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President: Mr. Lykketoft . . . . (Denmark)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

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

Agenda item 17

Information and communications technologies for development

    Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/63)

    Draft resolution (A/70/L.33)

The President: I declare open 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. This meeting is held in accordance with resolutions 68/198, of 20 December 2013, and 68/302, of 31 July 2014, and takes place under agenda item 17, "Information and communications technologies for development".

The Assembly has before it a report of the Secretary-General entitled "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" (A/70/63). The Assembly will also have before it the draft 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, to be issued as document A/70/L.33 on 16 December 2015. By its resolution 68/198, the General Assembly reaffirmed its role in the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, as recognized in paragraph 111 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society.

Statement by the President

The President: Let me express that it is an honour to welcome all to this high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the World Summit on the Information Society. Let me begin by congratulating all on reaching consensus on the outcome document (A/70/L.33), which is scheduled for adoption tomorrow. Once again, the membership of the United Nations has proved that, through perseverance, commitment and compromise, we can advance and make great things happen together. I congratulate and sincerely thank the co-facilitators, Ambassador Jānis Mažeiks and Ambassador Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, on their able leadership throughout.

Ten years ago, world leaders declared a common desire and commitment to building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society. In doing so, they underscored the power of information and communications technologies (ICT) and its ability to contribute positively to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Since then, we have made great strides along this path, as levels of ICT access, use and skills have continued to improve across the world. According to the annual report of the International Telecommunication Union, *Measuring the Information Society Report*, 43.4 per cent of the world population is now online, and mobile-cellular subscriptions have reached almost 7.1 billion. ICT has played an increasingly important role in promoting

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economic and social development, such as enhancing productivity, facilitating trade, creating quality jobs, providing ICT-based services, such as e-health and e-learning, and improving governance.

While recognizing these achievements and this great potential, we must not lose sight of the remaining challenges. Various forms of digital divides still exist within and among countries. Progress on ICT has not been mirrored by broad-based sustainable development in many countries. New challenges have emerged relating to Internet stability and security, data ownership and exercise of human rights online.

Today's draft outcome document recognizes many of these challenges and the work that lies ahead. It recognizes also the linkages between ICTs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). Adopted just three months ago, that Agenda carries forward the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals. In the Sustainable Development Goals, it sets out an ambitious set of targets to end poverty, advance shared prosperity and ensure environmental sustainability worldwide over the coming 15 years. Both the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda have recognized that ICT will be one of the key cross-cutting enablers for making those targets.

There are a number of actions we can take to make this happen. We must ensure that ICT is integrated into the implementation of the strategies of the Sustainable Development Goals. We must create an enabling policy and regulatory environment for all levels for investment, development and the spread of ICT. We must step up our efforts to provide equitable and affordable access to ICT and improve capacity and skills to make use of them, especially in the developing world and for the marginalized communities. We must ensure that governance of the Internet promotes equitable distribution of resources, facilitates access for all and ensures a stable and secure functioning of the Internet. We must guarantee that fundamental freedoms and other human rights that are exercised off-line are equally exercisable online. Finally, and based on experience of what has worked over the past 10 years, we must enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration and action among more stakeholders to achieve the vision of the World Summit on the Information Society and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The adoption of the draft outcome document at this meeting will mark the conclusion of the 10-year review process of the World Summit on the Information Society. It will also mark the beginning of a new phase of the journey — a journey that seeks to fully harness the power of ICT to realize the Sustainable Development Goals and to leave no one behind. In spite of the many challenges of this area, we know we have the knowledge, the skills and the resources to make this happen. So let us leave New York this week recommitted to working together and re-energized to take immediate action.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: Information and communication technologies (ICT) have reached into every walk of life. They have sparked innovation and entrepreneurship. They have created new forms of public engagement and economic activity. That would have been unimaginable just a few years ago. They help people connect, organize and act towards a common purpose. Members are here to help maximize the benefits of ICT for people everywhere. This high-level review is timely, coming just three months after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). ICT can be an engine for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. IT can power this global undertaking.

As we celebrate remarkable ICT achievements for development, we must keep focus on bridging the digital divide, including the gender digital divide. Today more than 80 per cent of households in developed countries have Internet access. Meanwhile, two out of three households in developing countries do not. Women are half of the global population, yet 200 million fewer women than men have access to the Internet. We must bridge these divides.

Mobile technologies and digital currencies also present huge potential to reach the 2 billion women and men who are still unbanked around the world. By encouraging innovation in financial technology, we can help promote financial inclusion, enlarge opportunity and grow the productive economy. The secure use of new and non-traditional sources of data can help actors better anticipate, plan, target, implement, monitor and account for our common endeavour.

As we look ahead, we must work together to build confidence, strengthen trust and promote a global culture of cybersecurity. This culture requires a shared commitment and action by all partners to protect and

enhance human rights, while fighting cybercrime and cyber attacks. There will be new challenges. By 2020, it is anticipated that there will be six times as many devices as people connected to the Internet. We must cooperate to consider the implications of this and ensure that the Internet evolves into an inclusive space for the public good. Therefore, let us intensify our work to build an open, reliable, safe, secure, stable and inclusive Internet.

I welcome the decision of the General Assembly to extend the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum by 10 years. The United Nations system stands ready to work with all members. Last week, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination issued a joint statement underscoring the importance of collaborative action to harness the power of ICT and the Internet to implement the 2030 Agenda.

We will support content development, skills and capacity-building and foster an enabling environment, including multilingualism. We will work to advance freedom of expression, cultural diversity and human rights online through efforts at the country, regional and global levels. We will strengthen coherence across the United Nations system and enhance the role of United Nations Group on the Information Society. We will also promote the World Summit on the Information Society Forum as a key platform for discussing the role of ICT as a means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2015, we embarked on a journey — a journey of climate action, a journey of sustainability, a journey of prosperity for all the nations and communities sharing this one planet. ICT and the Internet must help drive this journey. Let us ensure that the results of this high-level meeting help us reach our shared destination: a sustainable, equitable and connected world for everyone everywhere.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Before we proceed with the list of speakers, I would like to turn to some organizational matters pertaining to the conduct of the high-level meeting. We turn first to the length of statements.

I would like to remind members that statements should not exceed five minutes when speaking in a national capacity and, when speaking on behalf of a group, statements should not exceed seven minutes. In

the light of that given time frame, I should like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a normal speed so that interpretation may be provided properly.

To assist speakers in managing their time, a light system has been installed at the speaker's rostrum. I appeal to all speakers for their cooperation in observing the time limits of their statements.

Representatives are also reminded that photos of speakers delivering statements in the plenary of the General Assembly are routinely taken and are available for download in high resolution from the United Nations website and from the United Nations Photo Library, located in room S-1047 in the Secretariat building.

Mr. Cwele (South Africa): I am honoured and privileged to address this high-level meeting of the General Assembly on behalf of the 134 members of the Group of 77 and China.

I would like to start by congratulating and expressing our appreciation to Ambassador Jānis Mažeiks of the Republic of Latvia and Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates for the sterling leadership they have displayed in guiding the review process to its successful conclusion.

The Group of 77 and China fully supports the fundamental principles of the World Summit on the Information Society, which are to create an information society that is underpinned by social, cultural, economic and technical development; and the objectives of which are to build partnerships and bridge the gap between developed and developing countries. The Group's engagement in the Summit process is informed by the desire to fulfil its global vision for an inclusive, people-centred, development-oriented global information society; and to enhance its capacity as a tool for economic and social development.

The Summit agenda is as relevant today as it was at its inception and can be a catalyst for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. It has been 10 years since the adoption of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, and we recognize the successes in the development of national e-strategies and the creation of an enabling environment; the adoption of e-applications and the mainstreaming of information and communications technologies; and the creation of a media environment that promotes information-sharing

and regional cooperation. The advent of broadband has transformed education and health, and has proved to be a useful tool for the delivery of Government services.

There is increasing recognition of the enhanced multiplier effect that derives from investment in broadband. This is important for developing countries because access to adequate, reliable, affordable and secure information and communication infrastructure and devices is still a challenge, particularly in rural areas. Challenges faced in achieving the information society are further impacted by illiteracy, high levels of unemployment and poverty. Equality of opportunities, especially relating to gender, and digital inclusion tools to cater to people with disabilities, is one of the critical factors that have not been addressed adequately. There is a need for us to address Internet challenges, such as privacy, data protection, cybercrime, network security, equal access and participation by all countries and ensuring adaptability of usage in local contexts.

We further recognize that there are many cross-cutting international public policy issues that require attention and are not adequately addressed. In that context, it is important to build a united, equal, open, transparent, fair and balanced platform that recognizes all Governments on an equal footing. The Tunis Agenda for the Information Society called for mechanisms to consider the views of all stakeholders, recognizing the contribution of the public and private sectors, civil society, and intergovernmental and international organizations in their respective roles in the building of an information society. Those principles should enshrine the outcomes of our collective decision from this meeting.

The Group of 77 and China believes that the information society is underpinned by an understanding that the current society is significantly different from previous social formations, and that information and knowledge are central to the development and emergence of a new form of social organization in society. As information and communications technologies stewards, we believe that access to information and communications technologies remains essential for all. We should therefore commit to e-skilling, building capacity and ensuring that all citizens in the world are connected.

While having a digital society yields benefits, it is important to ensure that our citizens, especially the youth, are educated about the threat of cyber-

opportunism. It should be a collective responsibility to invest in youth programmes and create capacity platforms, not only to train in terms of e-skills, but with a view to developing e-applications to mitigate security threats such as cybercrime, which remains a high priority for us. As we all know, information and communication technologies are critical catalysts for integrated development and accelerated shared growth, and the importance of enabling a secure and robust environment must not be overlooked.

The gender digital divide is a concern. Women, in any society, serve as pillars, yet they remain the most vulnerable as cyberspace continues to be used for the exploitation of women and girls. Through private-public partnerships, we must tackle cyberdiscrimination and violence. We need to change societal norms and practices in order to tackle offline and online violence directed at women and children. The development of norms, protocols and standards to safeguard and ensure the proper use of cyberspace could contribute to changing societal norms. In addition, we must develop programmes that will empower women and girls and promote their active participation in the digital economy.

