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**Information and communications technologies
for development**

Fiji:* draft resolution

Information and communications technologies for development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [56/183](#) of 21 December 2001, [57/238](#) of 20 December 2002, [57/270 B](#) of 23 June 2003, [59/220](#) of 22 December 2004, [60/252](#) of 27 March 2006, [62/182](#) of 19 December 2007, [63/202](#) of 19 December 2008, [64/187](#) of 21 December 2009, [65/141](#) of 20 December 2010, [66/184](#) of 22 December 2011 and [67/195](#) of 21 December 2012,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolutions 2006/46 of 28 July 2006, 2008/3 of 18 July 2008, 2009/7 of 24 July 2009, 2010/2 of 19 July 2010, 2011/16 of 26 July 2011 and 2012/5 of 24 July 2012, and taking note of Council resolution 2013/9 of 22 July 2013 on the assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,

Recalling further the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society at its first phase, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003,¹ and endorsed by the General Assembly,² and the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by the Summit at its second phase, held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005,³ and endorsed by the General Assembly,⁴

Recalling International Telecommunication Union Council resolution 1179, adopted by the Council at its session of 2001, in which the Council endorsed the

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

¹ See A/C.2/59/3, annex.

² See resolution 59/220.

³ See A/60/687.

⁴ See resolution 60/252.



proposal to hold the World Summit on the Information Society at the highest possible level in two phases, the first in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003 and the second in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005, and taking note of the outcomes of the World Summit,

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome,⁵

Recalling further the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals and its outcome document,⁶

Recalling the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, and its outcome document, entitled “The future we want”,⁷

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General 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 levels,⁸

Noting the organization of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2013 in Geneva from 13 to 17 May 2013,

Noting also the establishment of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development at the invitation of the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, taking note of the “Broadband targets for 2015”, which set targets for making broadband policy universal and for increasing affordability and uptake in support of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and taking note also of the report of the Broadband Commission, entitled *The State of Broadband 2013: Universalizing Broadband*, which provides a country-by-country evaluation of those targets and the state of broadband deployment worldwide, as well as the report of the Commission, entitled *Doubling Digital Opportunity: Enhancing the Inclusion of Women and Girls in the Information Society*, which identifies a digital gender gap of approximately 200 million fewer women online than men and notes that without further action to increase access to broadband for women and girls, this digital gender gap could grow to 350 million by 2015,

Recognizing 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, in particular the review and assessment of the progress made in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, while at the same time maintaining its original mandate on science and technology for development,

Noting the holding of the sixteenth session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in Geneva from 3 to 7 June 2013,

Recognizing the need for full respect for national sovereignty and international law in the consideration of all aspects of information and communications technologies for development,

⁵ Resolution 60/1.

⁶ Resolution 65/1.

⁷ Resolution 66/288, annex.

⁸ A/68/65-E/2013/11.

Noting that cultural diversity is the common heritage of humankind and that the information society should be founded on and stimulate respect for cultural identity, cultural and linguistic diversity, traditions and religions and foster dialogue among cultures and civilizations, and noting also that the promotion, affirmation and preservation of diverse cultural identities and languages, as reflected in relevant agreed United Nations documents, including the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,⁹ will further enrich the information society,

Acknowledging the positive trends in the global connectivity and affordability of information and communications technologies, in particular the steady increase in Internet access to one third of the world's population, the rapid diffusion of mobile telephony and mobile Internet, the increased availability of multilingual content and the advent of many information and communications technologies services and applications, which offer great potential for the development of the information society,

Noting that many innovations in the field of information and communications technologies, such as mobile Internet, social networking and cloud computing, were not foreseen when the World Summit on the Information Society took place in 2003 and 2005 and that this dynamic landscape requires all stakeholders to continuously adapt to such innovations,

Recognizing the ongoing efforts by relevant international and regional organizations and other stakeholders to conceptualize and articulate the impact of information and communications technologies on development, and encouraging the international community and relevant stakeholders to support the efforts of developing countries in harnessing the benefits of information and communications technologies for achieving the eradication of poverty as an overarching objective for sustainable development,

Stressing, however, that in spite of recent progress, there remains an important and growing digital divide between countries in terms of the availability and affordability of and access to broadband and the use of information and communications technologies, and stressing also the need to close the digital divide, including with regard to such issues as international interconnection charges for Internet use, and to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technologies, are available to all,

