



General Assembly

Seventieth session

78th plenary meeting

Wednesday, 16 December 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Lykketoft (Denmark)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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 (continued)

Information and communications technologies for development

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

Draft resolution (A/70/L.33)

Mr. Barriga (Liechtenstein): We welcome this review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. Liechtenstein is generally satisfied with the draft outcome document we will soon adopt. We would like to warmly thank the co-facilitators for their able leadership in the negotiating process. We fully support the vision of the World Summit on the Information Society of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society.

Information and communications technologies (ICT) have become accessible and affordable. As a result, the number of their users has greatly increased. That trend will continue. Access to ICT has enormous benefits, and their use in many aspects of daily life has quickly become the standard. But that also means that exclusion from access to ICT comes with significant

disadvantages. A lack of access to ICT for the poor in both developing and developed countries, inequality of access for women and men, and the digital divide between generations are clear challenges. Our efforts to promote the use of ICT, therefore, have to be accompanied by a special focus on bridging all forms of the digital divide.

ICT are also playing an essential role in sustainable development. We therefore have much to gain by aligning our discussions on this issue with the framework provided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). Most important, we must ensure that the process for follow up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will give due attention to this issue.

We have already transformed into an information society, with all its positive effects, but also with risks and potential negative consequences. The following points are of particular importance, in our view.

First, ICT are altering the way in which individuals and communities interact, consume and spend their time. That leads to new and sometimes unforeseen health and social consequences. Children and adolescents are particularly affected by excessive use of ICT and by cyberbullying. Furthermore, the new opportunities provided by ICT are frequently misused for criminal purposes, such as fraud, espionage and terrorist recruitment.

Secondly, private and public interactions are increasingly conducted online. That creates a globally connected society, but it also increases the risk of

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

15-43211 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



infringements upon our privacy, as Governments and private companies can easily access massive amounts of personal data.

While we agree that the protection of human rights needs to be guaranteed both online and offline, implementing this principle in practice remains a great challenge. That is particularly true when trying to strike a balance between the freedom of expression and the need to combat hate speech, or between the right to privacy and combating violent crime, including terrorism. Throughout those challenges, we must stay true to the spirit of international human rights law, and when in doubt, we must err on the side of human rights.

Despite those challenges, we remain confident in the positive effects of the spread of ICT. The fulfillment of the vision of World Summit on the Information Society will therefore be a key ingredient of our success in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Ms. Tan (Singapore): In 2003 and in 2005, we met in Geneva and Tunis, respectively, to develop a vision of an information society that was people-centric, inclusive and development-oriented. That vision is encapsulated in the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and continues to be relevant today.

Ten years ago, a mere 16 per cent of the world's population had access to the Internet. Today, more than 40 per cent of the world is connected online. For many of us, the Internet has become integral to our lives. We use social media to keep in touch and information and communications technologies (ICT) applications to access the news, entertainment, banking and public services. However, more needs to be done. According to the International Telecommunication Union, some 4 billion people remained unconnected at the end of 2014. We need to intensify our efforts to connect the unconnected.

Singapore is a highly connected society, with 87 per cent of its households having broadband access, and 9 out of 10 having access to a smartphone. Singapore ranked second in the World Economic Forum's Network Readiness Index 2014 for leveraging ICT to promote economic growth and well-being. But there are still those in our society who are not able to keep up with, or benefit fully from, ICT advancements. For example, we have a sizeable elderly population who do not access the Internet. There are also families that cannot afford mobile or broadband access, as well as

persons with disabilities who face a variety of unique challenges in accessing the Internet. To address these issues, Singapore has programmes in place dedicated to helping the vulnerable to stay digitally connected. Let me just elaborate on a few.

Our Silva Infocomm Initiative encourages older persons to adopt ICT by partnering them with family members or friends who can act as ICT guides. For example, we encourage grandchildren to act as their grandparents' guides in using social media, such as YouTube, and in making online purchases. For families with financial challenges, the home access programme provides eligible households with telephony services and high-speed broadband at less than \$5 monthly. The package provides Internet fiber connectivity bundles with a basic computer device, such as a tablet. For persons with disabilities, the Singapore Government has partnered with other stakeholders to raise awareness of the benefits of information technology and assistive technology to people with disabilities, their caregivers and professionals from the disability sector. Persons with disabilities can borrow such technologies to try before purchasing them.

Allow me to say a few words on Singapore's Smart Nation journey. Launched on 24 November 2014 by our Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, Singapore's vision of a smart nation is one where people live meaningful and fulfilled lives, enabled seamlessly by technology that offers exciting opportunities for all. As we strive to be one of the world's first smart nations, we work to ensure that no one is left behind. We invite our local stakeholders to work with us on policies that make Singapore more sustainable, more comfortable and more livable for all. The Smart Nation Platform (SNP) is backbone infrastructure built on the next-generation Nationwide Broadband Network, a heterogeneous network, a mesh of networks of census, big data and data analysis. The SNP also enables industry collaboration on cross-sector initiatives in health care, transport and security. The platform helps citizens find and use information to make more informed decisions with positive consequences to their lives.

Singapore is also working closely through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to further advance the cause of WSIS in our region. Just last month, the ASEAN ICT ministers gathered in Danang, Viet Nam, to endorse the ASEAN ICT Masterplan 2020, or AIM 2020. The Masterplan will guide ICT cooperation in ASEAN for the next five years towards

a digitally enabled economy that is secure, sustainable and transformative, and to enable an innovative, inclusive and integrated ASEAN community. AIM 2020 is driven by eight strategic thrusts, which are closely linked to WSIS action lines.