The existing imbalance in the development and distribution of software and information technology equipment remains a barrier for uptake, and the rapid deployment of information- and communications-technology infrastructure and usage by citizens. It is therefore necessary to identify strategic electronic and manufacturing programmes and partnerships, especially for developing countries, to ensure joint efforts to free the world markets of existing monopolies. We support and encourage the development of intellectual property on open-source principles to facilitate universal and unrestricted access, and believe that the manufacturing of software and hardware devices should remain a collective priority in order to ensure social and economic development. The Group of 77 and China also considers it necessary to promote measures and facilitate favourable conditions to ensure the progressive development of information and communications technologies. As Governments, we should commit to creating favourable and harmonized legal and regulatory environments, and to promoting private-sector investment for localization. That must be scaled up to regional levels for maximum economies of scale.

The Tunis Agenda for the Information Society pushed for financing mechanisms to support the digital agenda. Harnessing and sustaining investment in information and communications technologies requires political will, incentive schemes and commitments by partners to support local programmes, including those whose return on investment may not be immediate. Fast-tracking information and communications technologies infrastructure roll-out should not be at the disadvantage of communities and citizens who face economic hardships. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda recognizes the important contribution that direct investment can make to sustainable development, particularly when projects are aligned with national and regional sustainable development strategies.

With regard to confidence and security in the use of information and communication technologies, the Group of 77 and China is of the view that there is a void created by the lack of relevant international instruments and measures. It is no longer prudent to think that bilateral technical cooperation agreements alone will eradicate crimes committed online. In that regard, there is a need for effective and robust measures at the international level to combat these challenges.

We reaffirm that the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online. We emphasize that the process towards the World Summit on the Information Society vision should be considered not only as a function of economic development and the spread of information and communication technologies, but also as a function of progress with respect to the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The need for the transparency and democratization of the international order rings true for Internet governance, as it displays an unbalanced control of what are, in essence, global resources and infrastructure. It is now self-evident that the Internet and the infrastructure it is based upon are critical for the economic, social and security dimensions of all countries. Different countries rely on the Internet for their manufacturing, domestic and foreign trade; while citizens rely on the Internet to receive Government services, including using it to express their political choices and participate in countries' political processes. To a greater extent, all countries are exposed to threats to their banking and financial systems, electricity, water and other critical utilities as a result of what happens to the Internet and its security. Further, the defence and security forces of countries are also dependent on a safe operation of the

Internet that is free of disruptions and interception by others.

In conclusion, I would like to borrow the words of our democratic South Africa's founding father, Mr. Nelson Mandela, when he addressed the International Telecommunication Union Telecom World on 5 October 2009 and said,

"These technologies have transformed the way people live and the manner in which countries develop. They have the potential to enable us to solve many of the critical problems confronting us. If this potential is to be realized, then we must find ways of turning these technologies into a resource for all people despite the challenges they face within their community."

The President: I call on the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Oettinger (European Union): It is a great pleasure to be here today in the house of all the nations of the world and to share, in our General Assembly, the views of the European Union on the future of the global digital society.

Ten years ago, the World Summit on the Information Society pushed the importance of information and communications technologies to the top of the political agendas of the world and brought together all those involved in making the Internet an open, innovative engine of growth and tool for information and communication for all. At that time, when the World Summit on the Information Society was finalizing its work in Tunis, the disruptive effects of information and communications technologies and the Internet were only beginning to be seen.

In these past 10 years we have witnessed an impressive increase in access to information and communications that is profoundly changing our society. At the end of 2015, there will be more than 7 billion mobile subscriptions, and just in the past five years global Internet penetration has grown sevenfold, from only 6.5 per cent to 43 per cent. Some 3.2 billion people are using the Internet now, of whom 2 billion are from developing countries. Indeed it is in the developing countries that we have seen the greatest growth in access, also from a very low base 10 years ago. The reasons for this are both supply-driven and demand-driven. Supply is facilitated by effective public-private partnerships and the right regulatory

environments for investment and distribution. Demand depends on the citizens' need to communicate, access health, education and other Government services, as well as their drive for information and innovation.

Governments and public authorities have had to ensure enabling environments, industry has had to deploy networks and services, and civil society gives a voice to the ones wanting to be heard. They all have played an important role in this digital revolution and need to continue to do so. Last September, Heads of State and Government agreed to a new set of objectives and targets for the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (resolution 70/1), including increased connectivity by 2020. These are targets that we can and must achieve, not only to bring the advantages of the digital economy to all, but also to reduce poverty, improve health care, increase education levels and drive efficiencies and innovation in all parts of the globe. Connecting the unconnected remains a high priority. Lower connectivity, prices, cheaper devices and new technologies make this objective not just a long-term dream for the most disadvantaged but a reasonable and attainable goal.

However, there is a risk that a new digital divide will develop between those with access to broadband and new digital services, one that will adversely affect those without such access. While access to mobile telephony in Africa is relatively good, mobile broadband penetration there remains the lowest in the world, less than 20 per cent. Fixed broadband is available to fewer than 1 per 100 African inhabitants. We face future fragmentation between those with access to all services and facilities versus those limited to just the basic Internet. That is not good enough for us to achieve the global information and digital society goals that we have established.

Another issue that is at the heart of our European environment relates to local content and multilingualism, also an integral part of the World Summit's agenda. Even if networks are available, people will connect to the Internet only if it gives them access to content they want that is useful, relevant, or entertaining and in a language they understand. Local content promotes cultural diversity and can facilitate democratic discussion and information exchange. In Europe, we have some experience with this. Ensuring that different cultures and languages interact and grow together to build a strong community based on common values is part of our daily endeavours. We want diversity and multilingualism to flourish. That goal is even more important globally where efforts to bring the next 4 billion Internet users online will also need to take into consideration the ability to access the Internet in local or regional languages.

Digital literacy is also a challenge for addressing the next digital divide. We must help more people to get online and expand the potential of those that already have access. Without sufficient digital skills, local content cannot be developed; the gross sectoral benefits of information and communication technologies remain limited, and digital economies do not develop. The *World Summit on the Information Society+10 Statement on the Implementation of WSIS Outcomes* recognizes the critical importance of the digital economy. We are acutely aware of this in Europe, too, and adopted earlier this year a digital single-market strategy to foster our digital growth.

Digital economy and societies are key to achieving sustainable development. We must do our utmost to ensure that the right conditions are in place everywhere for it to flourish. The overall review of 10 years of progress after the World Summit on the Information Society has highlighted as never before the role of the Internet as a driver of innovation, economic growth, the exercise of human rights through information and communication, but also as a catalyst for social change for the entire world. Access to the Internet has become an important factor in facilitating human development, helping some of the most underprivileged people in the world improve their living standards, and extending access to a more global society.

Europe has been working for many years to ensure that the Internet remains a single, open and free unfragmented network of networks, and remains a strong supporter of the multi-stakeholder system of Internet governance. We applaud the decision of the General Assembly to extend the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum for 10 years, and will work together with all stakeholders to bring even more added value and inclusiveness to this important forum. The Internet Governance Forum stands out as an excellent example of bringing stakeholders together globally, but also as a good practice that can be replicated and expanded regionally, nationally or locally.

I want to thank all of those involved in developing the draft outcome document (A/70/L.33), but in particular the two co-facilitators who spent so many

hours carefully listening, absorbing and incorporating the contributions of so many stakeholders. The President of the General Assembly has also taken this opportunity to let all stakeholders contribute to this review, and that has enriched our discussions. We should be proud of the final result.

The digital economy is a global engine for growth that knows no borders. We must all work together to make connectivity accessible and affordable for all so that everyone, everywhere, can benefit. I look forward to the next 10 years for a vibrant and dynamic information and digital society for all. In Europe, we stand united to do all that we can to ensure that the Internet continues to be the open, stable and reliable platform for information, communication, innovation and inspiration for all. We are hoping that in 2025, when we review progress over the next 10 years, we can tell ourselves that we made the world a better place.

Ms. Kaljurand (Estonia): I am very pleased to be here today to mark the 10-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society. We have come a long way. The world has experienced incredible economic and social growth as a result of the development and use of information and communications technologies. The Internet and interconnectivity have become a decisive factor for development, growth, prosperity and stability. Estonia has been a keen adopter of these benefits. The benefits are not abstract — 96 per cent of people submit their personal income tax declarations online; for a majority of people it takes less than five minutes. We also estimate that we save 2 per cent of gross domestic product annually in the whole of economy just by signing everything and anything digitally. Information and communication technologies have helped us to save time, human resources and money.

Information and communications technologies have also helped Estonia to create a well-functioning partnership among people, industry and Government in support and in protection of our values, economic aspirations and political goals. We know that the principle for adopting information and communication technologies as a factor of development is different for every country. It is about making conscious choices to establish one's own formula of growth and development — establishing your own way of life. For that very same reason, the effective global governance of the Internet needs to be perceptive to the less traditional structures that new technologies provide for and include close cooperation and coordination among

the respective stakeholders — not only Governments, but the work and collaboration of industry, civil society, and the technical and academic community.

The World Summit on the Information Society is a good example of the more than 10 years of work that has created a platform for multi-stakeholder interaction and better understanding between key interest groups and stakeholders. Perhaps one of the most sensitive questions around information and communications technologies is security. For Estonia, cyberthreat is not an abstract doomsday scenario. In 2007, we became one of the first countries in the world to experience how a lifestyle dependent on information and communications technologies can be attacked in support of political agendas. Attacks on Estonian Government servers and financial services caused considerable nuisance, but we were able to take control of our own services and functions, with the help of numerous other countries, through information exchange, coordinated defence and expert cooperation. We were able to test and reinforce our laws and policies. We were able to invite other countries to turn more attention to the threats and risks that come with the development and use of information and communications technologies, as well as with any other technology or societal change. Based on our own experience, even for a small country, or rather especially for a small country, it is possible to incorporate information and communication technologies into society in a way that offers more benefits and advantages instead of introducing new risks.

We have also taken international cybersecurity efforts seriously. There have been major achievements during the past 10 years to develop consensus on the application of international law with regard to State use of information and communications technologies, in particular by the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. It is important to bear in mind that cyberspace is not a lawless domain. National and international law, including human rights and humanitarian law, all apply fully. Both benefits and mitigation of risk require us to reach out.

We deem it necessary to provide assistance and cooperation to technologically less developed countries in order to try to bridge the digital divide. We will continue to share our experience and contribute to relevant programmes and activities, but it is essential

for all of us to focus more on coordination among actors globally, exchange views and good practices, and seek future synergies in our respective global capacity-building initiatives.