Reaffirming the need to more effectively harness the potential of information and communications technologies to promote the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, through sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development,

Expressing deep concern about the adverse impacts, particularly on development, of the ongoing world financial and economic crisis, which has highlighted long-standing systemic fragilities and inequalities, stressing that the recovery is being threatened by, among others things, the deepening and widespread fiscal strains in the economies of developed countries and that the systemic

⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Thirty-first Session, Paris, 15 October-3 November 2001*, vol. 1 and corrigendum, *Resolutions*, chap. V, resolution 25, annex I.

problems facing the global economy have to be resolved, including through the full accomplishment of the reform of the global financial system and architecture,

Expressing concern that the adverse impacts of the challenges experienced by the global economy continue to have a negative impact on the ability of developing countries to develop and to bridge the digital gap,

Expressing concern also about the growing gap in broadband provision between developed and developing countries, as well as about the new dimensions that the digital divide has taken on,

Recognizing that the lack of capacity-building for the productive use of information and communications technologies needs to be addressed in order to overcome the digital divide,

Recognizing also that the number of Internet users is growing and that the digital divide is also changing in character from one based on whether access is available to one based on the quality of access, information and skills that users can obtain and the value they can derive from it, and recognizing 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,

Recognizing further the fact that information and communications technologies are critical enablers of economic development and investment, with consequential benefits for employment and social welfare, and that the increasing pervasiveness of information and communications technologies within society have had profound impacts on the ways in which Governments deliver services, businesses relate to consumers and citizens participate in public and private life,

Recognizing the immense potential that information and communications technologies have in promoting the transfer of technologies in a wide spectrum of socioeconomic activity,

Stressing the important role of Governments in the effective use of information and communications technologies in their design of public policies and in the provision of public services responsive to national needs and priorities, with the involvement of other stakeholders, as appropriate, to support national development efforts,

Recognizing that, in addition to financing by the public sector, financing of information and communications technologies infrastructure by the private sector is playing an important role in many countries,

Reaffirming paragraphs 4, 5 and 55 of the Declaration of Principles adopted in Geneva in 2003, and recognizing that freedom of expression and the free flow of information, ideas and knowledge are essential for the information society and beneficial to development,

Conscious of the challenges faced by States, in particular developing countries, in combating cybercrime, and emphasizing the need to reinforce technical assistance and capacity-building activities for the prevention, prosecution and punishment of the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes,

Acknowledging that the Internet is a central element of the infrastructure of the information society and a global facility available to the public,

Recognizing that the free flow of information, knowledge and data is essential for information and communications technologies and critical to development, and in this regard expressing concern over the unauthorized practice of illegal interception and distortion of communications and data from citizens, businesses and members of Government by foreign Governments and businesses, underscoring that this constitutes a serious violation of international law, national sovereignty and individual rights and is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and democratic coexistence between countries, and reaffirming the need for Member States to discuss these issues openly and to cooperate in relevant intergovernmental multilateral forums to secure the development of appropriate international governance on cybersecurity,

Highlighting, in this context, the importance of discussing the responsibilities attributable to each stakeholder,

Recognizing that the international management of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of Governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations, as stated in the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society,

Recognizing also 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, while acknowledging the calls for improvements in its working methods, and taking into account the recommendations of the Commission on Science and Technology Development Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum,

Recalling its decision that the desirability of the continuation of the Internet Governance Forum will be considered again by Member States in the General Assembly in the context of a 10-year review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society in 2015,

Reiterating the significance and urgency of the process towards enhanced cooperation in full consistency with the mandate provided in the Tunis Agenda and the need for enhanced cooperation to enable Governments, on an equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities in respect of international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet but not in respect of the day-to-day technical and operational matters that have no impact on those issues, and welcoming the establishment of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation, which will make recommendations on how to fully implement this mandate as an input to the General Assembly for its overall review summit on the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,

Reaffirming that the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society 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 recognizing that the two processes may be complementary,

Reaffirming also paragraphs 35 to 37 and 67 to 72 of the Tunis Agenda,

Welcoming the efforts undertaken by the host countries in organizing the meetings of the Internet Governance Forum, held in Athens in 2006, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2007, in Hyderabad, India, in 2008, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in 2009, in Vilnius in 2010, in Nairobi in 2011, in Baku in 2012 and in Bali, Indonesia, in 2013,