Over the past 10 years, WSIS has been an effective platform for a multi-stakeholder approach to bridging the digital divide and deploying ICT for development. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), there is much work to do in harnessing the benefits of ICT to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. While Governments have a unique role in Internet governance, we support the view that Internet governance must be inclusive and responsive to be fully effective. Governments, industry, civil society and other stakeholders must work together for the benefit of all. On that note, Singapore supports the extension of the Internet Governance Forum, as it is an effective platform for discussing a wide range of issues related to the Internet, including Internet governance.

While the benefits of the information society are real, the challenges ahead will require extensive cooperation among all stakeholders. Singapore is committed to the extension of WSIS as a process that focuses on development and closing the digital divide. We look forward to working closely and collaboratively with all stakeholders to promote the development of ICT in order to better lives and create more opportunities for all.

Ms. Frankinet (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Belgium wishes to thank the co-facilitators, Ambassador Nusseibeh and Ambassador Mažeiks, and to congratulate them on the negotiations that they deftly guided in a spirit of openness, transparency and dialogue.

Ten years after Tunis, the digital gap remains a major challenge at three levels: within countries themselves, among countries and between men and women. Today we are firmly committed to pursuing our efforts to reduce the gap, while bearing in mind that information and communication technologies (ICT) are never an end in themselves but rather are an instrument that gives citizens the capacities they need to act and to shape their own destiny, one which encourages economic growth and strengthens human rights.

Strengthening the digital divide along a North-South axis is unacceptable for Belgium, given that

information and communication technologies can serve as a catalyst in the area of human development. If our cooperation relations with developing countries are not reflected, there is the risk that our support will increase the digital divide. Therefore, Belgium is focusing its cooperation on development in order to take advantage of ICT for international development. We strongly encourage digital creativity in conventional interventions. We support specific efforts to bolster skills, regulations and institutions in our partner countries so that they, like us, can enjoy the fruits of the information society. Belgium plays an active role within the European Union and, moreover, has offered to bolster its expertise in the sphere of digitalization for development.

Belgium welcomes the fact that synergies between the processes of the World Summit on the Information Society and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) are explicitly recognized. The opportunities offered by ICT for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals are well known. However, they cannot be fully implemented without the necessary skills, the due regulatory frameworks or responsible institutions. Those elements should be at the heart of our efforts if we are to encourage local digital ecosystems and sustainable development. The private sector also has a major role to play to ensure that digital advantages are accessible to all. Governments and the private sector should work together to ensure open and secure connectivity at affordable prices.

With regard to human rights, ICT have proven to be an excellent driver of freedoms and a powerful instrument for impinging on such freedoms when they are used to achieve online censorship or mass surveillance. Belgium states very clearly that those practices are unacceptable in both developed and developing countries.

Finally, with regard to Internet governance, no actor, be it Governments, companies, civil society or technical experts, can truly achieve its goals if it remains isolated. It is for that reason that Belgium supports the multi-stakeholder model, which has shown its ability to guarantee that general interests prevail over specific national interests. Belgium recognizes the need to improve the participation of developing countries in that model. That is vital for meeting the main challenges that we need to confront, including that of protecting private life and security in our

contemporary world, which is characterized by big data and the Internet of Things.

Ten years ago, when the World Summit on the Information Society met for the first time, no one could have predicted the speed at which ICT would develop and what impact they would have on our contemporary societies. Granted, there are challenges and certain divisions persist. But Belgium is more than ever convinced that the vision of the World Summit on the Information Society offers great opportunities. The onus is on us to seize those opportunities.

Mr. Rigby (Canada): The Government of Canada is honoured to participate in the General Assembly's review of progress made since the World Summit on the Information Society. We thank the Permanent Representatives from the Missions of Latvia and the United Arab Emirates for leading the very important discussions.

Ten years ago, we established a framework to leverage the potential of information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance opportunities for all people worldwide. We have seen considerable progress since then. Increasingly affordable ICT, thanks to the rapid growth of wireless networks and the widespread use of mobile phones, have had a significant impact on economic, social and political development worldwide. It is encouraging that mobile phone subscriptions have risen to over 7 billion this year. By the end of this year, 3.2 billion people are expected to be online. We have seen that, under favourable conditions, access to and use of ICT reduces inequalities, transforms health and education outcomes, spurs job creation, enables the exercise of human rights, strengthens democratic development and drives economic growth.

We have achieved much progress in implementing the Summit's vision, due to a strong commitment by all stakeholders — civil society, the private sector, the technical community, academia, Governments and international organizations — to work in partnership.

(spoke in French)

For its part, the Government of Canada has helped individuals and communities in developing countries to reap the benefits of information and communications technology. In Kenya, we are supporting girls' access to quality education by using mobile phones to monitor the quality of learning in remote communities. In sub-Saharan Africa, we are supporting women's

access to information and online resources regarding agricultural practices, weather patterns and local diseases. Throughout the Caribbean, in partnership with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, Canada is promoting the use of ICT as the basis for the modernization of public financial management in ministries of finance. Canadian research institutions, civil society groups and the private sector are also doing their part.

Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) has pioneered applied research on ways in which ICT can be used to achieve sustainable development results. In Mongolia, Viet Nam, Sri Lanka and many other developing countries, the IDRC has enabled strategic reform and supports capacity-building to connect individuals and communities to the Internet. It also supports a leading global network of cyberstewards that work with cybersecurity researchers, advocates and petitioners based in the South to promote a free, open and secure Internet. The University of Toronto Citizen Lab has undertaken leading-edge advance research on developments that impact the openness and security of the Internet and that threaten human rights. The Canadian Internet Registration Authority has engaged Canadian stakeholders in the elaboration of Internet public-policy issues by organizing the Canadian Internet Forum.

(spoke in English)

Our collective work is by no means done. We must continue to make steady progress on closing the digital divide, not only between and within countries but also between women and men, boys and girls. Every 10 per cent increase in broadband Internet penetration in developing countries correlates with a 1.38 per cent increase in gross domestic product. Imagine the boost to the global economy by bringing online more girls and women in developing countries.

Earlier this year, we established the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) to eradicate poverty and to improve people's lives and prospects. As we set a course for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals we have an incredible opportunity to support that Agenda through the use of new technologies. We are not starting from zero. We have over a decade of accumulated experience on which we can build.

We know that many factors facilitate development gains, such as enabling environments that encourage

investment, competition and public-private partnerships; respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law; national strategies designed to leverage greater use of and impact from ICT; and training and capacity-building to ensure that people have the appropriate skills and capabilities to use ICT.

In charting the way forward, we need to look for new ways to apply ICT to deliver effective and sustainable development results. That is why, over the next five years, our Department of Global Affairs in Canada will invest C\$25 million in initiatives that encourage inclusive and accountable governance, broader democratic participation and improved Government transparency, along with meaningful engagement with citizens through the use of technological platforms. Canada's IDRC will commit nearly C\$50 million to harness digital innovations that create inclusive economic opportunities and support democratic development in developing countries.

From discussions over the past two days, it is clear that we continue to face a number of challenges in building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society — from ensuring the protection of human rights online to enhancing users' trust in ICT. There are significant efforts under way to address those challenges in multi-stakeholder forums, regional bodies and United Nations expert groups, and we must continue to support them.

Multi-stakeholder approaches to Internet governance have made the Internet the highly robust, dynamic and geographically diverse medium that it is today. Canada is pleased that the Internet Governance Forum will continue to serve as an important capacity-building forum where all stakeholders can come together and share different perspectives concerning the Internet's development.

Multi-stakeholder cooperation will be critical in the years ahead as we seek to build a future in which individuals in every corner of the globe can create, access, use and share information and knowledge; all individuals' human rights and freedoms are protected; poverty is eliminated; networked technologies continue to generate prosperity and spur innovation; and our ICT infrastructure is secure. Canada is committed to working with all stakeholders to realize that vision.

Mrs. Schwalger (New Zealand): New Zealand welcomes the upcoming adoption of the draft outcome document of this 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 (WSIS) (A/70L.33). We are pleased to have participated in this review process. We would like to commend stakeholders for the progress that has been achieved. We especially thank the co-facilitators, from the Permanent Missions of Latvia and the United Arab Emirates, for assisting the discussions that enabled us to reach this point successfully.

New Zealand supports the maintenance of a global Internet that ensures that all users are able to access, create and share information regardless of their location. That openness underpins the unique value of cyberspace, allowing it to act as an enabler of social and economic development.

Substantial progress has been made in achieving the goals of the World Summit on the Information Society. The draft review document notes the remarkable evolution and diffusion of information technologies globally over the last 10 years. It mentions the remarkable growth in mobile phone and broadband subscriptions, as well as the success of businesses making the most of this increased connectivity.

The digital divides are being bridged, but there is clearly much more that needs to be done. New Zealand recognizes that information and communications technologies (ICT) will be a critical factor in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

New Zealand launched its refreshed cybersecurity strategy last week. Our strategy recognizes that improving confidence in and understanding of cybersecurity issues is an important part of supporting economic growth through the use of ICT. The cybersecurity strategy recognizes that a partnership approach to cybersafety and security based on mutual respect and trust is essential to embedding a cybersecurity culture. In implementing its strategy, New Zealand will continue to contribute to building cybersecurity capability in developing States, with a particular focus on its Pacific region. New Zealand's aid programme also recognizes that improved connectivity can be a catalyst for sustainable economic development.

New Zealand is particularly supportive of the reinforcement in the WSIS draft review document of the importance of multi-stakeholder processes and contributions. We are pleased that the participation of non-governmental stakeholders was encouraged

during parts of this review process. We welcome the opportunity for increasing the participation of non-governmental stakeholders in the 2025 review of the WSIS outcomes.

New Zealand is delighted that this review has resulted in the existing mandate of the Internet Governance Forum being extended for 10 more years. That will further strengthen the multi-stakeholder model.

New Zealand recognizes that many emerging cross-cutting issues in Internet governance have both technical and public policy dimensions. We acknowledge the willingness of existing organizations to address those issues, and the benefits of collaboration, cooperation and coordination among stakeholders to address those challenges.

During the past 10 years, work has been undertaken to support enhanced cooperation. In particular, we recognize the continuing financial and technical support offered by non-governmental organizations, which has enabled Governments to participate in multi-stakeholder public policy discussions. Enhanced cooperation is a continual process. As the Internet continues to develop and new uses emerge, ongoing dialogue will be necessary to ensure the full participation of all Governments in that environment.