A significant digital divide exists not only between countries, but also between women and men. The world cannot afford to make use of only half of the human potential for growth and innovation. It is critical to address women's empowerment in the digital age and to work towards closing the gender gap in information and communications technologies (ICT). There are explicit interlinkages and synergies between the World Summit on the Information Society and the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, we must ensure that there is consistency between the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

We cannot separate the idea of ICT and the idea of freedom. The development of every country, including in the field of ICT, has to be based on the promotion and protection of human rights. The principles stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights must remain the core of any strategy and development plan in democratic society. Estonia, as an active member of the Freedom Online Coalition, is convinced that freedom online contributes to the faster development of ICT and thereby increases the competitiveness of every country. The human rights that we have all signed up for under international law are technically neutral; we do not need to create new moral values just because we went from analogue to digital. It is deeply concerning when we see Government restrictions, including on social media, used to follow people and limit their freedom of expression, to uncover, reveal and ultimately persecute dissidents.

Estonia supports and stands by everyone who shares the values of democracy and the rule of law applicable equally offline and online. We continue our dedicated work to promote and protect human rights: the freedoms of expression, assembly and association and privacy online. We remain committed to advancing Internet freedom as an engine to strive for the extended use of ICT for development and continue to work closely with our partners in the world. In many ways, ICTs can function as a platform for stability and peace and prosperity, if we learn to adopt and approach them that way.

Let me conclude by saying that ICTs are not the end of technological development; they are the beginning of a technology-centric lifestyle, good governance and security. We need to acknowledge the differences that sovereign countries have on the development and use of these technologies. However, our focus needs to remain on shared goals and objectives. The more we postpone a constructive attitude and full attention, the more we postpone social and economic benefits, stability and security related to ICT.

The World Summit on the Information Society has done excellent work in pointing out the interrelationship between the benefits and the risks of ICT, and this work needs to be continued. We have not yet fully discovered all the potential that ICTs carry, and it is therefore paramount to keep debating and understanding each other's perspectives.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank all of those involved in working on the draft outcome document and, in particular, the co-facilitators: the Ambassadors of Latvia and the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Fehri (Tunisia): Tunisia is proud to attend this high-level meeting 10 years after the high-level World Summit on the Information Society held in Tunis, two years after the Geneva summit. At those summits, we reached a consensus to achieve development goals enabled by information and communications technologies (ICT). Our commitment to the actions of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society was not just words on paper. We have since established a technology strategy. We have also since established a regional platform to follow up. The ICT For All platform has been a very useful platform to all stakeholders to come to grips with the development of the agenda and to follow up on ICT progress.

By being here today, we in Tunisia are renewing our commitment to the agreed outcome of the document, which should represent the agenda and the journey for the next 10 years. Moreover, we also are still offering to the United Nations and the regional communities the ICT platform as a mechanism for a multi-stakeholder platform to follow up on our progress. Ten years ago, at the World Summit on the Information Society held in Tunis, we were trying to convince the world of the importance of ICT to developing our societies, as well as the importance of the multistakeholders approach. Now, with the draft outcome document (A/70/L.33), there is no question about this anymore. However, we

need to go to the next level now and agree on how to achieve these goals together.

In the case of Tunisia, we made some progress and we have a good story to tell. We were right to invest in ICT in 2005 to empower our youth. They adopted it very quickly. They have used it to express themselves. In 2011, they showed their discontent with a non-democratic regime, and they toppled it. We call that youth empowerment by technology. During the transition period, young people continued to use technology to make politicians like myself behave. They were tweeting every single word in every single commission in the Constitutional Assembly to make sure that everybody knew what everybody was thinking. That was a perfect way to build consensus and to make sure that the pressure of the world was on the politicians. We achieved our Constitution two years ago — a Constitution that put us on a path of stability, and a year ago we had elections. Now we are on the path of stability.

We now have a stable country with a start-up democracy enabled by technology. The world found that this was a good showcase, and just five days ago we were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. I am talking here today as one of the 11 million people who were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, thanks to youth and technology. This was possible because of the engagement of young people, women and civil society, to whom I hereby pay tribute.

But the young people who enabled the revolution and all these fantastic things are still jobless. Democracy still has to deliver. Looking back at the world 10 years ago, is the world more advanced now than it was 10 years ago? Frankly, the answer is not simple; in some parts yes and in some parts no. Is the world safer and more sustainable now than it was 10 years ago? Are we achieving greater equality of opportunity than we were 10 years ago? The answer to that is not obvious either.

There are three gaps that we must bridge, the first of which is the widening digital gap — the divide between the connected world and the unconnected world that could make the latter an underworld. Today, it is 50 times harder for an African child to get access to technology than it is for a child in the developed world. That is the first gap we should bridge. The second is the generation gap. Our children speak the language of the twenty-first century, but the world's rulers hear them with twentieth-century ears and, moreover, respond to them with laws and rules dating to the nineteenth century or even earlier. That cannot continue. The third is the gender gap. It is much more difficult for girls to get access to technology than for boys, in the developed as well as the developing world. If we are to achieve a safe and sustainable developed world, we must work together to bridge those gaps.

In Tunisia, we are doing our best. We believe that a digital economy is the answer to the problem of delivering equality of opportunity and consequently prosperity and sustainability. Today the digital economy represents 7.2 per cent of Tunisia's gross domestic product, but we would like it to extend much further. Our strategy is to become a regional leader in the area, with our efforts based on four pillars. First, we are aiming to connect — and we will connect — every single household to broadband Internet by 2020. That is the only way. We must connect every family to broadband Internet if we are to have equality of opportunity. But that is not enough. We are aiming to make our schools 100 per cent digital, with appropriate digital content, because I want my own and everyone else's children to be able to access the best material there is, anywhere in the world. We would like to help the private sector move faster, and we have a plan to achieve a fully paperless Government within the same period — clearly one of the hardest tasks there is, as the Assembly knows. Where gender equality is concerned, we are implementing article 46 of our Constitution, which requires us to achieve gender equality in every area.

Mr. González Franco (Paraguay), Vice-President, took the Chair.

That said, a new and urgent problem has appeared in the world. Fighting terrorism and achieving a secure and safe cyberspace is a priority for both Tunisia and the international community. We must all increase our cooperation in that war on terror, while maintaining the rule of law and staying true to our human rights values. By the way, in that regard the multi-stakeholder approach works in both directions. Private companies should also strengthen their cooperation on such matters with the countries concerned.

In conclusion, we believe that the essence of sustainability is the ability to adapt to change. The world is changing and, as Charles Darwin said more than a century and a half ago, it is not the strongest or the most intelligent species that survives; it is the

one most adaptable to change. In Tunisia, we believe that today's agents of change are young people, women, civil society, the democratic process, the rule of law and the spirit of consensus-building, powered by digital technology. We must therefore trust our young people and our women, for they will lead us to a more prosperous, open, reliable, safe, secure, stable and inclusive world.

Mr. Gómez-Lobo (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am honoured to be participating in this High-level meeting on the process of follow-up and review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Tunis 10 years ago. The General Assembly has done well to convene today's meeting in order to review the progress of the commitments made in the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society.

As we all know, communications technologies have expanded exponentially since the Tunis World Summit, penetrating our daily lives inexorably and sometimes without giving us time to arrive at better considerations and reflections on their impact and usefulness. I am grateful for the tireless work of the co-facilitators of the current process, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Latvia, who have made every effort to arrive at a draft resolution (A/70/L.33) that represents a consensus, reflects the view of all and has been updated to accord with the technological realities of today.

Today's High-level meeting is taking place only three months after the General Assembly's adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), which will determine the form and substance of public policy and international cooperation for the next 15 years. This is a global agenda whose 17 Goals must be met by all Member States. Chile is giving the 2030 Agenda top priority, and we firmly believe that achievement of its Goals will bring significant and visible progress for millions who have yet to see the benefits of development. Goal 1 of the Agenda — ending poverty in all its forms everywhere — is especially relevant.

Information technology is a powerful tool that, if used well, can help us to make progress on and meet the Sustainable Development Goals more quickly. In our view, we have a huge opportunity to tie the use of current information technology more closely

to fostering balanced development in all three of its aspects — social, economic and environmental.

The Government of Chile is honoured to be participating in this meeting's review process as an expression of its commitment to information-society issues and its innumerable related topics and themes. Various indicators show that Chile continues to be a leader in Latin America in telecommunications improvements and information- and communications-technologies usage. A little over 70 per cent of our citizens use the Internet. With a total population of around 18 million, we have about 20 million Internet-connected devices, and we are working to ensure that by the end of 2016, 98 per cent of our populated territory can be certain of Internet access.

While we would like to celebrate and share those achievements, we are still dealing with major development challenges, one of them in the broadband area. We are working to make broadband access deeper and more extensive, especially for lower-income people. We are also dealing with geographical challenges, since we have an obligation to reach rural, isolated and remote areas. And despite the advances our country has made in the past 10 years, we still have significant challenges in areas such as the development and use of technologies in the service of education, a digitized Government, digital skills and expansion of the digital economy, among others.

In view of those challenges, at the public-policy level we are implementing a series of measures aimed at encouraging the continued development of telecommunications in both the areas of infrastructure and of information technologies development and expansion of our information society in general. In that regard, I would like to highlight President Michelle Bachelet Jeria's recent announcement of a new 2020 digital agenda for Chile, with a total of 60 measures and projects aimed at making further progress and narrowing gaps in these important areas.

The issue of human rights plays a key role in this process. We believe firmly that at the very least the digital environment should carry the same rights and obligations as in the real world. In that context, Chile supports a focus on rights and guarantees for individuals in the use of Internet and other information technologies. Human rights must be understood as complementary and interrelated, and Chile's position, in this case, should be to serve as a bridge for integrating

privacy and freedom of expression on behalf of the individual. We also believe that the right to privacy extends to Internet communications and activities. Chile would like to be a serious actor in defending such human rights as freedom of expression and privacy, and in implementing innovative and participatory cybersecurity solutions with the aim of protecting people from threats such as large-scale espionage and other crimes.

We are living in a particularly complex world in which cyberspace offers tremendous facilities and benefits but also presents threats. The Government of Chile is aware of this and has proposed that we work on reaching international agreements on the subject. We are also working to develop a national cybersecurity policy, a task that is on the verge of completion, which will enable us to tackle the new challenges in the area more effectively.

