit, with particular attention to information and communications technology for development;

22. *Reiterates* the importance of maintaining a process of coordinating the multi-stakeholder implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit through effective tools, with the goal of encouraging collaboration and partnership among all stakeholders, including international organizations, exchanging information among action line facilitators and other stakeholders, identifying issues that need improvement and discussing the modalities of reporting on the overall implementation process;

23. *Encourages* all stakeholders to continue to contribute information to the stocktaking database maintained by the International Telecommunication Union on the implementation of the goals established by the World Summit, and invites United Nations entities to update information on their initiatives in the database;

24. *Highlights* the urgent need for the incorporation of the recommendations contained in the outcome documents of the World Summit into the revised guidelines for United Nations country teams on preparing the common country assessments and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, including the addition of an information and communications technology for development component, for which the United Nations Group on the Information Society has offered its assistance;

25. *Recalls* General Assembly resolution [60/252](#) of 27 March 2006, in which the Assembly requested the Council to oversee the system-wide follow-up to the outcomes of the Geneva and Tunis phases of the World Summit;

26. *Also recalls* that, in its resolution [70/125](#), the General Assembly called for continuation of the annual reports on the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit, through the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, to the Council, and reaffirms the role of the Commission, as set forth in Council resolution 2006/46, in assisting the Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up, in particular the review and assessment of progress made in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit;

27. *Calls upon* all States, in building the information society, to take steps to avoid and to refrain from taking any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impedes the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries and that hinders their well-being;

28. *Welcomes* the fact that the rapid growth in access to mobile telephony and broadband Internet has further accelerated during the pandemic, so that in 2023, 95 per cent of the world's population were living within range of a mobile broadband network and 5.4 billion people or 67 per cent of the world's population were using the Internet, in line with the World Summit targets; the value of this progress is enhanced by the advent of new electronic and mobile services and applications for health, agriculture, education, business, development, financial and government services, civic participation and transactional services, which offer great potential for the development of the information society;

29. *Notes with great concern* that many developing countries lack universal, meaningful and affordable access to information and communications technologies and that, for the majority of the poor, the promise of science and technology, including

information and communications technologies, remains unfulfilled, and emphasizes the need to effectively harness technology, including information and communications technologies, data management, and promote digital literacy to bridge the digital and knowledge divides;

30. *Underlines* that efforts to promote access to information and communications technology, digital, media and information literacy, civic participation and online safety are important to bridge digital divides and ensure digital inclusion and the enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to development;

31. *Expresses concern* that many forms of digital divides remain between and within countries and regions, and underlines the need for digital, media and information literacy as well as the need to address prevailing challenges to bridge digital divides, including through international cooperation and education, striving to ensure that individuals, especially persons in vulnerable situations, are able to connect to and access the Internet in a safe, secure and meaningful way so as to enable their full economic, political and social participation in an inclusive information society;

32. *Recognizes* that information and communications technologies present new opportunities and challenges and that there is a pressing need to address the major impediments that developing countries face in accessing the new technologies in an inclusive manner, such as sufficient resources, infrastructure, education, capacity, investment and connectivity, as well as issues related to technology ownership, standards and flows, and in this regard calls upon all stakeholders to provide adequate resources, enhanced capacity-building and transfer of technology and knowledge to developing countries, particularly the least developed countries and landlocked countries, towards a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy;

33. *Also recognizes* the rapid growth in broadband access networks, especially in developed countries, and underscores the need to urgently address the growing digital divides in the availability, affordability, quality of access and use of broadband between and within high-, middle- and low-income countries and other regions, with special emphasis on supporting the least developed countries, small island developing States and Africa as a continent;

34. *Further recognizes* that the transition to a mobile-led communications environment and emerging digital platforms and services is leading to significant changes in operators' business models and that it requires significant rethinking of the ways in which individuals and communities make use of networks and devices, of government strategies and of ways in which communications networks can be used to achieve development objectives;

35. *Recognizes* that, even with all the developments and the improvement observed in some respects, in numerous developing countries information and communications technologies and their applications are still not available to or affordable for the majority of people, particularly those living in rural areas;

36. *Also recognizes* that the number of Internet users is steadily increasing and that, in some instances, the digital divide and the knowledge divide are also changing in character, from a divide based on whether access is available to one based on the quality of access, information and skills that users can obtain and the value that they can derive therefrom, and recognizes in this regard that there is a need to prioritize the use of information and communications technologies through innovative approaches, including multi-stakeholder approaches, within national and regional development strategies;

