



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ABDULLAH M. ALSAIDI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE BRIEFING ON "MATTERS RELATED TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM" (New York, 30 March 2010)

Mr. Under-Secretary-General,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Allow me, at the beginning, to express our appreciation to you, Mr. Sha Zukang Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, for convening this timely briefing on "Matters related to the continuation of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)".
2. The Internet in recent years has undergone explosive growth: there are more than 1.6 billion Internet users in the world today. As a result of such rapid growth, Internet policy and governance issues are acquiring increasing importance. Therefore, the G77 and China believes that there is a need to further develop the role of the future reformed IGF to enable it to address issues of concern in this regard and to respond effectively and efficiently to the Internet's growing importance.
3. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) belongs to the United Nations series of summits that focus on economic and social development issues. The General Assembly of the United Nations, in its resolution 56/183, welcomed the holding of the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society. Delegations from Member States as well as representatives from international organizations, private sector, and civil society attended the first phase of WSIS in Geneva and adopted the Geneva Declaration of Principles and Geneva Plan of Action on 12 December 2003. More than 19,000 participants from 174 countries attended the second phase hosted in Tunis and adopted the Tunis Commitment and Tunis Agenda for the Information Society on 18 November 2005. The Group of 77 and China, therefore, remains hopeful that the full and effective implementation of both the Geneva and Tunis phases of the WSIS will rebound to the benefit of developing countries from information and communication technologies. We also stress that the information society should be seen as an important phase and requirement for achieving the developmental objectives by bridging both the digital and the development divides.
4. It was pursuant to paragraph 72 of the Tunis Agenda that the Internet Governance Forum was mandated, among other things, to discuss public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance in order to foster the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet. The UN Secretary-General was also asked, in accordance with paragraph 76, "to examine the desirability of the continuation of the Forum, in formal consultation with Forum participants, within five years of its creation, and to make recommendations to the UN membership in this regard."

Mr. Under-Secretary-General,

5. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the IGF and thus supports its reform and continuation. In this connection, allow me to highlight the following points:

First: In light of the importance of the issue of Internet governance, the G77 and China believes that

the matter of enhancing the role of the future IGF and its continuation is best addressed in the 65th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations regardless of any discussion of this issue in other fora;

Second: The G77 and China believes it is necessary to review the extension of the IGF every two or three years;

Third: We believe that the future IGF should focus, among other things, on how to resolve significant public policy issues such as the unilateral control of the critical Internet resources and measures in enhancing access to the Internet;

Fourth: The future IGF should also go beyond merely promoting debate. Building on the success achieved since its existence, the IGF can and should provide advice to intergovernmental bodies and other entities involved in Internet governance issues with a view to incorporating the WSIS principles in Internet governance processes at all levels;

Fifth: Paragraph 65 of the Tunis Agenda underlines "the need to maximize the participation of developing countries in decisions regarding Internet governance, which should reflect their interests, as well as in development and capacity building." The intent of this paragraph needs to be operationalized through meaningful initiation of the agreed Enhanced Cooperation process for a substantive review of the issues related to the key elements of the Internet governance. To ensure effective participation in global Internet governance, the G77 and China emphasizes that participation of developing countries in the IGF, especially from LDCs, should be addressed and enhanced;

Sixth, and last, the Tunis Agenda should be strictly followed, when reforming the IGF, so as not to duplicate the work and mandates of other existing arrangements, mechanisms, institutions or organizations. Furthermore, the future IGF should continue to operate under the auspices of the UN, while maintaining its multi-stakeholder nature.

I thank you.