Chile is also committed to ensuring that Internet content is available to all our citizens at all times. In that regard, the principle of net neutrality, which our country, as a pioneer in this kind of regulation, has enshrined legally since 2010, is key to stimulating the creation of the services and applications that our citizens need. Specifically, five years after its enactment, Chile's net neutrality law has not proved any kind of barrier to private investment in telecommunications networks. The growing public debate regarding governance and an open Internet has also launched an internal discussion on this process. In that regard, Chile considers the development of the Internet as a free, open, democratic and safe space that can ensure responsible use without infringement of people's rights to be a central tenet. The work we will be doing under the country's new digital agenda will be key to that.

I would like to reiterate Chile's commitment to an information society that is fair, free, secure and conducive to our peoples' sustainable development.

Mr. Whittingdale (United Kingdom): It is an honour for me to represent the United Kingdom at the conclusion of the 10-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society. The World Summit's Tunis Agenda for the Information Society is a crucial one for the United Kingdom, and the review is a major step forward in our shared aim of building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society. It is an agenda built on the inseparable links between access to information and communications

technologies (ICT), the protection of human rights and social and economic development across the globe.

The United Kingdom has played a leading role in the evolution of ICTs, from the early development of telegraphy and the first submarine cables to the work of the Marconi Company in radio communications in my own area of Chelmsford in England. That pioneering work has continued, from the invention of the worldwide web by Sir Tim Berners-Lee right up to the development of 5G mobile. The revolutions in technology we have seen over recent years have transformed business, public services and access to information, education and culture. They are transforming the lives of billions of people for the better. We need to make sure that those benefits reach every corner of the world. Investment by the private sector and Governments has delivered enormous progress in the past 10 years — 3.2 billion people are now online.

But there is more to do to close the digital divide. Four billion people around the world remain offline, most of them in developing countries, with a disproportionate number of those being women. That is why, throughout the review, the United Kingdom has emphasized that we must make an explicit link between the World Summit and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). In the United Kingdom, we have kept our pledge on overseas aid by enshrining in the law the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income to be spent on development aid. Many of the development programmes we fund are driven by information and communications technologies. But for development to be truly sustainable, investment alone is not enough. We must also create an enabling environment. That is why we are pleased that the World Summit review emphasizes the importance of competition, proportionate taxation and independent and non-discriminatory regulation.

But Governments cannot achieve the information society alone. That is why the multi-stakeholder approach, which brings together Governments, the private sector, civil society, the technical community and academia, is so vital. Our experience in the United Kingdom has demonstrated the critical importance of multi-stakeholder approaches. Whether it is in the rollout of super-fast broadband to every citizen of the country or to keep our children safe online, we have found that working together brings the best results.

And let me be clear that ICTs do bring new challenges. As we become more dependent on them, so we need new solutions to ensure that networks are open and secure. A year ago, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron, convened the first WePROTECT Summit in London. Industry, Governments and other organizations came together, united in the determination to treat child sexual abuse as a global crime requiring a global response, and taking a multi-stakeholder approach to a serious challenge that affects us all. Our resolve to combat child sexual abuse is mirrored in our resolve to tackle the use of ICT for other harmful activities — from harassment to crime to terrorism. A vital part of digital literacy is learning how to stay safe online. In the United Kingdom we are helping parents make choices about what their children can access and giving them filtering tools to protect them. We are looking at the best ways to require age verification for some types of harmful content and at ways to tackle illegal online gambling, to prevent piracy and to protect personal data. And we are investing £1.9 billion in cybersecurity over the next five years. But Governments cannot successfully tackle those issues working in isolation. If we are to achieve the Summit's vision, then all stakeholders need to play their part.

I would like to conclude by talking about freedom. As the Minister in Britain for culture, media and telecoms, I know that societies thrive when there is access to information, an independent media to hold the powerful to account, the freedom for people to express their opinions and freedom for cultural expression. But in many parts of the world, serious threats remain to freedom of expression and plurality of information. Online censorship, restrictions on social media, and efforts to limit civil society are all undermining human rights. Journalists live in fear of attack, intimidation, politically motivated persecution and arbitrary libel suits. And because the Internet has made millions of people citizen journalists, new activists and bloggers are also under threat. The United Kingdom calls on all countries to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms. That is why we consider one of the major achievements of the review to be the affirmation that human rights apply online as they do offline. Without that foundation, we will not be able to realize the potential of ICT for global sustainable development.

In conclusion, the Summit review has been a major step forward in our common goal to build an information society for all. That goal should be measured not only by economic development and the spread of ICT, but also by progress towards the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the opportunity for every individual to fulfil their potential. Our work has just begun. Let us now move on to get the next four billion people online.

Ms. Al-Jaber (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): We are greatly honoured to address this High-level meeting on behalf of the State of Qatar. Our presence today underlines our ongoing commitment to the Summit's goals and objectives as demonstrated in the Geneva Summit of 2003 and the Tunis Summit of 2005. The past decade has seen considerable progress in information and communications technologies (ICT) in that it has enabled individuals in developing and developed countries alike to produce, have access to, benefit from and exchange knowledge in order to realize their full potential. It has also enabled Governments to build sustainable economies that have allowed companies to innovate, grow, prosper and thereby provide a better life for their citizens.

We have been part and parcel of that progress. Ten years ago, we set up ICT programmes in line with the Summit's action plan, and the outcome is visible today. We are making the transition from a natural resources-based economy to a knowledge-based economy. In Qatar, we have forged many public-private partnerships with leading universities throughout the world to provide our young people with access to the best education available in the fields of medicine, engineering, law, art and ICT. In addition, our National Vision 2030 is in line with many of the Summit's objectives and the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those pertaining to access, comprehensiveness, openness and security. Today we are redoubling and expediting our efforts, with a special focus on investment in building advanced infrastructure, upgrading general services and creating smart cities. We are taking into consideration the need to protect vital infrastructure in order to secure cybersecurity for all our citizens.

Thanks to our National ICT Plan 2015, which presents Qatar's digital agenda, and to the National Broadband Plan and our National Vision 2030, we have made considerable progress in our transition to becoming a lead country in the use of ICT. That is attributable to a package of digital and material projects

that will lead to the attainment of our National Vision 2030. We have made great efforts to ensure that the digital revolution is comprehensive for all our citizens without exception. Our strategy of integration through technology seeks to engage all persons with disabilities in every aspect of life. We have a centre that provides services to all citizens with disabilities and access to education. Thus, all citizens with disabilities can engage in all parts of life and access the right type of education.

We have a *tawasul* programme for those who work in the State of Qatar in order to integrate all groups and provide them with access to ICT. We have also put cybersecurity at the top of our priorities. Our national cybersecurity strategy provides a framework for protecting information and recovering from cyberattacks. We have harnessed ICT to foster an environment conducive to innovation among young people in order to encourage the creation of new business models. To that end, we have been striving to provide the latest and most advanced ICT. We also have a digital centre that provides a guidance and support programme for youth.

The State of Qatar has made significant gains towards its goal of becoming a smart digital State. Smart Cities is a programme that seeks to bring digital programmes in the private and public sectors together to improve our living standards by maximizing our ICT and innovation. That will enable users to benefit from the many advantages of that project throughout all sectors. It is also in line with ICT advances, such as the digital cloud and flexible digital governance.

I wish to stress yet again our commitment to the World Summit on the Information Society and its goals. I wish members every success in their endeavours.

Ms. Seile (Latvia): Ten years ago, the political leaders at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) formulated a vision — a vision and commitment to building 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 and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respecting fully and upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That vision charted the way forward into the unknown.

No one could predict the way the information society would evolve. Yet two things were clear: first, that the information society would evolve at great speed, and secondly, that this development would merit a review in 10 years' time.

Indeed, the past 10 years have shown the fulfilment of the promise of access to information. Our world is more connected than ever before; already now there are more mobile subscriptions than there are people in the world. The global penetration of the Internet has ensured that information and communications technologies (ICT) can support the development of all countries — big and small, rich and poor. In many countries, including Latvia, the ICT sector has become one of the key drivers of the economy. ICT solutions have enabled a wide range of public services that are available through the Internet. Internet penetration has also enabled new opportunities for education, with online courses and new distance-learning opportunities. These opportunities are particularly important for diasporas who can preserve and develop their identities through digital connections with their native countries.

Yet this fast pace of positive change has not eliminated all challenges. In fact, these positive changes have brought new challenges. While the overall digital divide is narrowing, the broadband digital divide persists. While countries like Latvia, which has one of the fastest Internet speeds in the world, benefits from this technology, others need help to fully enjoy the opportunities that ICT brings. Part of the solution lies in new technologies, but no less significant is the establishment of an enabling environment for technological development. Furthermore, access alone is not the solution. People need to be educated not only about the new technologies, both at school and through life-long learning, but also be held to strengthen critical and analytical thinking skills. Also, respect for diversity tolerance and other values promoted by civil society must be a core part of our education systems. Following this, we have also helped to redesign the teachers' training system.

In the context of access and usage, we should also continue to address the persisting gender digital divide. This is both in the interest of individuals and of society as a whole. In the broader context of human rights, it is important to ensure that the rights that people enjoy offline are protected also online.

We should also use ICT to preserve the linguistic and cultural diversity of our world. This challenge is particularly important for smaller languages, as most of the online content is available in only 10 languages. Five hundred years ago, the printing press became the instrument that helped develop the local cultures and languages. Nowadays one can speak of the second Gutenberg effect — that the development of ICT local content and multilingual content helps maintain the global multicultural diversity. The Latvian ICT sector has been actively and successfully working on developing local content and preserving our cultural heritage digitally for over 20 years. Importantly, ICT will be a key enabler in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) during the next 15 years. As the Agenda rightly mentions, the spread of information and communications technologies and global interconnectedness has great potential for accelerating human progress.

With all those changes in mind, it is particularly opportune that the political leaders of the world determined 10 years ago that the review of the implementation of WSIS outcomes would take place in 2015. This review has shown the readiness of all stakeholders, including Governments, to engage in a meaningful dialogue to arrive at a draft outcome document that takes stock of the past 10 years, but also shows the way forward, including the extension of the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum for 10 years.

Latvia is very grateful for the opportunity to have contributed to the successful outcome of the WSIS review process as one of the two co-facilitators of the negotiations, who were appointed by the President of the General Assembly. We are grateful for the support of the President of the General Assembly and his predecessor to the work of the co-facilitators and for the active role of the President in engaging the broader stakeholder community.