37. *Emphasizes*, in this regard, the vital importance of multilingualism and local content but also the integrity of information in the information society, and urges

all stakeholders to encourage the creation of, and access to, educational, cultural and scientific content online so as to promote meaningful access and ensure that all people and cultures can express themselves and have access to the Internet in all languages, including Indigenous languages in the context of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022–2032);

38. *Recognizes* the importance of human capacity-building, an enabling environment and resilient information and communications technology infrastructure, as well as fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships, and assistance to countries in their efforts to strengthen the enabling role of information and communications technology for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals;

39. *Urges* a continued focus on maximizing development gains from e-commerce, through the eTrade for All initiative, which provides a new approach to trade development through electronic exchanges by allowing developing countries to more easily navigate the supply of technical assistance for building capacity in e-commerce readiness and by enabling donors to have a clear picture of the programmes that they could fund;

40. *Recognizes*, in this regard, that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development has initiated and implemented rapid e-trade readiness assessments of least developed countries in cooperation with other donors and organizations in order to raise awareness of opportunities and challenges related to leveraging e-commerce in the least developed countries;

41. *Recalls* the *Digital Economy Report 2021* of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, which examines the role of cross-border data flows for development in maximizing equitable development gains, while minimizing risks and impacts of a potential fragmentation in the digital space;

42. *Welcomes* the holding of the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy, in Geneva from 6 to 8 May 2024, and of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development eWeek, from 4 to 8 December 2023;

43. *Takes note* of the latest global report of the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, entitled *The State of Broadband 2023: Digital Connectivity – A Transformative Opportunity*, and notes with interest the continuous efforts of the Broadband Commission in promoting high-level advocacy for the establishment of an enabling environment for affordable and reliable broadband connectivity, in particular through national broadband plans and public-private partnerships for ensuring that the development agenda challenges are met with appropriate impact and in conjunction with all stakeholders;

44. *Recalls* the launching of the Broadband Advocacy Targets by the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development to support “connecting the other half” and to help to bring online the 2.6 billion of the world’s people who are not connected to the Internet;

45. *Recognizes* that the digital economy and emerging technologies have enormous potential for social good, the implementation of World Summit outcomes and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

46. *Also recognizes* the existing artificial intelligence and other digital divides between and within developed and developing countries in terms of conditions possibilities and capacities and the need to narrow these disparities;

47. *Welcomes* the many initiatives of United Nations organizations that support the implementation of the World Summit action lines, and encourages all action line facilitators to continue to work towards implementation of the action lines;

48. *Also welcomes* the work of the Information for All Programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which aims to assist Member States in formulating policies to bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable knowledge societies, and further welcomes the holding of Global Media and Information Literacy Week, from 24 to 31 October each year;

49. *Further welcomes*, in this regard, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, adopted on 23 November 2021;⁸

50. *Notes* the significant developments in the information society with the emergence in the public sphere of artificial intelligence, which significantly advances the pace and scale with which artificial intelligence is expected to have an impact on many aspects of human societies, and also acknowledges concerns about the negative impacts of artificial intelligence, namely, on employment and information integrity;

51. *Also notes* the establishment by the Secretary-General of a multi-stakeholder High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence, takes note of its interim report, issued on 21 December 2023, and looks forward to its final report;

52. *Further notes* that the International Telecommunication Union has established partnerships with 40 other United Nations entities to convene the Artificial Intelligence for Good platform, including its summits and the launch of the International Telecommunication Union Artificial Intelligence Repository to identify responsible and practical applications of artificial intelligence to advance the Sustainable Development Goals;

53. *Recognizes* the work of the International Telecommunication Union, including, in particular, the holding of its Plenipotentiary Conference in Bucharest from 26 September to 14 October 2022, at which the membership reaffirmed its commitment to the common vision of a connected world;

54. *Recalls* the holding of the sixth World Telecommunication/Information and Communications Technology Policy Forum, organized by the International Telecommunication Union from 16 to 18 December 2021;

55. *Looks forward* to the holding of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, to be convened by the International Telecommunication Union in New Delhi from 15 to 24 October 2024, and the holding of the Global Standards Symposium, to be convened in New Delhi on 14 October 2024 by the International Telecommunication Union;

56. *Recalls* the holding of the World Telecommunication Development Conference, organized by the International Telecommunication Union in Kigali from 6 to 16 June 2022;

57. *Also recalls* the holding of the eighteenth World Telecommunication/Information and Communications Technology Indicators Symposium in Geneva on 3 and 4 July 2023 on the theme “Advancing the measurement agenda to achieve universal and meaningful connectivity”;

58. *Recognizes* the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to promote digital inclusion and data and digital infrastructure in Africa and other regions to support poverty reduction and food security;

⁸ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Forty-first Session, Paris, 9–24 November 2021*, vol. 1, *Resolutions*, annex VII.