Finally, New Zealand supports the protection and promotion of human rights, both online and offline. ICT have strengthened the realization of human rights for many people by enabling access to information and avenues for expression. The right to freedom of expression must continue to be promoted and respected, as well as the right of a person to not be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference in his or her privacy.

Mr. Sabarullah Khan (Sri Lanka): At the outset, I extend my deep appreciation to the President for convening this important high-level meeting.

Exactly 12 years ago, in Geneva, the world resolved to commit itself to building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society, and thereby ushered in an era of harnessing the full potential of information and communication technologies (ICT) for development. We are at a historic crossroads today as the General Assembly reviews the implementation of the outcomes that have resulted from that resolve.

We welcome the draft outcome document of the of this 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 (WSIS) (A/70/L.33), which was the result of an intensive intergovernmental negotiation process. My delegation places on record its deep appreciation for the the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Latvia for co-facilitating the intergovernmental process.

The importance of ICT as a substantial promoter of economic and social development, and particularly as a key enabler of sustainable development, hardly needs emphasis. Universal access to the Internet can enable incredible societal and economic gains, and it is well recognized that the Internet has very positive effects in terms of employment generation and wealth creation.

It is encouraging to note that there has been continued growth in the adoption and use of ICT across the globe in recent years, particularly during the past decade. Internet penetration has increased from about 15 per cent of the global population in 2005 to more than 40 per cent today. Broadband Internet is becoming more affordable all over the world, and the rapid development of ICT has brought about the death of distance and accelerated the development process.

Despite those positive developments, some disturbing realities still exist. The digital divide and the gap in broadband access between developed and developing countries continue and do not augur well for sustainable development. Though the global community has been successful in rapidly deploying broadband, there are billions more people to reach, and continued investment in this sector is essential. It is also imperative that the WSIS action lines build synergies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), since ICT constitute a cross-cutting element that touches all the Sustainable Development Goals. Those synergies must function as a bridge over the digital divide in all its forms.

To a great extent, specific WSIS outcomes have been implemented in Sri Lanka, with connectivity abundant and affordable throughout the country. Thanks to the implementation of a national policy based on WSIS action lines, Sri Lanka's information-technology literacy grew from a mere 3 per cent in 2005 to almost 50 per cent in 2014. The national broadband policy of Sri Lanka is also helping to narrow the digital divide and to harness the power of ICT for development. Free Wi-Fi connections will be available throughout the country

by March 2016 through Google's Loon Project, thereby providing the entire country with universal Internet access. As a multi-ethnic, multilingual nation, we attach great importance to multilingual Internet initiatives and have a policy of encouraging multilingualism. To that end, we have put in place technical conditions aimed at facilitating the use of local languages on the Internet.

Sri Lanka considers the growing role of cyberspace and the importance of security-building initiatives to be particularly important for the future of the information society. In that regard, we have enacted far-reaching laws prohibiting cybercrime, including in relation to sexual abuse, child pornography and hate speech. Sri Lanka is a State party to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, which entered into force in Sri Lanka on 1 September.

As a society made up of people of diverse races, religions and cultures who have coexisted for millenniums, and as a country that recently emerged from a long-drawn-out conflict, Sri Lanka is acutely conscious of the danger of abuse of the Internet. As a nation engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding, we are conscious of our duty to introduce all the necessary measures to ensure tolerance on the Internet and of the vital need to change attitudes and patterns of behaviour in society at large, particularly among young people.

Sri Lanka's electronic governance policy and associated projects have sparked a rapid drive to achieve electronic services that benefit a significant portion of the country's population. Our success in investing in electronic governance has been recognized by the United Nations. It is also noteworthy that Sri Lanka has established a legal framework for electronic governance and commerce through its adoption, several years ago, of the requisite legislation for electronic commercial transactions, based on model laws of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law. All such developments will help us to harness the potential of ICT for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level.

Today's high-level meeting gives us an opportunity to take a retrospective look at the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. We can see not only the progress we have made so far, but also the gaps and challenges that we face in our quest for a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society. We must

use this opportunity to recommit to achieving that truly universal society.

Mr. Al Saad (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would like to begin by expressing its thanks for the efforts of the friendly delegations of the United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Latvia in facilitating the intergovernmental preparations for the review process of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). We would also like to thank the Republic of South Africa, as Chair of the Group of 77 and China, for its coordination of the work of the Group.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/70/PV.76).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been eager to implement the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society in ways relevant to our national context, taking into account the importance of achieving our internationally agreed-upon development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals and the Geneva action lines. In that regard, Saudi Arabia has exceeded the targets for many of those specific goals.

The Internet has proved that it can be an effective tool in every area of life, and the Government of Saudi Arabia has worked to ensure that all its citizens in every community in the Kingdom, including in remote areas, have access to broadband service. To that end, we have not only opened up our telecommunications and technology market but have also committed to large-scale projects aimed at guaranteeing high-quality, affordable broadband Internet for all. As a result of the Government's work on information and communications technologies, since 2012 we have received several awards from the World Summit on the Information Society in the area of electronic Government services.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is proud of its active participation in the World Summit on the Information Society in both its first and second phases, as well as of its participation in the United Nations Working Group on Internet Governance established by the Secretary-General. We continue to support the Summit's outcomes through our participation in the Commission on Science and Technology in Developing Countries, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. We have also held a number of leadership positions

in relevant committees, acting as Vice-Chair for Asia of the Commission at its seventeenth session, in addition to our membership in the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and leadership of the ITU Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues. We also continue to lead the working group on the implementation of WSIS outcomes and, in that connection, participated in the WSIS preparatory process and in the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the Summit in the 10 years since the adoption.