I am sure that in 10 years' time, when the General Assembly holds the next high-level meeting on the overall review of the implementation of WSIS outcomes in 2025, the participants in the meeting will once again be amazed by the speed by which ICT will have changed our lives. In the meantime, I am confident that the vision of the World Summit on the Information Society will keep us focused on building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society in the years to come. Today's meeting is a very important affirmation of that vision.

Mr. Clastornik (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour and a privilege for me to address the General Assembly at this important meeting to consider the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. On behalf of all Uruguayans and of my country's Government, I am particularly grateful to have this opportunity to speak on this issue in such a symbolic forum as this.

With the adoption of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, the year 2005 was a milestone for all of us. It was a special year in my country's history. We saw the arrival of a Government with a vision that was clearly focused on equal rights and equal opportunities for all Uruguayans. Today, 10 years later, a number of profound changes have taken place in my country. Allow me to share some of those changes with the Assembly.

In 2005, legislation established the National Agency for e-Government and Information Society in Uruguay, which I have had the honour of leading since its beginning. The Agency was established with the goal of promoting the development of the information society and knowledge. The Agency was given the necessary institutional framework so that it could assume that function across the Government. Following that, a digital policy with clear and measurable goals began to be developed. Known as the Uruguay Digital Agenda, it has followed a continuous and systematic trajectory and has been possible due to the efforts of multiple stakeholders.

Two counter-balancing trends emerged at the same time in Parliament, namely, laws on access to public information and on the protection of personal data. Those standards, together with the cybersecurity strategies under way, have provided a framework of trust and security in the use of information and communication technologies and have been accompanied by a range of efforts aimed at promoting the rights of our people and raising the population's awareness of the risks associated with the digital environment.

Well-known changes in infrastructure were carried out by means of the significant investments by the Government through the State's telecommunications company. Our people have a number of free ways to access the Internet via asymmetric digital subscriber lines, while 100 per cent of our schools are connected. We are bringing fibre optics to every home in the country. We are also establishing a national 4G network.

Various studies identify Uruguay as the country with the fastest and cheapest Internet in the world. Various initiatives were implemented, such as the Ceibal Project, which made Uruguay the first country to give a free computer to every child, which can be shared with his or her family. That experience is now being replicated among the elderly with the Ibirapitá Plan, by which a tablet with Internet access is given to retirees with lower incomes.

Let me recall that the efforts I mentioned were conceived to ensure that the entire population would benefit equally from the potential of information and communication technologies. That shows the spirit of equality and equity that is the hallmark of our country. And it has made it possible for us to achieve well-recognized reductions in various digital divides, such as that of access to personal computers, in which there is practically no difference between higher- and lower-income households or between genders with regard to access to the Internet. Even the 100 per cent individual bovine traceability programme, through which it is possible identify animals throughout all processes, sought to put all cattle breeders — large and small — on an equal footing in the use of this technology — an industry that is a pillar of our entire economy.

Democratizing access to Government services is a top priority. With e-Government we are getting closer to a citizen-focused Government, as well as improving public policy and making it more transparent. While United Nations rankings list us as regional leaders on various indices and as holding prominent positions at the global level — such as ranking fourteenth in the world in digital services and third in the world in Internet participation — we have set even more ambitious goals for ourselves to ensure that 100 per cent of State processes and services can be completed online. There are many other aspects that I could share, such as the development of national digital medical records, the promotion of financial inclusion and its impact on e-commerce, and the software industry, which has positioned us as the highest per capita exporter in the region, reaching more than 50 markets. However, I do not want to go on at too great a length.

In Uruguay we are convinced that the value of cooperation cannot be underestimated when it comes to building an information society that is people-centred, comprehensive and focused on development. We have worked actively to strengthen that cooperation among various sectors and actors, all of whom contribute to the achievement of the established objectives, including strengthening regional and international cooperation to support ourselves among nations. One example such example of that is the Plan of Action for the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, which we had the honour of presiding over until last August. Promoting regional agendas that contribute to that effort is absolutely essential.

For my country, this has been a decade of great efforts with significant achievements. Many challenges remain. Uruguay's achievements in the digital sphere to date present us with new challenges for the country's digital future, which will be addressed by the new version of our digital policy that we are currently discussing. Over the course of the past 10 years, the World Summit on the Information Society has played an important role in guiding our actions, which we hope will continue to be the case.

The purpose of today's meeting can be understood as the culmination of a negotiation process that the General Assembly has undertaken with great seriousness. However, we believe that it must fundamentally be seen as a springboard for the years to come. It should prompt us to be even more audacious in order to, as an international community, move beyond declarations and fulfil clear and measurable commitments to guide our actions for the future that lies ahead, serve as a catalyst to make progress in the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and, above all, contribute to the well-being of our peoples.

Mr. Ocampos (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to pay tribute to all those delegations and representatives of the various Member States here today.

Paraguay is no stranger to the breakneck speed of the growth of mobile telephone technologies, in particular smartphones, which has forced us to redefine the way in which we propose to address and close the digital divide in our States. In my country, with the support of private-sector initiatives, we have developed large networks that provide universal coverage in order to ensure that no underdeveloped communities are without access.

The problem of the digital divide today is therefore not so much about coverage or about who has or does not have a device to connect to the Internet. Rather, the next important step to take in addressing the digital gap

is to develop individual capacities. While people may have the ability to connect to networks, they need to develop their digital skills. In that regard, what we are doing for individuals without the economic ability to join networks or have a data plan is to develop access points free of charge in public spaces throughout the country, digital kiosks, digital contact points, information centres and telecentres for people for whom a data plan is out of reach.

But, again, connectivity is not enough to have full coverage unless Governments also make a commitment to developing content and applications so that we can close the virtuous circle that brings us information and communications technologies. In that regard, over the past two years, the national Government has worked diligently to develop the online content of our public institutions. We have made available a great deal of information about our public entities, which has generated a higher level of transparency with regard to the national Government. That is indeed the best antidote to corruption among public officials.

Open data is but part of the agenda, however. Not only have the vast data sets that we have put on large Government websites provided a unique contribution by the Government on matters of procedure, but in 2016 we expect all citizens to be able to download public documents related to their personal information. We also see the importance of distance learning and its role in capacity-building in primary and secondary schools, where we aim to provide each student with a tablet in the first two years of his or her studies, which will help to develop literacy and digital skills.

The virtuous circle consists of penetration, capacity-building, content and applications. With respect to applications, as stated before, our main role is to develop useful platforms for citizens for the open sharing of public data. We are greatly encouraging development through a programme for start-ups by providing seed capital to small-scale digital entrepreneurs so that they can in turn provide applications with local content. With those applications we seek to close the virtuous circle and provide not just greater connectivity but also more digital content for greater economic competitiveness.

With regard to cybersecurity, we have been cooperating with a number of countries and international organizations in the area of prevention. We also know that cybersecurity is a question of education, so we are working hard to strengthen our

response to cybersecurity-related computer incidents. As part of that effort, we have been producing bulletins and newsletters to alert the community.

We believe strongly in the multistakeholder approach and in the inclusion of a wide range of actors in our society. Accordingly, we are also working on providing training and raising awareness on Internet governance. We are reaching out to all stakeholders while also ensuring that all interested parties play a leading role in the process, because we agree on an approach that involves multiplying the number of parties interested in Internet governance.

Finally, it is important to note — and we welcome this fact — that the General Assembly has drafted some significant provisions on the need for special focus on Mediterranean countries and others to address the digital divide between them and more developed countries, in particular the fundamental factors underlying the excess cost for Mediterranean countries of access to undersea fibre-optic exchange points for data traffic. We are grateful for the provisions stating that this situation can be improved, including for landlocked developing countries.

In conclusion, I would like, as I always do in these forums, to thank all international organizations that have been cooperating on the digital agenda, in particular the World Summit on the Information Society, which has given much to our countries, including members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, and other regional organizations, in developing our agenda, which is, without a doubt, an essential reference for the development of all our countries.

Mr. Ismailov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Ten years ago, at the two-stage World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), representatives of the peoples of the world adopted a general concept of the Information Society, having defined its basic principles and objectives for the creation of an information society open to everyone and focused on development. What has the WSIS process given us? First and foremost, it has given us the main goal, which is to facilitate the use of technologies to improve people's lives and narrow the digital divide.

Initiated and prepared by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), along with other United Nations system organizations and all interested parties, WSIS became the first global event dedicated to issues of building an information society as a new stage

in the development of civilization. For the first time at a high level, in a dialogue with representatives of business circles and civil society, the main orientations of work were outlined for practically all aspects — specifically, inter alia, economic, technological, social and cultural — of the building of an information society in their interconnectedness.

It is difficult to overestimate the tremendous significance of information and communications technologies for inducing innovation, broadening the rights and opportunities for various groups of people in developed and developing countries, ensuring access to information and facilitating economic and social growth. We see a inextricable connection between the achievement of the goals and objectives of sustainable development by 2030 and WSIS processes. In that regard, I would like to specifically note the ITU Connect 2020 initiative and its goals and objectives.

Nevertheless, we cannot say that the WSIS process has already been concluded and that all the objectives set out in Geneva and Tunis have been achieved with success. The review carried out has clearly shown that there are still many important issues to be resolved: to overcome the still significant differences in the level of development both between countries and within countries, including with regard to broadband access and skills in making use of ICT opportunities.

Enhanced cooperation in the field of ICT must ensure universal access and be based on an understanding of the needs of the State, business and society. Furthermore, both the State and citizens using ICT need to know that their data are safely protected. Nevertheless, for the last 10 years, we have been failing to create a truly international Internet platform to manage new technologies on a global scale. We regret that this issue was not reflected in the outcome document.

Key infrastructure must be regulated on the basis of an internationally recognized regulatory system set up under the auspices of the United Nations, and the United Nations should have a key role in its regulation. We support the activities of ITU and UNESCO on issues of international State policies concerning the Internet, including issues of security. We note that the Internet Governance Forum has shown insufficient capacity to react to such issues. The Russian Federation is in close contact with businesses, academia and civil society in developing its strategies. We are in

favour of BroadAspect and broadband access for the residents of small and remote towns and cities. We are also continuing work to convert State bodies to e-document management and ensure digital access to State services. The main area of activities of the State in developing the Internet is the creation of conditions so that citizens of the Russian Federation, no matter where they live, have equal access to information, modern communications services and State services online. By 2020, we plan to have access to broadband for 97 per cent of Russian Federation citizens. We note the many problems connected with that undertaking. The Government of the Russian Federation is working to solve them problems by achieving these goals.