59. *Also recognizes* the work of the International Labour Organization on the impact on jobs caused by technological change, in particular the impact on women and persons in vulnerable situations;

60. *Further recognizes* the work of the Global Observatory for eHealth of the World Health Organization, including its consideration of how m-health, telehealth, electronic health records and e-learning can contribute to the goals of universal health coverage;

61. *Recognizes* the work of the United Nations Development Programme, including the publication of its Digital Strategy, which is aimed at applying the potential of digital technology to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and reiterates the importance of the United Nations Development Programme continuing to focus on such assistance and digital capacity development for countries, in particular developing countries, in collaboration with other relevant United Nations agencies;

62. *Also recognizes* the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, including its publication of the *Digital Initiatives for Indigenous Languages* toolkit, which illustrates how Internet and other digital tools can be utilized to conserve, revive and promote Indigenous languages, as well as other minority languages;

63. *Further recognizes* the work of the Internet Governance Forum, including the development of its youth, national and regional initiatives, that support multi-stakeholder discussions on digital public policy;

64. *Recalls* the publication of the Secretary-General's strategy on new technologies on how the United Nations system will support the use of new technologies to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and to facilitate their alignment with the values enshrined in the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the norms and standards of international law;

65. *Reiterates* the commitment to harnessing the potential of information and communications technologies to achieve the 2030 Agenda and other internationally agreed development goals, noting that they can accelerate progress across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, accordingly urges all Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, the technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders to integrate information and communications technologies into their approaches to implementing the Goals, and requests United Nations system entities facilitating the World Summit action lines to review their reporting and workplans to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

66. *Notes with great concern* the persistence of the gender digital divide on a global level – as 65 per cent of women and girls are now using the Internet compared with 70 per cent of men – and that women remain digitally marginalized in many of the world's poorest countries, draws attention to the gender digital divide, which persists in women's and girls' access to and use of information and communications technologies, including in education, employment and other areas of economic and social development, and, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls, calls upon member States and other stakeholders, as appropriate, to adopt all needed measures, especially by significantly enhancing women's and girls' education, as well as their participation in information and communications technologies, as users, content creators, employees, entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders, and by addressing technology-facilitated gender-based violence;

67. *Notes* the many initiatives targeted at closing the gender digital divide, including, among others, International Girls in ICT Day (International Telecommunication Union), the Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age (the EQUALS initiative), the EQUALS in Tech Awards (International Telecommunication Union and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women), the eTrade for Women Network (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), Women on the Homepage (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the Global Survey on Gender and Media (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the Broadband Commission Working Group on Broadband and Gender, the Best Practice Forum on Gender and Access of the Internet Governance Forum, the work being done in the World Summit on the Information Society Forum on gender issues and the work of the World Bank in a number of countries promoting opportunities for women and girls in information and communications technologies, as well as the work of many other stakeholders on this issue;

68. *Reaffirms* the commitment to pay particular attention to the unique and emerging information and communications technology challenges facing all countries, in particular developing countries, as envisaged in the relevant paragraphs of General Assembly resolution [70/125](#);

69. *Notes with appreciation* the special initiatives and tracks launched under the World Summit on the Information Society Forum, in particular the Multi-stakeholder Alliance on ICTs and Older Persons, in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union, the World Health Organization and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and in alignment with the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing, and the Youth Campaigns;

70. *Notes* that, while a solid foundation for capacity-building in information and communications technology has been laid in many areas with regard to building the information society, there is still a need for continuing efforts to address the ongoing challenges, especially for developing countries and the least developed countries, and draws attention to the positive impact of broadened capacity development that involves institutions, organizations and entities dealing with information and communications technologies and Internet governance issues;

71. *Acknowledges* the 911 pledges in the International Telecommunication Union Partner2Connect Digital Coalition (also known as P2C), which aims to foster meaningful connectivity and digital transformation globally with a focus on developing countries, including landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, aligned with World Summit action lines and the Sustainable Development Goals;

72. *Recognizes* the need to focus on capacity-development policies and sustainable support to further enhance the impact of activities and initiatives at the national and local levels aimed at providing advice, services and support, with a view to building an inclusive, people-centred and development-oriented information society;