The concept of multilateral responsibility is central to defining international Internet governance, as per the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society. The draft outcome document of this high-level meeting (A/70/L.33) is clear in that regard. And, as per paragraph 35 of the Tunis Agenda, because developing public policies for the Internet is the sovereign right of States and must be based on equal sovereignty, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia looks forward to working, through this overall review, on implementing the outcomes that have not yet been achieved. With regard to the issue of Internet governance, the pace at which the outcomes of the Tunis phase of the Summit are being achieved has been slow. International Internet governance, as per paragraphs 29 and 31 of the Tunisia Agenda for the Information Society, has yet to be achieved.

We also have not achieved the cooperation necessary to allow Governments to fulfil their objectives and to shoulder equal responsibility in the area of public Internet-related policies, as per paragraphs 68 and 69, with a view to protecting network security and billion-dollar national investments, building national networks and transforming all transactions into electronic transactions. It should be underscored that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports efforts of the International Telecommunication Union to follow up on the implementation of Summit outcomes by means of specialized working groups and the organization of WSIS-related activities. We reiterate our firm belief in the importance of the continued efforts of the International Telecommunication Union to lead the facilitation and coordination of future WSIS-related activities.

Mr. Suprawoto (Indonesia): On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Indonesia, allow me to express our appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for his leadership during this high-level meeting. We would also like to thank the Permanent

Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and of Latvia, co-facilitators of the outcome document on the overall review of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) (A/70/L.33), for their hard work during the consultation process.

Ten years ago, we declared our commitment to pursue the vision of the information society. To succeed in such a goal, we must first establish a strong foundation at the national level. For our part, Indonesia has adopted policies and regulations to further strengthen the development of information and communication technologies (ICT) to support the implementation of WSIS targets and action lines, and to enhance connectivity in rural and urban areas. At the moment, the penetration rate of mobile users in Indonesia has reached 150 per cent of the total population, or about 350 million subscriptions. The number of Internet users has reached 88.1 million, while the number of broadband users has reached 48 million. Broadband growth is expected to reach 30 per cent this year, and 70 per cent by 2025. To accelerate the development of broadband across the archipelago, the Government recently formulated the Indonesia Broadband Plan and prepared an e-commerce road map.

As rapidly growing technology remains ahead of policy, we are challenged to respond better to emerging ICT issues. Collective efforts therefore have to be our greatest strategy. In that regard, there are three emerging challenges in ICT that I want to emphasize.

First, I believe that our ultimate aim is clear: we have to bridge the digital divide by enhancing the capacity of the developing world to utilize ICT as a solution as well as a tool for development. We believe that capacity-building, the transfer of technology and flexibility with regard to intellectual property will be the key factors to achieve that aim. In that regard, WSIS should continue to facilitate multi-stakeholder engagement and to enhance efforts to narrow the gap between the haves and the have-nots in the context of access to ICT.

Secondly, Indonesia is of the view that, in order to pursue and sustain the safe, secure, reliable and tolerant utilization of ICT for development, the international community should continue to promote the importance of ethics for the information society, including through the establishment of a code of cyberethics. We are confident that by doing so we can realize the potential of ICT and, at the same time, transform the challenges to

building a robust ICT infrastructure and development-oriented information society into opportunities that can contribute to common progress.

Thirdly, the implementation of the outcome document on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of WSIS should serve to strengthen the role of ICT in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, as established in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), and in the fulfilment of the means of implementation, as set out in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The future of WSIS should also contribute positively to the achievement of the Connect 2020 Agenda for Global Telecommunication/ICT Development.

We underline the importance of the Internet governance framework in addressing the emerging challenges of ICT development. In that connection, we welcome the extension of the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF). The IGF should strengthen its engagement with all the relevant stakeholders and provide concrete solutions to improve the existing Internet governance mechanism, such as the ongoing process of transferring the stewardship of the functions of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority to the multi-stakeholder community. Indonesia continues to support multilateral and multi-stakeholder approaches to Internet governance that encourage Governments, private businesses, civil society and all the relevant stakeholders to take part in, and contribute to, the discussions.

Through WSIS, we should continue our collaboration with all stakeholders in working towards people-centred, inclusive, transparent and equal ICT to the benefit of all humankind. I would like to conclude by emphasizing Indonesia's support for strengthening and nurturing a global information society that contributes to our mutual progress, security and prosperity.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt): I would like to start by thanking the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and of Latvia, for their wise and efficient steering of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) review process, as well as to express our deep appreciation to them for making it a clear success.

Ten years after the World Summit on the Information Society, we are gathered here at the United Nations to review the implementation of its outcomes and to reiterate our commitment to the fundamental

principles they set out, in which the role of information and communications technologies (ICT) is rightly emphasized as an enabler for development and a crucial tool for achieving our development goals. Our meeting also reflects our common determination to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society.

Over the past 10 years, ICT tools have contributed significantly to economic and social development through their support of small and medium investments. That contribution should continue to grow and to work as a catalyst for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, while also ensuring digital inclusion for all by making broadband services accessible and affordable for everyone.

