Commission on Science and Technology for Development
Fourteenth session
Geneva, 23 to 27 May 2011

Draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

The Commission recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Draft Resolution
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 on the Information Society and review of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the mandate that it gave to the Commission,

Recalling further its resolution 2010/2 of 19 July 2010 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 General Assembly resolution 65/141 of 20 December 2010 on information and communications technologies for 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 on the Information Society at the regional and international levels,[2]

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Improvements and innovations in existing financing mechanisms: information and communications technology for development",[3]

Taking note of the submission of the report *Implementing WSIS Outcomes: Experience to Date and Prospects for the Future* by the Commission for Science and Technology for Development[4] as an information document,

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[1] See A/C.2/59/3, annex, and A/60/687. The outcome documents are also available from www.itu.int/WSIS/index.html.
[2] A/66/64 , E/2011/77.
[3] E/CN.16/2010/3.
[4] UNCTAD/DTL/STICT/2011/3.

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

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

1. *Notes* the ongoing implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, 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 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;

2. *Notes* the respective reports of many United Nations entities, with their own executive summaries, submitted as inputs for the elaboration of the annual report of the Secretary-General to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, and published on the website of the Commission as mandated in Economic and Social 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;

3. *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 on the Information Society at the regional and international levels,[5] 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;

4. *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 exchanging information among action line facilitators, identifying issues that needed improvement and discussing the modalities of reporting the overall implementation process, *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 stocktaking database;

5. *Highlights* the urgent need for the incorporation of the recommendations of the outcome documents of the World Summit in the revised guidelines for United Nations country teams on preparing the common country assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, including the addition of an information and communications technology for development component;

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[5] A/66/64 , E/2011/77.

6. *Notes* the holding of World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2011, organized by the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Development Programme as a multi-stakeholder platform for the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit and to facilitate the implementation of the Summit action lines;

7. *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;

8. *Welcomes* the progress highlighted in the Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, in particular that the rapid growth in mobile telephony since 2005 has meant that more than half of the world's inhabitants will have access to information and communication technologies within their reach, in line with one of the World Summit on the Information Society targets. The value of this progress is enhanced by the advent of new services and applications, including m-health, mobile transactions, e-government, e-business and developmental services, which offer great potential to the development of the Information Society.

9. *Notes with great concern* that many developing countries lack affordable access of information and communication technologies, and that for the majority of the poor the promise of science and technology, including information and communication technologies, remains unfulfilled, and emphasizes the need to effectively harness technology, including information and communications technologies, to bridge the digital divide;

10. *Recognizes* that information and communications technologies present new opportunities and challenges and that there is a pressing need to address the major impediments that the developing countries face in accessing the new technologies, such as sufficient 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 transfer of technology to developing countries, particularly the least developed countries;

11. *Recognizes* the rapid growth in broadband access networks, especially in developed countries and notes with concern that there is a growing digital divide in the availability, affordability, quality of access and use of broadband between high income countries and other regions with least developed countries and Africa as a continent lagging behind the rest of the world;

12. *Recognizes* that the transition to a mobile-led communications environment 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;

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

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

15. *Welcomes* the Broadband Commission for Digital Development's report as presented to the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon in New York on 19 September 2010 and *notes* that the report also includes the Commission's 'Declaration of Broadband Inclusion for All';

16. *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 effort 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;

17. *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;

18. *Notes* that topics that were not central at the first and second phases of the World Summit in 2003 and 2005 continue to emerge, such as the potential of information and communications technologies to combat climate change, social networking, virtualisation and cloud computing the protection of online privacy and the empowerment and protection of vulnerable groups of society, in particular children and young people, particularly against cyber exploitation and abuse;

19. *Reiterates* the importance of information and communications technology indicators 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, and emphasizes that the standardization and harmonization of reliable and regularly updated information and communications technology indicators capturing the performance, efficiency, affordability and quality of goods and services is essential for implementing information and communications technology policies;

Internet governance

20. *Reaffirms* paragraph 21 of its resolution 2010/2 of 19 July 2010 and paragraph 16 of the General Assembly resolution 65/141 of 20 December 2010;

21. *Reaffirms* also paragraphs 35 to 37 and paragraphs 67 to 72 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society;