73. *Notes* that topics continue to emerge, such as e-environment applications and the contribution of information and communications technologies to early warning, mitigating and adapting to climate change, disaster response, social networking, cultural and linguistic diversity, virtualization and cloud computing and services, mobile Internet and mobile-based services, community networks, the gender digital divide, cyber, the protection of privacy and freedom of expression as defined

in articles 17 and 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights⁹ and the empowerment and protection, especially against cyberexploitation and abuse, of vulnerable groups of society, in particular children and young people;

74. *Reaffirms* that, in the outcome document on the overall review of the implementation of the World Summit action lines, the General Assembly called for the World Summit on the Information Society Forum to be held annually,¹⁰ and recognizes the value of the Forum in enhancing cooperation, partnership, innovation and the exchange of experiences and good practices by all stakeholders in information and communications technologies for sustainable development;

75. *Notes* the holding of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2023, hosted by the International Telecommunication Union and jointly organized by the Union, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development from 13 to 17 March 2023, under the theme “WSIS action lines for building back better and accelerating the achievement of the SDGs”, and welcomes the holding of the WSIS+20 Forum High-level Event in Geneva, from 27 to 31 May 2024, and the open consultation process, which aims to ensure wide participation in and broad ownership of the Forum;

76. *Encourages* action line facilitators to use the Geneva Plan of Action¹¹ as the framework for identifying practical measures to use information and communications technologies to help to achieve the 2030 Agenda, noting the World Summit on the Information Society-Sustainable Development Goals matrix, developed by United Nations agencies;

77. *Encourages* World Summit action line facilitators to ensure close alignment with the 2030 Agenda when considering new work to implement the outcomes of the World Summit, according to their existing mandates and resources;

78. *Reiterates* the importance of the call by the General Assembly for all stakeholders to integrate information and communications technologies into approaches to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and its request to United Nations entities facilitating the World Summit action lines to review their reporting and workplans to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

79. *Encourages* active participation of entrepreneurs in the World Summit process and the Sustainable Development Goals, as called for in General Assembly resolution [77/160](#);

Internet governance

80. *Reaffirms* that the outcomes of the World Summit related to Internet governance, namely, the process towards enhanced cooperation and the convening of the Internet Governance Forum, are to be pursued by the Secretary-General through two distinct processes, and recognizes that the two processes may be complementary;

81. *Also reaffirms* paragraphs 34 to 37 and 67 to 72 of the Tunis Agenda;

82. *Further reaffirms* paragraphs 55 to 65 of General Assembly resolution [70/125](#);

⁹ See General Assembly resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

¹⁰ See General Assembly resolution [70/125](#).

¹¹ See [A/C.2/59/3](#), annex.

Enhanced cooperation

83. *Recognizes* the importance of enhanced cooperation in the future to enable Governments, on an equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities in international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet, but not in the day-to-day technical and operational matters that do not have an impact on international public policy issues;

84. *Recalls* the work of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation, established by the Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution [70/125](#), to develop recommendations on how to further implement enhanced cooperation as envisioned in the Tunis Agenda, and also notes that the Working Group ensured the full involvement of Governments and other relevant stakeholders, in particular from developing countries, taking into account all their diverse views and expertise;

85. *Also recalls* that the Working Group held five meetings between September 2016 and January 2018, at which it discussed inputs from Member States and other stakeholders, as stipulated by the General Assembly in its resolution [70/125](#);

86. *Further recalls* the report of the Chair of the Working Group,¹² which includes references to the full texts of all proposals and contributions, and expresses its gratitude to the Chair and all participants who submitted inputs and contributed to the work of the Working Group;

87. *Welcomes* the good progress made by the Working Group in many areas and the fact that consensus seemed to emerge on some issues, while significant divergence of views on a number of other issues persisted, and in that regard regrets that the Working Group could not find agreement on recommendations on how to further implement enhanced cooperation as envisioned in the Tunis Agenda;

Internet Governance Forum

88. *Recognizes* the importance of the Internet Governance Forum and its mandate as a forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue on various matters, as reflected in paragraph 72 of the Tunis Agenda, including discussion on public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance;

89. *Recalls* the decision of the General Assembly, in its resolution [70/125](#), to extend the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum for a further 10 years, during which time the Forum should continue to show progress on working modalities and the participation of relevant stakeholders from developing countries;

90. *Recognizes* that over 155 national and regional Internet Governance Forum initiatives have emerged, taking place in all regions and addressing Internet governance issues of relevance and priority to the organizing country or region;

91. *Recalls* General Assembly resolution [70/125](#), in which the Assembly called upon the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, within its regular reporting, to give due consideration to fulfilment of the recommendations contained in the report of the Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum of the Commission;¹³

92. *Notes* the holding of the eighteenth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, organized in Kyoto, Japan, from 8 to 12 October 2023, under the theme “The

¹² See E/CN.16/2018/CRP.3.