Overcoming the digital divide is a major strategic challenge. It requires an integrated approach, including the improvement of legal regulations on issues concerning the use of radio frequencies and ensuring conditions for building modern communications networks in the country. We are trying to do everything possible in order to harmonize legislation on communications to facilitate wireless service providers' work and to create the most conducive conditions possible for investment in infrastructure development in the country. In addition, active work is being carried out for strategic projects in this area. More than 215,000 kilometres of fibre-optic communication lines will be laid in the Russian Federation to connect every town and city with a population of 250 to 500 residents. It is clear that, with the implementation of this large-scale project, the cable will be laid in many other populated areas where there has never been an Internet connection, and it would not exist without this project. The Internet is becoming a medium for establishing relations between citizens and States, and we want this medium to be safe, stable and predictable.

It is already possible to sum up the outcomes of the preparatory process for the 10-year review of the implementation of the decisions of the World Summit on the Information Society. First, I want to thank the coordinators of the preparatory process and all who shared their views and comments on the draft outcome document (A/70/L.33). Secondly, we note with satisfaction the consensus achieved during the intergovernmental negotiations on the draft outcome document, although that was a very complicated effort.

The right path was chosen 10 years ago, and now we are challenged to continue it properly. We must lay the foundations to develop an overall direction of

the development of cyberspace over the next decade, including for the internationalization of Internet governance. The format of the General Assembly presumes the intergovernmental adoption of decisions and the holding of high-level meetings. Moreover, non-governmental organizations can participate in the preparation and carrying out of these events as invited experts. United Nations agencies can organize high-level meetings with the involvement of non-governmental organizations, as was done by the ITU jointly with other United Nations bodies in 2014. We support the draft outcome document for this meeting, and we thank everyone who actively participated in its development.

Mr. Marcondes de Carvalho (Brazil): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Let me first of all thank the co-facilitators, Ambassador Lana Zaki Nusseibeh and Ambassador Janis Mažeikis, for their excellent work in steering our negotiations on the draft outcome document (A/70/L.33).

Brazil is encouraged by the fact that the draft outcome document simultaneously, first, takes stock of the progress made so far in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS); secondly, addresses existing challenges; and, thirdly, indicates areas for continued work. My delegation is particularly pleased with the fact that the review process was preceded by an intergovernmental preparatory process that took into account inputs from all the relevant WSIS stakeholders.

Brazil is a pioneer in promoting discussion of Internet governance-related issues in a multistakeholder fashion. Our national experience has been through the Brazilian Internet Steering Committee, a multistakeholder body established in 1995 that predates the original WSIS process. This year it celebrated 20 years of continuous operation, confirming that multistakeholder processes are effective and can produce tangible decisions and outcomes.

The organization of the Global Multi-stakeholder Meeting on the Future of Internet Governance in Brazil last year reinforced our trust in the collaborative efforts among representatives of all stakeholder groups. The set of principles and the road map agreed upon in Sao Paulo will hopefully serve as an important input to the future evolution of the Internet Governance ecosystem.

Brazil upholds and practices domestically the multistakeholder model in Internet governance, based on the belief that all Internet-related issues can and should be discussed in a multistakeholder environment. Nonetheless, different issues of different natures may require, accordingly, differentiated frameworks, taking into account the differentiated roles and responsibilities associated with the various stakeholders.

The majority of the poor remain excluded from the benefits of information and communications technologies (ICT). Actually, for every user of the Internet in the world, there are two who are marginilized. It is high time that we turn that situation around and ensure that the Internet is accessible to all. ICT is undoubtedly a very powerful tool for fostering development and adddressing the needs of the marginilized. The transformational potential of ICT lies in its global nature and universal applicability, while taking into account differences among countries. In that context, we should not forget that both the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) recognize ICT as a development enabler.

We hope that this High-level meeting will spur efforts to bridge the digital gap between and within Member States. The digital divide continues to widen, for access to information will be duly bridged only when content and technology are geared to local needs and priorities, while enhancing the capabilities of end users to make productive use of data. Moreover, a significant amount of work remains to be done in order to address thye growing challenges resulting from unreliable and unavailable broadband access in developing countries. Urgent action is needed with a view to providing developing countries with enhanced access to ICT and know-how, as well as mobilizing resources for investment in new technologies, particularly in infrastructure and broadband connectivity. In sum, we should collectively devise a shared political vision of ICT as development catalysers, taking into account the different capacities of countries for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Ten years after the adoption of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, the global debate on international management of the Internet remains a controversial subject. In that context, Brazil reaffirms the values of the principles of multistakeholder cooperation and engagement, whicht have characterized the WSIS process since its inception. We also recognize

the importance of effective participation, partnership and cooperation among Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, the technical and academic communities and all the other relevant stakeholders. We are pleased that, while reaffirming the validity of the framework set out in Geneva and Tunis, the draft outcome document acknowledges that the management of the Internet includes both multilateral and multi-stakeholder processes.

Our endeavours in the field of Internet governance should necessarily respect the creativity, innovation and flow of information made possible by the Internet, while preserving and enhancing its operational stability, reliability, security and global interoperability.

In November, for the second time, Brazil hosted the meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in the city of João Pessoa, and many Member States were there. The IGF is a unique space in which different multi-stakeholders come together in a spirit of cooperation to share best practices and shape policy debates. We welcome the extension of IGF's mandate and look forward to working towards allowing it to produce more tangible outcomes that offer concrete solutions to contribute to global discussions on Internet governance. We also look forward to increased participation by developing countries at the IGF.

On the other hand, we concur with the idea that there is an urgent need to identify appropriate ways to bring forward the debate regarding the implementation of the concept of enhanced cooperation. The IGF and enhanced cooperation are twin, but distinct, processes born together in Tunis 10 years ago but, unfortunately, have evolved at different rates.

The same rights that people have offline must also be protected online. Human rights, including the protection of privacy and freedom of speech, require stronger safeguards against abuse and violation in cyberspace.

Like most developing countries, Brazil views ICT, particularly the Internet, as tools for progress. We have a legitimate aspiration to bring mechanisms that will facilitate the sharing of technologies, as well as investments in Internet infrastructure and human resources, to the centre of the debate.

The establishment of the technology facilitation mechanism in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a breakthrough in and of

itself. It is a promising initiative that aims to mobilize support for developing countries so that they can have greater access to technologies and develop the necessary capacities to make use of them. As recognized in the draft outcome document, we support a prominent profile for ICT in the technology facilitation mechanism, with a view to harnessing the contribution of ICT to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

From Addis Ababa to the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, from the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris back to New York, 2015 has been a landmark year for sustainable development. We are all taking together the necessary steps to shape the future we want. In order to achieve the WSIS vision, set out in 2003, of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society, different stakeholders should come together with the aim of bridging the digital divide, taking into account the different levels of development among nations, so as to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives.

Mr. Sakamoto (Japan): Ten years ago, we set a common goal of an information society for everyone, and since then we have worked together towards that common goal. As a result, we recognize that the common vision of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society is being significantly achieved. That is because of the cooperation among Governments, the private sector, civil society, academia and all stakeholders.

Japan sincerely welcomes the draft outcome document (A/70/L.33) to be adopted. I would like to express my respect for the efforts made by the co-facilitators and all those who worked so hard to move the process forward. Today, I would like to comment on three important points.

The first point concerns technological innovations. The spread of the Internet, especially in mobile communications, has progressed more than we expected and has contributed to the achievement of our common vision. The harnessing of information and communications technologies (ICT) has limitless possibilities in the future — for example, in the fields of global warming, health care, education and disaster prevention. We welcome the emphasis on harnessing the potential of ICT to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). In addition,

we reaffirm that the fundamental principles of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) of drawing real benefits from ICT are still valid and of vital importance. They include bridging the digital divide, access to information, capacity-building, ensuring security, the importance of media and ensuring cultural diversity. We should value the idea of open innovation to enhance technological innovation, and then reconfirm our mission to help people all over the world enjoy the benefits as soon as possible.

The second point concerns the importance of information. As a result of the evolution and diffusion of ICT, the amount of information distributed around the world has exponentially increased recently. The important point is to achieve an environment where all people can access every item of information easily without anyone being left behind — by developing communication infrastructure, ensuring accessibility and improving literacy. When we think about a solution to global challenges, it will become more and more important in future that we continue to enhance the distribution of information with quality and quantity, both domestically and internationally, and ensure the free flow of information. In that regard, we welcome the recognition made in the draft outcome document regarding the importance of the free flow of information and knowledge.

The third point is that we should also highlight the multi-stakeholder approach, on which there has been progress in the past decade. We have discussed and shared experiences and knowledge about Internet governance and other important issues in various places, including the Internet Governance Forum. Accordingly, we have strengthened multi-stakeholder cooperation, which is certainly a great accomplishment that does not apply only to Governments. We need to continue to address global challenges with all stakeholders, with a view to achieving our common goals. In that regard, we welcome the draft outcome document, in which we reaffirm the importance of the multi-stakeholder approach.

Lastly, we believe that the active use of ICT is essential for solving global challenges such as poverty and hunger, education, gender equality, health care, environmental protection, ageing societies and disaster reduction, among others. A globally connected space that brings all humans and things on Earth together is emerging for the first time in human history. The wisdom of humankind is now being tested when it comes to how to utilize that space for the prosperity of humankind. To achieve that, we would like to reiterate that all stakeholders' cooperation is of vital importance.

Finally, the Government of Japan, as one of the stakeholders, will continue to put forth its best possible efforts, together with all stakeholders, to implement the WSIS outcomes.

Mr. Perdomo Di-Lella (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Twelve years ago, during the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, we declared our commitment to building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society. As we gather to review the implementation of the outcomes of the Summit, we must go beyond technologies and focus our attention on how they have contributed to development and poverty eradication in the world.

Although in the past 10 years statistics on the adoption of information and communications technologies (ICT) have increased significantly, unacceptable levels of poverty and inequality in the world remain. We therefore cannot be complacent. At this stage begins, we must align the objectives and actions of the World Summit on the Information Society with the post-2015 development agenda by establishing measurable commitments, precise timetables and systematic controls.