Noting the holding of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum, organized annually by the International Telecommunication Union, in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Development Programme, which has become a key forum for multi-stakeholder debate on pertinent issues related to the World Summit process, and noting further that the Forum's inclusiveness, openness and thematic focus have strengthened responsiveness to stakeholders and contributed to increased physical and remote participation,

Reaffirming the role of the General Assembly in the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held in 2015, as recognized by the World Summit in paragraph 111 of the Tunis Agenda, and emphasizing the importance of launching a preparatory process for the review summit, drawing on the experience from the two phases of the World Summit,

Considering that the review summit was convened under the patronage of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, with the International Telecommunication Union contributing to its preparation, in cooperation with interested United Nations bodies and other international organizations as well as the host countries,

Noting the initiatives taken by United Nations entities such as the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to contribute to the preparatory process for the overall review,

Recognizing the unique role, challenges and opportunities for youth in a deeply interconnected world, and noting the BYND 2015 Global Youth Summit, held in Costa Rica from 9 to 11 September 2013, in cooperation with the International Telecommunication Union, as a contribution to the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda in the field of communications technology for development,

Recognizing the pivotal role of the United Nations system in promoting development, including with respect to enhancing access to information and communications technologies, inter alia, through partnerships with all relevant stakeholders,

Welcoming, in view of the existing gaps in information and communications technologies infrastructure, the Connect Africa summits held in Kigali in 2007 and in Cairo in 2008, the Connect the Commonwealth of Independent States summit held in Minsk in 2009, the meeting of Commonwealth countries held in Colombo in 2010, the first and second Digital Agenda Assemblies of the European Union, held in 2011 and 2012, the Connect Americas summit held in Panama in 2012, the Connect Arab States summit held in Qatar in 2012, the Connect Asia-Pacific summit held in Thailand in 2013, the Transform Africa summit held in Kigali from 28 to

31 October 2013, the annual European Dialogue on Internet Governance, the Mesoamerican Information Highway and the Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway projects, which are regional initiatives aimed at mobilizing human, financial and technical resources to accelerate the implementation of the connectivity goals of the World Summit on the Information Society,

1. *Recognizes* that information and communications technologies have the potential to provide new solutions to development challenges, particularly in the context of globalization, and can foster sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, competitiveness, access to information and knowledge, poverty eradication and social inclusion that will help to expedite the integration of all countries, especially developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, into the global economy;

2. *Also recognizes* the rapid growth in broadband access networks, especially in developed countries, and expresses concern about the growing digital divide in the availability, affordability, quality of access and use of broadband between high-income countries and other regions, with the least developed countries and Africa, as a continent, lagging behind the rest of the world;

3. *Expresses concern* regarding the digital divide in access to information and communications technologies and broadband connectivity between countries at different levels of development, which affects many economically and socially relevant applications in such areas as government, business, health and education, and also expresses concern with regard to the special challenges faced in the area of broadband connectivity by developing countries, including the least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries;

4. *Acknowledges* that a gender divide exists as part of the digital divide, and encourages all stakeholders to ensure the full participation of women in the information society and women's access to and use of information and communications technologies for their overall empowerment and benefit;

5. *Stresses* that, for the majority of the poor, the development 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, to bridge the digital divide;

6. *Also stresses* the important role of Governments in the design of their national public policies and in the provision of public services responsive to national needs and priorities through, inter alia, the effective use of information and communications technologies, including on the basis of a multi-stakeholder approach, to support national development efforts;

7. *Recognizes* that, in addition to financing by the public sector, financing of information and communications technologies infrastructure by the private sector has come to play an important role in many countries and that domestic financing is being augmented by North-South flows and complemented by South-South cooperation, and also recognizes that South-South and triangular cooperation can be useful tools for promoting the development of information and communications technologies;

8. *Also 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, such as insufficient resources, infrastructure, education, capacity, investment and connectivity and issues related to technology ownership, standards and flows, and in this regard calls upon all stakeholders to provide adequate resources, enhanced capacity-building and technology transfer, on mutually agreed terms, to developing countries, particularly the least developed countries;

9. *Further recognizes* the immense potential that information and communications technologies have in promoting the transfer of technologies in a wide spectrum of socioeconomic activity;