Enhanced cooperation

22. *Recalls* its resolution 2010/2 of 19 July 2010 which invited the UN Secretary General to convene open and inclusive consultations involving all Member States and all other stakeholders with a view to assisting the process towards enhanced cooperation, in order 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 the day-to-day technical and operational matters, that do not impact on those issues, through a balanced participation of all stakeholders in their respective roles and responsibilities, as stated in paragraph 35 of the Tunis Agenda;

23. *Takes note with appreciation* of the open and inclusive consultations convened by the Secretary General through the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs from September to December 2010, including the meeting held in New York on 14 December 2010;

24. *Decides* to forward the Report of the UN Secretary General on the outcome of these consultations to the General Assembly for consideration at its 66th session in order 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 do not impact upon those issues;

Internet Governance Forum

25. *Recalls* General Assembly resolution 65/141 of 20 December 2010 on information and communications technologies for development which extends the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum for a further five years while recognizing the need for improvements;

26. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report on the outcomes of the Working Group on improvements to the Internet Governance Forum and expresses its gratitude to all its members for their time and valuable efforts in this endeavour as well as to all member states and other relevant stakeholders that have submitted inputs to the Working Group consultation process;

27. *Takes note* that the wealth of information and the complexity and political sensitivity of the subject as well as a divergence of views among members of the Working Group on a number of concrete proposals did not, within the short time frame that it had, allow the Working Group to finalize a set of recommendations as appropriate on improving the Internet Governance Forum;

28. *Agrees* to extend the mandate of the Working Group on improvements to the Internet Governance Forum until the 15th session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and invites it to complete its task on the basis of the work already done;

29. *Urges* that the Working Group be re-convened at the earliest possible time to enable timely submission of its recommendations to the 15th session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, which shall constitute an input from the Commission to the UN General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council;

The road ahead

30. *Urges* the United Nations entities still not actively cooperating in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit through the United Nations system and in its follow-up 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 United Nations Millennium Declaration;[6]

31. *Calls upon* all stakeholders to keep the goal of bridging the digital divide, in its different forms, an area of priority concern, put into effect sound strategies that contribute to the development of e-government and continue to focus on pro-poor information and communications technology policies and applications, including access to broadband at the grass-roots level, with a view to narrowing the digital divide among and within countries;

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

33. *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;

34. *Urges* all countries to make concrete efforts to fulfil their commitments under the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development;[7]

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[6] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[7] Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18–22 March 2002 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

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

(a) *endorses* the work of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development;

(b) *calls on* United Nations organizations and other relevant organizations and forums to study the implications of the current world economic situation on ICT deployment, particularly ICT connectivity through broadband, and its economic sustainability;

(c) *calls on* the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development to further its work on measuring the impact of information and communication technologies, particularly in developing countries, by creating practical guidelines, methodologies and indicators;

(d) *encourages* governments to collect relevant data at the national level on information and communication technologies, to share information about country case studies, and to collaborate with other countries in capacity-building exchange programmes;

(e) *encourages* United Nations organizations and other relevant organizations and forums to promote impact assessment of information and communication technologies on poverty and in key sectors to identify the knowledge and skills needed to boost impacts; and

(f) *calls on* international development partners to provide financial support to further facilitate capacity-building and technical assistance in developing countries;

36. *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 on the Information Society, while acknowledging with appreciation the financial support provided by the governments of Finland and Switzerland to this fund;

37. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, on a yearly basis, a report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in Economic and Social 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;

38. *Urges* the Secretary-General to ensure the continued functioning of the IGF and its structures in preparation for the fifth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, to be held from 27 to 30 September in Nairobi, Kenya and future meetings of the Internet Governance Forum, without prejudice to the improvements that may be proposed by the Working Group on improvements to the Internet Governance Forum;

39. *Invites* all stakeholders to contribute to the open consultation of the United Nations Group on the Information Society on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the WSIS Outcomes (WSIS+10) in order to ensure that their views and needs are reflected in the outcomes of this consultation, i.e. the Action Plan, which shall be presented to the Chief Executive Board at its meeting in April 2012, and request the United Nations Group on the Information Society to provide a report on this Open Consultation for consideration by the Commission at its fifteenth session in May 2012.