In spite of the significant achievements that have been made towards implementing the WSIS outcomes, we still have to address challenges ahead of us. That will require us to collaborate and create synergies, with a special focus on the needs of developing countries. A significant amount of work remains to be done if we are to bridge the digital divide between developing and developed countries and to achieve equitable access to ICT, including connectivity in rural and remote areas.

We cannot overemphasize the importance of the means of implementation in its broader sense. Ensuring adequate financing mechanisms and sustainable investment in ICT infrastructure and services, capacity-building and technology transfer for developing countries is crucial. It should be clear that the level of implementation by developing countries is linked to their acquisition of capacity, which therefore demands that international commitments in that regard be fulfilled.

As ICT have become increasingly linked to development over the years, they have also become a target for malicious uses. We should therefore enhance our collaborative efforts to address such security threats by putting cybersecurity in place and by combating cybercrime, in order to effectively prevent the increasing threat of terrorists' use of ICT. In that regard, we should ensure cybersecurity capacity-building and knowledge transfers for developing countries. Egypt also strongly believes in the importance of establishing an international instrument aimed at dealing with such challenges.

With regard to improving cooperation, Egypt remains concerned that efforts to enhance cooperation

still need strengthening simply in order to achieve the basic objectives outlined in the Tunis Agenda. In the years ahead, we must therefore make more effort to ensure the full operationalization of enhanced cooperation plans. The role of women and young people in developing an information society should be enhanced and strengthened, with the goal of boosting their inventiveness and entrepreneurship while providing them with opportunities and ensuring their active contribution to the digital economy. We should also enable persons with disabilities to be integrated into mainstream society in order to help them realize their full potential.

Further measures should be taken to enhance the key role of ICT tools, whether for ensuring information privacy or protecting children online, while emphasizing provisions aimed at ensuring freedom of expression, which carries with it specific duties and responsibilities. We strongly believe that the information society should be founded on and encourage respect for cultural identity and cultural and linguistic diversity, traditions and religions, and that it should foster dialogue among cultures and civilizations.

Egypt attaches great importance to the WSIS principles, which reaffirm that international management of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic. In that regard, we would like to highlight the crucial importance of respecting the sovereign rights of States in relation to international Internet-related public policy issues. The private sector has played an important role in that regard in Egypt within the area of its responsibilities, with the Government providing continued support through its provision of an enabling environment, along with significant contributions from civil society to social and development aspects.

It is worth noting that Egypt has been an active participant in the Internet Governance Forum since its inception and successfully hosted its fourth annual meeting, in 2009. In 2014 we presented our national progress report. We have also considered the WSIS outcomes through our 2014-2021 digital society strategy. Similarly, only two days ago, the President of Egypt launched two important initiatives in the areas of electronic design and industry and technological education, aimed at further boosting our national efforts to harness the potential of ICT for development.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that Egypt's commitment to the full implementation of the WSIS outcomes remains unwavering. We will continue our national, regional and global efforts to play our role in that collective endeavour, through cooperation with all the relevant stakeholders and partners at every level.

Mr. Roet (Israel): I would like to congratulate the co-facilitators and all those who contributed to the successful conclusion of the negotiations on the draft outcome document of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) (A/70/L.33). We believe it faithfully reflects the vision of the WSIS process and is a testament to our combined efforts.

Today we are reviewing the remarkable progress that has been made over the past decade towards achieving our goal of building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society. Information and communications technologies (ICT) have now penetrated almost every corner of the globe and every facet of our daily lives. They have transformed how we interact, how we connect, how we travel and how we conduct business. Equally important, ICT have strengthened human rights and led to greater freedom of expression.

We have made great strides on the march towards universal connectivity. More than 40 per cent of the world's population now has some form of access to the Internet. That is an amazing achievement, and many of us are using that development right now. But we must also remember that 60 per cent of the population still does not have such access.

Ever-expanding circles of people across the globe are becoming part of the technological revolution. Broader access means greater connectivity and deeper prosperity. Today, small-scale farmers in Africa wirelessly connect to Global Positioning System technology to track lost livestock and manage disease outbreaks among their herds. In Kenya, families without access to local banks can do their shopping by conducting secure transactions with their mobile phones. That progress was made possible by cooperation among all stakeholders, the crucial role played by the private sector and the commitment to fostering an environment that encourages investment and unleashes innovation. Today the question is no longer whether all stakeholders should cooperate, but how we can cooperate to achieve the vision of an open, inclusive and people-centred society.

Central to that effort is the need to build a bridge across the digital divide and to connect the unconnected. Although we have witnessed great progress in that regard, the gap among and within countries persists. Special emphasis must be placed on the situation of women and girls and people with disabilities, who are among the most vulnerable yet have the least access to the means of communication and channels of information. Inequalities in the cyberworld constrain progress, just as they do in the real world. As long as we fail to close the divide, both of access and of the quality of access, our work is still unfinished.

Last September we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). In the coming years, as we focus on achieving the targets and goals of the Agenda, ICT will play a transformational role in our efforts. ICT can spark economic growth and new industries. They are changing the face of education through the democratization of knowledge and by enabling more efficient and higher-quality health services. As the WSIS programme action lines and the Sustainable Development Goals are strongly linked, Israel believes that we should focus on harnessing the potential of ICT to promote the achievement of the Goals.