¹³ [A/67/65-E/2012/48](#) and [A/67/65/Corr.1-E/2012/48/Corr.1](#).

Internet we want – empowering all people”, which welcomed over 11,000 participants;

93. *Looks forward* to the holding of the nineteenth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, to be organized in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from 15 to 19 December 2024 under the theme “Building our multi-stakeholder digital future”, and the continued implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum that are applicable for its preparatory process;

94. *Welcomes*, in that context, the continuous progress made with regard to the intersessional work of the Internet Governance Forum in the different modalities of connecting and enabling the next billion online, dynamic coalitions and best practice forums and policy networks, as well as the contributions of national and regional Internet governance forums, the Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group and the Leadership Panel;

95. *Notes*, in that context, the establishment of the Leadership Panel of the Internet Governance Forum, as a step in implementing the Internet Governance Forum Plus proposal presented in the report of the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation;

The road ahead

96. *Calls upon* United Nations entities to continue to actively cooperate in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit through the United Nations system, to take the necessary steps and commit to a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society and to catalyse the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda;

97. *Calls upon* all stakeholders to keep the goal of bridging the digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and fostering digital inclusion, in their different forms, an area of priority concern, to put into effect sound strategies that contribute to the development of e-government and to continue to focus on pro-poor information and communications technology policies and applications in order to reach those in vulnerable situations, including access to reliable and affordable broadband at the grass-roots level, including through participative models, with a view to narrowing the digital divides among and within countries towards building information and knowledge societies;

98. *Recognizes* the importance of expanding participation of all countries, in particular developing countries, in digital transformation to harness the benefits and effectively participate in the development, deployment and use of emerging technologies, including safe, secure and trustworthy artificial intelligence systems, and the importance for the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to consider the impact and challenges of rapid technological changes and frontier technologies on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets;

99. *Invites* all stakeholders to take an active part in the WSIS+20 Forum High-level Event in Geneva, including the multi-stakeholder consultations on achievements, key trends, challenges and opportunities on World Summit action lines for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;

100. *Acknowledges* the challenges remaining for the full implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit, also acknowledges the challenges remaining for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and invites all stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of World Summit action lines to fulfil the objectives defined in the

10-year review process and advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

101. *Urges* all stakeholders to prioritize the development of innovative approaches that will stimulate the provision of universal, meaningful and affordable access to broadband infrastructure for developing countries and the use of relevant broadband services in order to ensure the development of an inclusive, development-oriented and people-centred information society, and to minimize the digital divides, including the gender digital divide;

102. *Calls upon* all stakeholders to promote an enabling policy environment for investment and to foster public-private cooperation and partnership for sustainable investment in information and communications technology infrastructure, applications and services, content and digital skills, with the aim of ensuring the meaningful connectivity needed to advance the Sustainable Development Goals;

103. *Calls upon* international and regional organizations to continue to assess and report on a regular basis on the universal accessibility of nations to information and communications technologies, with the aim of creating equitable opportunities for the growth of the information and communications technology sectors of developing countries;

104. *Recognizes* that, in line with paragraph 4 above, financing of information and communications technologies for development needs to be placed in the context of the growing importance of the role of information and communications technologies, not only as a medium of communication, but also as a development enabler, and as a tool for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Sustainable Development Goals;

105. *Urges* all countries to make concrete efforts to fulfil their commitments under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,¹⁴ with special attention to the needs of developing countries;

106. *Reiterates* the importance of information and communications technology indicators in open data format as a monitoring and evaluation tool for measuring the digital divide among countries and within societies and in informing decision makers when formulating policies and strategies for social, cultural and economic development, emphasizes the importance of the standardization and harmonization of reliable and regularly updated indicators, and stresses the value of gender-disaggregated data to contribute to the bridging of the gender digital divide;

107. *Calls upon* all countries to encourage the inclusiveness of innovation, especially with regard to local communities, women, persons with disabilities, older persons and youth, and to ensure that the scaling and diffusion of new technologies are inclusive and do not create further divides;¹⁵

108. *Acknowledges* the importance of digital measurement and monitoring tools that support the deployment and measurement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

109. *Encourages* the development and implementation of robust legal frameworks, policies and data protection and accountability measures to foster privacy by design across technologies and services, and highlights the importance of enabling cross-border data flows and data free flow with trust, while respecting applicable legal frameworks in this context, and reaffirming the role of data for development;

¹⁴ General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.