10. *Encourages* strengthened and continuing cooperation between and among stakeholders to ensure the effective implementation of the outcomes of the Geneva¹ and Tunis³ phases of the World Summit on the Information Society through, inter alia, the promotion of national, regional and international multi-stakeholder partnerships, including public-private partnerships, and the promotion of national and regional multi-stakeholder thematic platforms in a joint effort and dialogue with developing countries, including the least developed countries, development partners and actors in the information and communications technologies sector;

11. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by Tunisia, host of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Telecommunication Union and other relevant international and regional organizations, in organizing annually the ICT 4 All Forum and technological exhibition as a platform within the framework of the follow-up to the World Summit to promote a dynamic business environment for the information and communications technologies sector worldwide;

12. *Notes* the progress that has been made by United Nations entities in cooperation with national Governments, regional commissions and other stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in the implementation of the action lines contained in the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society, and encourages the use of those action lines for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

13. *Also notes* the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional level, facilitated by the regional commissions, as observed in the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit at the regional and international levels;⁸

14. *Encourages* the United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, within their respective mandates and strategic plans, to contribute to the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, and emphasizes the importance of allocating new and additional resources in this regard;

15. *Recognizes* the urgent need to harness the potential of knowledge and technology, and in this regard encourages the United Nations development system to continue its effort to promote the use of information and communications technologies as a critical enabler of development and a catalyst for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

16. *Also recognizes* the role of the United Nations Group on the Information Society as an inter-agency mechanism of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination designed to coordinate United Nations implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society;

17. *Takes note* of the report of the Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum,¹⁰ and requests the Secretary-General to submit, as part of his annual reporting on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, information on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Working Group, in particular on enhancing participation by developing countries;

18. *Stresses* the need for the enhanced participation of all developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, in all Internet Governance Forum meetings, and in this regard invites Member States, as well as other stakeholders, to support the participation of Governments and all other stakeholders from developing countries in the Forum itself, as well as in the preparatory meetings;

19. *Invites* Member States and other stakeholders to give appropriate consideration to the issues of information and communications technologies for development and the use and governance of the Internet in the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda;

20. *Reaffirms* the role of the General Assembly in the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held in 2015, as recognized in paragraph 111 of the Tunis Agenda;

21. *Decides* to hold, in 2015, the 10-year review summit on the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, in accordance with paragraph 111 of the Tunis Agenda;

22. *Also decides* to launch a preparatory process for the review summit by January 2014, which shall take place through an open-ended intergovernmental preparatory committee and be consistent with and draw on the experience of the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society process and which will define the agenda of the review summit, finalize the negotiated outcome document of the summit and decide on the modalities for the participation of other stakeholders in the summit;

23. *Invites* Governments to participate actively in the preparatory process of the overall review summit in 2015 and to be represented in the summit at the highest possible level;

24. *Acknowledges* the contributions of the International Telecommunication Union in the Geneva and Tunis Summits, and invites the Union to contribute similarly to the overall review summit and its preparatory process;

25. *Requests* the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to submit recommendations to the Economic and Social Council on considerations to foster the multilateral, transparent and democratic international governance of the Internet, with the full involvement of Governments, as well as the private sector, civil society, the academic and technical communities, international organizations

¹⁰ A/67/65-E/2012/48 and Corr.1.

and intergovernmental organizations in their respective roles, as stated in the Tunis Agenda, as an input to the General Assembly for its 10-year review summit on the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society in 2015;

26. *Requests* the Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to ensure that the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation addresses the implications of the current international governance of the Internet with a view to ensuring that information and communications technologies, particularly the Internet, are used in such a way as to promote and protect all fundamental human rights, in particular the right to privacy, in full respect for national sovereignty and international law, and to make recommendations to the Commission at its seventeenth session, in 2014, as an input for the overall review of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society;

27. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session a report on the status of preparation for the review summit, taking into consideration the work of the intergovernmental preparatory committee;

28. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report outlining the challenges of the unauthorized practices of interception and distortion of communications and data and options to address the right to privacy, national sovereignty and international law as an input for the preparatory process for the review of the summit;

29. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, through the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the Economic and Social Council, a report on the status of the implementation of and follow-up to the present resolution, as part of his annual reporting on the 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 levels;

30. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-ninth session the item entitled “Information and communications technologies for development”.