The use of ICT also has a dark side, as it has the potential to endanger international peace and security. Cuba expresses its great concern about the covert and illegal use by individuals, organizations and States of other nations' information systems to attack third countries owing to its potential to cause international conflicts. Joint cooperation among all States is the only way to prevent and face those new threats and prevent cyberspace from becoming a theatre of military operations.

The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States has declared Latin America and the Caribbean a zone of peace to promote friendly relations and cooperation among nations, and has recognized the importance of ICT, including the Internet, as tools to promote peace, well-being, knowledge and human development. Cuba calls upon all States to work together so that the Internet is a zone of peace and prosperity and that these issues be discussed at length in the framework of the United Nations.

The Cuban Government is aware that the fundamental problems of society — its economic, social and cultural challenges — should be at the centre of any strategy for ICT use, since ICT alone do not resolve problems. That is why we are working to develop the digitization of society and to make the Internet available to everyone, while facilitating genuine and effective insertion for Cubans in that space. Cuba is making efforts to develop ICT and is giving priority to their use in education, health, science and culture, and as a means to boost economic productivity and growth. However, all those efforts have been carried out despite the obstacle of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba for more than half a century.

The Geneva Declaration of Principles recognizes that building an information society required new forms of solidarity, partnership and cooperation among Governments and other stakeholders. In that endeavour the international community can always count on Cuba sincerely raising its voice against injustice, inequality, underdevelopment, discrimination and manipulation — and for the establishment of an more fair and equitable international order in which human beings and their dignity and well-being lie at the centre.

Mr. Nguyen Minh Hong (Viet Nam): First of all, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to all members, as well as to express my deepest appreciation for the United Nations initiative in organizing the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). I appreciate the efforts, contributions and participation of States Members of the United Nations in implementing the action plan of the World Summit, which serve to demonstrate the determination of all nations in building together a global information society where everyone is able to create, access, use and share information and knowledge.

As we know, information and communications technologies (ICT) provide an opportunity for every country to increase its economic growth and to bridge the information access gap among groups, regions and countries. However, that is not true for all. Reality shows that the information society is becoming more complete, but the digital divide and the rich-poor gap are getting larger instead of narrower, not only on a global and regional level but even within countries themselves. In addition, the abuse of ICT and the Internet for such illegitimate purposes as inciting terrorism, violence, religious conflict or other criminal

activities on the Internet are becoming the major challenges and obstacles on the way towards a global information society with our desired goals.

The experience of Viet Nam shows that the commitments made at the World Summit on the Information Society serve as motivation for growth. In recent years, developing information and communications technology has been regarded as one of the top national policies in our economic development strategy, as well as one of the key factors for our poverty-reduction efforts. Investments have been made in the telecommunications infrastructure in Viet Nam to meet the goal of economic growth as well as the needs of the people. To date, about 38.5 per cent of the population in Viet Nam uses the Internet. ICT applications are considered a top priority and are encouraged to be implemented to improve the competitiveness of the country and to increase the quality of education and health care.

Generally speaking, we have achieved many of the set goals after 10 years of implementing the WSIS outcomes. However, the gap in access to information is still evident, and even growing larger, vis-à-vis the increasing demands of people for information and improved quality of life. To continue the successful implementation of outcomes set by WSIS, we would like to recommend that participants consider prioritizing the discussion on initiatives to bridge the digital divide among member countries and between urban and rural areas, while ensuring equal access to information and service for every citizen as we move towards the objective of inclusive development for the region and the world.

The development of ICT must be linked with sustainable growth and ensure the generation of economic benefits and the mitigation of negative effects, on both society and the environment. I believe that, keeping such principles in mind, telecommunications and information technology infrastructure will be effectively developed and expanded to remote and underserved areas so as to ensure people a minimum level of access to information and help improve their knowledge and living standards.

We can all agree that the Internet has become the fundamental platform for the development of the global information society. To date, the United Nations has organized 10 meetings of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) at the international level,

not to mention those at the regional level, to discuss the mechanism for governing the Internet. From the governmental perspective, on the one hand, I think that multi-stakeholders participation on Internet governance should be encouraged. On the other hand, however, it is also very important to distinguish among the different domains and pay attention to the contributions of stakeholders in relation to those domains — for instance, the contributions of Governments to Internet governance with regard to public policy and those of the private sector on the expansion of business in Internet services, among others. In that regard, we would like to express our support for the continuation of international IGF meetings to further discussion about Internet governance throughout the world.

Viet Nam commits to continuing its active participation in implementing new cooperation initiatives, especially the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), and contributing to building a world of peace, development and prosperity. We believe that after this high-level meeting, with the collective efforts of all nations, the global information society will become more complete and benefit all the people on the planet. I wish the meeting great success.

Mr. Rosenthal (Netherlands): On behalf of the Dutch Government, I congratulate the President on the draft outcome document (A/70/L.33) after a 10-year process.

For the Dutch Government, the agenda of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) is a very important one — foremost because there is still great inequality between the group that has access and the group that does not. The WSIS vision of building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society still has a long road ahead. Major challenges remain in enabling everyone to benefit from universal access to information and knowledge. At the same time, the inequality is deepened because the implications of the digital divide continue to increase. The Netherlands deems it essential that, as we all become more dependent on the Internet for economic growth, innovation and development, the preconditions for a free, open and secure Internet be in place on a truly global level. That is indeed the vision that was central to the Global Conference on CyberSpace that took place in The Hague in April.

Respect for human rights is another prerequisite for sustainable development that is connected to information and communications technologies (ICT).

The protection of human rights and the realization of human rights online is vital to building an inclusive information society. In 2011, the Netherlands founded the Freedom Online Coalition, with partners from all over the world, because we believed in the importance of a joint effort to support a free and open Internet. Because ICT, and especially the Internet, have far-reaching implications in each and every domain of social, economic and political activity, there is a need to develop a holistic approach that enables an Internet that is free, open and secure.

The WSIS agenda is also important because it embraces the multi-stakeholder approach, which acknowledges the benefits of the effective participation, partnership and cooperation of all stakeholders involved. It thereby provides an important precedent for all processes shaping the Internet and ICT policies. The Netherlands commends the strong emphasis in the draft outcome document on the centrality of the multi-stakeholder approach to achieving a people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented information society. On our part, we firmly believe that the challenges and set-up of ICT serve to underscore that the responsibility to ensure a secure and trusted cyberspace is an obligation to be shared by all stakeholders — of course, within their respective roles and responsibilities. At the same time, we acknowledge that more work needs to be done to develop those roles and responsibilities in the different relevant fields.

The Netherlands takes a very positive view of the explicit recognition in the draft outcome document of the role ICTs can play during humanitarian crises throughout the world. A good example is the responsible and effective use of big data in responding to humanitarian crises. That is an issue the Netherlands champions, together with partners such as Global Pulse, because we are convinced that this can considerably improve the global response to humanitarian crises. The Netherlands will push for more awareness throughout the world about this issue during the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit. For that matter, to benefit from the expertise that is available worldwide in this area, the Netherlands is exploring, in cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the establishment of a data centre in The Hague that can provide guidance and training to help overcome the challenges in using big data and how to profit from the benefits of its use in responding to the humanitarian crises of today and tomorrow.

Finally, the pursuit of a truly resilient cyberdomain requires global engagement and better ways to work together to address the digital divide worldwide and to ultimately realize a free open and secure cyberspace for truly everyone in the world. Building partnerships for capacity-building is the key to advancing both development and resilience. The Netherlands, as the international community's partner for peace, justice and development, invests in the development of cybercapacities around the globe. We are proud to be one of the founders of the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise, which was established in April. The Global Forum on Cyber Expertise brings together public and private partners, from both developed and developing countries, to strengthen cybercapacity and expertise on a global scale. To achieve that, members — international and regional organizations, Governments and the private sector — share experiences, expertise, best practices and assessments on key regional and thematic cyberissues. In addition, the Global Forum aims to mobilize additional resources and expertise to build global cybercapacity. We sincerely hope to see more United Nations Members, international organizations and companies joining the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise in the future.

Ms. O'Loughlin (Australia): Australia was pleased to take part in the overall review of the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) over the past six months. I thank the President of the General Assembly and his team for organizing this landmark high-level meeting. I also thank the co-facilitators, Ambassador Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Ambassador Mažeikis of the Republic of Latvia. Their tremendous efforts throughout the preparations and their leadership in preparing and developing the draft outcome document (A/70/L.33) were essential to concluding such a successful process. It has enabled us to shape a draft outcome document that recognizes the significant achievements we have made over the past decade and aims to continue the WSIS vision into the future. Australia welcomed the opportunity to engage in the discussions and to actively participate in the preparations for this High-level meeting. We would also like to thank all the stakeholders who contributed to the WSIS framework over the past 10 years, particularly those that contributed to, and are here in New York for, this high-level meeting.

The centrality of the Internet to our economies and societies cannot be underestimated, as the WSIS review process reminds us. From its early days, when it was operated by a small group of enthusiastic amateurs, to the economic and social force it has become, the Internet has transformed so many parts of our daily lives. It has changed the way we do business, how we find out information, how we keep in touch with family and friends, how we work and how we play. It has also enabled unprecedented connectedness between people within and across national and international borders. And the Internet will continue to play a critical role in our collective future prosperity and social development.

Australia is well placed to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the Internet. Within a population of almost 24 million, there were almost 13 million Internet subscriptions and more than 21 million mobile phone subscriptions as at June 2015. Internet commerce in the 12 months to June 2014 was estimated at $267 billion — an 8.3 per cent increase over the previous 12 months. We have strong economic and trade credentials, direct access to the markets of Asia and some of the highest-quality research organizations in the world. However, we cannot be complacent if we are to reap the full benefits of a highly connected information society. As our Prime Minister, The Honourable Malcolm Turnbull, has said,

> "Any perceived or actual limitation lies not with the technology itself, but with our imagination and our vision."

It is clear that we will need to be creative, agile and resilient to reach our full potential.

In relation to the draft outcome document, Australia welcomes the inclusion of a specific focus on closing digital divides. Even among developed countries, such as Australia, we experience digital divides, such as differences in access to broadband between our cities and rural and remote communities. That is why Australia is continuing to roll out its national broadband network to ensure that all Australians have access to high-speed broadband no matter where they live. Through a multi-mix technology — using fixed-line, fixed wireless and satellite — our national broadband network will deliver the communications infrastructure to support Australia's social and economic ambitions for the future. More than 1.4 million premises now pass through our network, which will ramp up its roll-out schedule dramatically over the next two years. The successful launch of the network's first satellite, in September, will mean that new broadband services will be able to be delivered in the most remote parts of our large country from mid-2016.