¹⁵ A/78/213.

110. *Calls upon* all stakeholders to promote digital literacy and awareness-raising efforts to empower individuals, especially those in vulnerable situations, to understand and exercise their data protection and privacy rights, make informed choices about their personal data and take appropriate steps to safeguard their online security and privacy;

111. *Reiterates* the importance of sharing best practices at all levels, and, while recognizing excellence in the implementation of the projects and initiatives that further the goals of the World Summit, encourages all stakeholders to nominate their projects for the annual World Summit prizes as an integral part of the World Summit stocktaking process, while taking note of the report on the World Summit success stories;

112. *Calls upon* United Nations organizations and other relevant organizations and forums, in accordance with the outcomes of the World Summit, to periodically review the methodologies for information and communications technology indicators, taking into account different levels of development and national circumstances, and therefore:

(a) Encourages Member States to develop and put in place data infrastructure at the national level on information and communications technologies, to share information about country case studies and to collaborate with other countries in capacity-building exchange programmes;

(b) Encourages United Nations organizations and other relevant organizations and forums to promote assessment of the impact of information and communications technologies on sustainable development;

(c) Notes with appreciation the work of the Partnership on Measuring Information and Communications Technology for Development and the *Measuring Digital Development* series, which provides information on recent trends and statistics on access to and the affordability of information and communications technologies and the evolution of the information and knowledge societies worldwide, including the Information and Communications Technology Development Index;

(d) Encourages the Partnership on Measuring Information and Communications Technology for Development to continue the follow-up on the relevant decisions of the Statistical Commission on information and communications technology statistics for the purposes of producing high-quality and timely information and communications technology statistics and of leveraging the potential benefits of using big data for official statistics;

113. *Invites* the international community to make voluntary contributions to the special trust fund established by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to support the review and assessment work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development regarding follow-up to the World Summit, while acknowledging with appreciation the financial support provided by the Governments of Finland, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to this fund;

114. *Recalls* the proposal in General Assembly resolution [70/125](#) that the Assembly hold a high-level meeting on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit in 2025, welcomes the road map outlining the contributions of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to the overall review, and encourages willing Member States to provide financial or other support for its implementation;

115. *Takes note with appreciation* of the two road maps developed by the International Telecommunication Union and the United Nations Educational,

Scientific and Cultural Organization towards their preparation for the World Summit 20-year review;

116. *Requests* the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to collect inputs from member States, all facilitators and other stakeholders and to organize, during its twenty-eighth session, in 2025, substantive discussions on the progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit during the past 20 years, and to report thereon, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly;

117. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General and the related discussion of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development at its twenty-seventh session, and acknowledges the role of the Commission as the focal point for the system-wide follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit;

118. *Emphasizes* the importance of promoting an inclusive information society, with particular attention to bridging the digital and broadband divides, taking into account the considerations of developing countries, gender and culture, as well as youth and other underrepresented groups;

119. *Calls for* continued dialogue and work on the implementation of enhanced cooperation as envisaged in the Tunis Agenda;

120. *Highlights* the ongoing discussions on the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Road map for digital cooperation” and the proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda”,¹⁶ including the global digital compact, relevant to the World Summit on the Information Society, and in this regard looks forward to continuing consultations and engagements towards a global digital compact consistent with the World Summit outcomes, and underlines the importance of ensuring synergies and avoiding duplication across various entities;

121. *Also highlights*, in this regard, the well-established role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development as an intergovernmental platform for discussions on the impact and opportunities of technologies for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

122. *Stresses* the need for an ongoing open, inclusive and transparent process for the negotiations of the World Summit 20-year review and follow-up in Geneva that should include informal consultations with Member States, observers and stakeholders;

123. *Also stresses*, in regard to the above, the aim to maximize benefits from technologies for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and re-emphasizes the notion of leaving no one behind, which is the central transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda;

124. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, on a yearly basis, a report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the present resolution as well as in the other Council resolutions on the assessment of the quantitative and qualitative progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

*37th plenary meeting
23 July 2024*

¹⁶ [A/75/982](#).