Israel strongly believes that in order to achieve our goals of an open information society, Internet governance should remain an open and transparent process that includes all stakeholders. In that regard, Israel recognizes the vital role and the proficient work of the Internet Governance Forum and welcomes the extension of its mandate.

In 67 short years, Israel has been transformed from a land of swamps and sand into the start-up nation. That remarkable feat was made possible by a spirit of creativity and forward-looking policies. Israel has placed great emphasis on collaboration between Government and businesses, on heavy investment in education, encouraging research and development, and on targeted investment incentives. Israel knows at first hand how critical the role of ICT can be on the path towards development. Information and communications technologies have helped us manage our farms, increase crop yields and use water more efficiently. Technology has also changed the face of our economy, helping to make Israel the information and telecommunication powerhouse it is today.

Technology changed the world as we know it, and Israel is proud to be a part of that change. Despite its size, Israel is a global ICT hub and has more start-ups per capita than any other country. It also has one of the highest rates of Internet users in the region. Israel's high-tech companies are at the forefront of innovation in fields such as nanotechnology, medical equipment, telecommunications and mobile software. In addition, we have developed cutting-edge solutions to some of the world's toughest challenges.

For instance, the USB flash drive, invented by Israeli developers, changed the landscape of information-sharing and -storing, allowing millions of people worldwide to exchange and easily transport large quantities of information. Waze, the world's largest community-based traffic and navigation mobile application, uses real-time information-sharing in order to make driving not only easier but also safer and more sustainable by cutting down travel time and fuel usage, thereby reducing air pollution. Checkpoint, the world's largest security vendor — an Israeli company — provides industry-leading security solutions and protection from cyberattacks to millions of users worldwide. In addition to homegrown innovation, leading global companies such as Apple, Microsoft and Intel have established their research and development centres in Israel, utilizing the local know-how and the friendly environment afforded to the business sector.

Israel's commitment to utilizing the potential of ICT goes beyond our borders. Last year, Israel reached an agreement with the World Bank's Transport and ICT Global Practice. The agreement focuses on sharing best practices in the ICT sector with the policymakers of developing countries and World Bank staff, including through training courses and cybersecurity technical assistance.

Today, we have taken another important step on the road to reaching an open and inclusive information society. As we look ahead towards the future, let us commit to working together to achieve our common goals and harness the full potential of information and communications technology for the sake of generations to come.

Mr. Estreme (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/70/PV.76) and by the representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Community

of Latin American and Caribbean States (see A/70/PV.77).

I would like to begin by thanking the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates and the Permanent Representative of Latvia, for their unremitting efforts and the skilful manner in which they led the preparatory negotiations for this meeting, which made it possible to agree on a draft outcome document (A/70/L.33) of great relevance for the international community.

The Argentine Republic recognizes the determination and global commitment to building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law, human rights and multilateralism. My country is very committed to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). Specifically, my country believes that bridging the digital divide is a key factor in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. For that reason it is important to provide the means for reducing the gap, as the person is the centre of the knowledge-based information society. That can be achieved through universal access to its benefits and through their use to improve the quality of life and to generate services and spur their transformation. That would promote competitiveness, equal opportunity and social inclusion.

In keeping with the foregoing, Argentina welcomes the inclusion in the draft document (A/70/L.33) of references to the gender digital divide and of the importance of closing it. My country wishes to emphasize the need for all Internet governance organizations to consider relevant the idea of gender balance in their own structures, especially in positions of leadership. Furthermore, understanding that ICT provides an opportunity to promote the equality of persons, countries should promote the establishment of legal, political and regulatory practices that ensure the availability and accessibility of ICT for persons with disability, persons with special needs and those who are particularly vulnerable.

Argentina believes that the use of ICT is fundamental as a catalyst for the efficient use of energy and the construction of smart cities by leveraging the advantages of technologies such as the so-called Internet of Things. In that regard, education and

capacity-building are of vital importance in taking advantage of and using ICT and related services. To that end, it is important that we redouble our efforts to achieve maximum access to ICT services, products, content and terminals, promoting access to digital literacy, creating decent jobs, promoting electronic Government and utilizing all the benefits that flow from digital inclusion.

In the same vein, we commend the inclusion in the draft outcome document of references to the importance of promoting and preserving cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content in the digital ecosystem of the Internet and associated services. Among other things, that will serve to promote universal access, enhance the vitality of multilingual societies, strengthen dialogue among cultures, improve openness and mutual understanding and foster tolerance of others, thereby contributing to democratic stability, international peace and equal opportunities for all the inhabitants of the world.

My country attaches importance to all issues that relate to cybersecurity, but always with the understanding that actions undertaken in that area must respect international law and human rights. In particular, given the sensitivity of such matters, we would like to underscore the relevance of the right to freedom of speech and opinion and the right to privacy, in keeping with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Moreover, in the area of cybersecurity, we cannot continue thinking that bilateral technical cooperation agreements, in and of themselves, will lead to the eradication of online crime. For that reason, we believe that it is necessary to promote mechanisms for cooperation in all countries as the only way to effectively address security problems in cyberspace.

With regard to Internet governance, we believe that Governments have a relevant role, and it is important for all the structures of the Internet ecosystem and its governance, both now and in the future, to respect and reflect balanced participation by all actors, in keeping with their respective roles. In that regard, Argentina recognizes the commitment of all interested parties — Governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations — that joined forces and worked together in a number of different international intergovernmental forums in order to achieve concrete results in on the issue of governance. Moreover, we welcome the extension of the mandate of

the International Governance Forum (IGF) for another 10 years. We recall that Argentina's active participation in the IGF extends back to 2006, and that my country was among the countries to support its establishment, during the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Tunis in 2005.