Australia also particularly welcomes the recognition in the draft outcome document of the gender digital divide, which was not prominent in the original WSIS vision. Last night, many of us had the privilege of seeing the future of women and girls in information and communications technologies (ICT) at the Gemtech awards event. I congratulate the International Telecommunication Union and UN-Women on that important initiative of rewarding and inspiring girls and women in ICT.

The Australian Government recently announced important new initiatives to overcome the cultural, institutional and organizational factors that discourage girls and women from studying science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and that limit their opportunities to pursue STEM careers. In Australia, only one in four information-technology graduates and fewer than one in 10 engineering graduates are women. The Government is investing $13 million over five years to encourage more women to choose and stay in STEM research, related careers, start-ups and entrepreneurial firms.

Those initiatives are part of the Australian Government's recently released national innovation and science agenda, which takes a systematic approach to encouraging innovation and science across the education, research, industry and Government sectors and civil society. ICT lies at the heart of that agenda. It sees new initiatives to encourage greater entrepreneurship, skills and talent development, private and public sector cooperation in research and a strong role for Government leadership. On just those latter two, the Government will co-invest to further develop skills and capacity in Australian in quantum computing. It also recently announced an open-data-in-Government policy that aims to release the truly astonishing breadth and depth of data held by Government publicly, in an appropriate manner, to stimulate analysis, ideas and potential product and service development. The Australian Government sees the innovation agenda as a shared one, where all can contribute and benefit and where Government plays a nuanced and targeted role.

Similarly, the Australian Government recognizes that much of the global Internet infrastructure is owned and operated by the private sector, and while the Government is a major user, it does not command it or control it. We consider that this is as it should be; the Internet could not, and would not, have become what it is controlled by the more naturally risk-adverse hand of Government. It has evolved so well because of that lack of centralized control, not despite it.

But Governments, industry, civil society, the technical community, academia and international organizations, as well as individuals, have all played important roles. Their efforts are essential if we are to continue reaping the benefits of ICT, including for development. It would be fair to say that this may present, on occasion, some challenges for Governments. Again, innovative thinking and agility will be paramount as we strive to understand and address, where needed, those challenges.

In conclusion, Australia applauds the important work of WSIS in delivering on its vision of a people-centred, development-oriented information society for all. Australia remains committed and looks forward to continuing to implement the WSIS vision over the next 10 years.

Mr. Kolodziejski (Poland): We fully align ourselves with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

Today we are summing up the 10 years since the holding of the World Summit on the Information Society. Governance of the Internet, a medium that constitutes the foundation for the functioning of a modern knowledge-based society, has to be an open, bottom-up process, shaped by all stakeholders. The draft outcome document (A/70/L.33) is a reflection of that belief and a testimony to the fact that, in spite of differences in many areas, we can all agree on the most crucial matters — matters that can be reduced to one simple statement: the multi-stakeholder model is a tool that enables us to build an open, free and unfragmented Internet. That statement contains two elements that are crucial to us. The first is the need for a bottom-up approach and the cooperation of all stakeholders based on the principles of openness and equality. Polish society is extremely attached to the ideals of personal freedom. The people want to be heard and have a real influence on the most important decisions. We believe we should communicate, talk and cooperate with one other; the multi-stakeholder model is the best tool that we have, and it has proved effective in practice.

The second element is "unfragmented Internet". The fragmentation of the Internet is — and I do not hesitate to use these words — the colossal threat we face. Maintaining an unfragmented Internet has to be our common aim. That is the reason that Poland has

long used the refrain "do no harm" in various forums. Let us change, modify and improve the Internet; but let us do so cautiously, so as not to destroy the values and technical solutions that make the Internet the special global medium that it is now. A fragmented Internet means that we lose all the benefits and opportunities that we are currently drawing from the uniform global network, in all areas. We perceive the Internet as a carrier of development. We would lose a tool that offers us a chance to improve prosperity, education and employment for millions of people.

That is why we combine digital matters with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). However, the progress of civilization should not be measured only by the spread of information and communications technologies, of course. The Internet is also an unfragmented sphere of rights and freedoms. The global network is not only a carrier of socioeconomic development but also of universal values in the form of basic, commonly accepted human rights. As it noted in the draft outcome document, our common aim is to ensure a swift and systematic increase in the number of people who use the Internet on a daily basis. Therefore, it is clear that these rights need to be protected equally offline and online.

Having worked together for the past couple of months on the draft outcome document, we have proved that, in spite of differences, we share the same fundamental values underlying the Internet as we know it today. I am sure that we can maintain this unity of beliefs and face another decade of challenges together.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who were engaged in the development of the draft outcome document for their work and contributions, especially the Permanent Representatives of Latvia and United Arab Emirates, without whose coordination, efforts and support our work would have been much more difficult.

Ms. Rahman Khan (Pakistan): The significance of today's gathering cannot be overemphasized. We are reviewing the outcomes of 10 years' progress made under the platform of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and on how to take the development of information and communication technologies (ICT) and related socioeconomic benefits to the next level in coming years.

Today we recognize ICT as a true driver of economic growth that has immense potential to transform the

lives of people and societies. However, I believe there is a still a lot to be derived from the utility embedded in ICT. We need to focus on the success factors and to underline potential impediments in the uptake of ICT during this review process. The WSIS action lines are very detailed in terms of creating inclusiveness, connectivity, safety and security. Those very concepts will continue to be relevant and significant as we try to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental process for the review of WSIS outcomes, as well as all of the stakeholders who worked tirelessly to produce a forward-looking and workable consensus on the outlook of the WSIS process going forward.

Our Government, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, fully realizes the potential of ICT to spur socioeconomic growth. We consider it a key enabler for achieving efficiency, transparency, good governance and for empowering the people. We are pursuing the vision of accelerated digitization to transform Pakistan into a knowledge-based economy. Our focus remains on the ubiquitous development of ICT infrastructure across the country, with special emphasis on serving the marginalized segments of the society and bridging the digital divide. We believe in connectivity and inclusiveness for all. Special projects have been launched to empower women and girls through ICT, and broadband proliferation is our policy priority. Our 2015 telecommunications policy is very much aligned with the post-2015 sustainable development agenda and the WSIS action lines. We have made notable progress on action lines C1, C2, C6 and C7. Also, with the rapid uptake of data consumption in Pakistan and usage of ICT, we are becoming increasingly mindful of other action lines — such as C5, C10 and others — and are addressing them through legislative and policy frameworks.

We all appreciate the remarkable role of ICT in creating new opportunities for social interaction, enabling new business models and contributing to economic growth and development in all other sectors. The foremost outcome of the ICT journey of the past few decades is a world that is now increasingly interconnected and in which people have unprecedented access to information and knowledge. Information highways are seamlessly traversing geographical boundaries to create a cyberspace that is shared by all. The novel use of cyberspace has resulted in commercial,

economic, cultural and social opportunities for users. The vehicle of cyberspace — the Internet — is now being used by over 3 billion people across the globe. That in itself testifies to the significance, efficacy, utility and relevance of the Internet. As a progressive nation, we fully endorse the global vision of seamless connectivity across the world. There must now be emphasis connecting the unconnected, the unserved, the underserved and the marginalized. The issue of bridging the digital divide in all its manifestations, among and within countries, therefore needs continued focus and attention so that the remaining population can also have access to the immense knowledge platform.

The doctrines of openness and inclusiveness have facilitated the growth and value of the Internet. The roles played by Governments, the private sector, civil society, the technical community and international organizations over the years must be appreciated. Each entity has played its due role, and hopefully will continue its efforts to ensure the constructive use of cyberspace. The benefits that will accrue from expanding safe and secure use of the shared cyberspace are enormous, as they touch on every aspect of our lives. However, with the organic growth and proliferation of the Internet, unfortunately, some worrisome trends in the use of cyberspace have also emerged.

The concerns over safety and security tend to undermine the objective of accelerated development and affect how confident people feel in using the applications and services offered to navigate cyberspace. The increase in incidents related to the malicious use of ICT in cyberspace poses a risk to the whole spectrum of users, from individuals to States. The growing menace has serious implications for international peace and security. The diversity of threats and motives of spiteful and rogue actors in cyberspace increases the risk many times over. Attacks against critical infrastructure and information systems are a growing global menace, and the dark side of the Internet needs to be dealt with collectively through collaborative efforts. The use of cyberspace by criminals and terrorists cannot be permitted and we, as responsible members of the global community, must ensure that such elements do not operate in cyberspace to further their nefarious designs. Similarly, the global community needs to agree on minimum standards of protection for human dignity, particularly for women and children, who are the most vulnerable communities in cyberspace.

Owing to the global nature of the challenge at hand, there is a need for enhanced cooperation among States and other stakeholders to strengthen common considerations for stability and security in the use of ICT. The aspect of building capacity in countries that lack expertise is also essential to achieve global deterrence against such threats. The significance of local and regional initiatives cannot be overemphasized more.

We recognize the Internet as a global resource and believe that its governance and management should be transparent and include the participation of all stakeholders, who need to focus on their respective roles so that the Internet continues to be a vibrant, innovative and dynamic information platform. Since the use of the Internet has proliferated in a manner not previously envisioned, there is a need to optimize its management model. That model should consider the inclusion of all segments of the global community under an institutional framework. The principles of mutual respect and mutual trust hold paramount importance in governance models, particularly as they relate to the Internet. Emerging challenges, such as the protection of intellectual property rights and privacy, also require novel and adaptive policy responses from Governments. We also need to work together to ensure that the rights of individuals offline are appropriately covered online.

We are moving towards the Internet of things — digital smart cities, digital smart urbanizations, digital smart rural communities and virtualization in cloud computing — which are probably the next landmarks, after the Internet, in ICT innovation. To make that a universal reality, it is important that our policies reflect measures to overcome the digital divide, spectrum availability, infrastructure deployment and content and application development. Special focus on research and innovation is also critically important. We need to consider the whole ecosystem of ICT, from demand to supply, while realigning our policies to carry forward the WSIS agenda and to make progress with regard to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Pakistan has followed a policy of free flow of information and open access to the Internet. We will continue our support and assistance to initiatives aimed at achieving our shared goal of socioeconomic development through the safe and secure use of ICT.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.