I wish to conclude by welcoming the agreement achieved after a number of months of negotiations on the draft outcome document of this high-level meeting on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. This final document will enable us to build on the achievements since 2005 to create an information society that is people-centered, inclusive and geared towards development.

Mr. Manongi (United Republic of Tanzania): At the outset, the United Republic of Tanzania associates itself with the statement made by the Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services of the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/70/PV.76).

We also join in welcoming the convening of today's meeting on the review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). We thank and commend the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations for their tireless efforts and outstanding leadership, which led to productive consensus on the draft outcome document (A/70/L.33). We also thank delegations for their constructive engagement in the process and non-governmental stakeholders for their input.

The past decade has witnessed a tremendous increase in information and communications technologies (ICT) connectivity, access and innovation. Such developments have created an important enabling framework for reducing poverty and addressing other chronic development challenges. Despite that growth, however, enormous gaps remain between developed and developing countries, between urban and rural areas and between men and women. It is imperative, therefore, that we exert every effort to bridge the persistent gaps. That can be done by creating a conducive environment and by strengthening multi-stakeholder cooperation, including bilateral cooperation. We should also take full advantage of policy and financing mechanisms and initiatives, such as universal service funds and other public-private partnerships.

Most developing countries, such as mine, would benefit a great deal from the Technology Facilitation Mechanism. We see its immense potential in enhancing ICT for development in our countries. In that regard we also call for the full alignment of the WSIS process and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, especially the Technology Facilitation Mechanism. Tanzania attaches great importance to ICT development. We are working tirelessly in collaboration with local and foreign partners to address the ICT needs of our people. Given the importance of infrastructure, my Government has built our national ICT broadband backbone, which is being implemented in five phases. With the completion of the second phase, the fibre optic backbone now covers a total of 7,650 kilometres, reaching every administrative district in our country.

Our efforts in advancing ICT development have led to a substantial increase in mobile and broadband services. As a result, there are currently 34 million mobile subscribers and 11 million Internet users. In our case, ICT applications are found in a broad range of areas, including Government, education, health, agriculture, banking, employment, trade, tourism, postal services and transportation, among others. Moreover, as of June, the contribution of the ICT sector to our gross domestic product had reached 3.9 per cent. Consequently, for us, there is no denying that ICT is having a considerable impact on our people and their livelihoods. It has empowered thousands of men and women through mobile financial services and banking. It has exposed hundreds of students to unlimited online and offline educational materials, and it has transformed the dreams of many young entrepreneurs and innovators into reality.

It is incumbent upon us, therefore, to continue to strive for broader and more sustainable access to quality and affordable ICT for all. We are mindful that we have a unique opportunity to achieve that goal in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), which recognizes that ICT are a cross-cutting enabler for accelerating progress on all 17 Development Goals. We must therefore address the digital divide to facilitate the fulfilment of the Goals. In doing so, we must ensure the safe and secure use of ICT.

We are concerned about the increase in negative applications of ICT for harmful activities, such as cybercrime, terrorism, invasion of privacy, the spread of hate speech, bigotry and intrusive behaviours.

Weaknesses in those areas need our urgent attention if we are to promote greater public confidence in ICT. Indeed, we are also witnessing every day how ICT are changing our way of life, increasingly transforming how we interact with each other and how we spend our time. As a result, some individuals are becoming prone to non-communicable diseases due to physical inactivity. Others are becoming less productive due to net and social media addictions, or are too detached from reality and thus less effective at resolving social and communal challenges.

All of these challenges signify the imperative of collective action. We must strive to promote the responsible and sustainable use of ICT for development. We must work to prevent abuses, including through effective regulations. At the same time, we need to undertake research to ascertain the magnitude of the problem and offer credible solutions. We must also endeavour to inculcate into the minds of our youth a culture of peace, tolerance and mutual respect.

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming Tanzania's commitment to the outcomes of the WSIS process. We also reassert our belief in the principle of multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement. We see it as an enduring pillar of the WSIS process. We commend the International Telecommunication Union for its continued efforts, especially in the areas of infrastructure development and capacity-building. Finally, we wish to express our endorsement of the outcome of this meeting.

Mr. Logar (Slovenia): Slovenia welcomes the forthcoming adoption of the draft outcome document of this high-level meeting (A/70/L.33). I would also like to express my appreciation to the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Latvia for steering this process.

Slovenia welcomes and supports the objectives of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process, which is committed to building an inclusive and people-centred information society on a global scale. We believe that it is very important that future efforts be aimed at developing an information society and bridging the digital divide between various parts of the world, States and peoples.

The WSIS vision of people as the primary reason for introducing and building an information society cannot be realized without an open and neutral Internet. The greatest value of the Internet as a new technology for

development lies in its openness and neutrality. Without an open and neutral Internet, there would be no new means of communication, the exchange of experience and knowledge would be limited and, with the rise of Internet giants, people would have fewer opportunities. All that would hinder the development of societies and modern digital economies.

Zero-rating practices allow access only to certain services and therefore prevent users from exploiting the full potential of the Internet. The Internet is too much of a factor in the development of societies to be reduced, under the pretence of promoting Internet access, to a mere service.

In the future, we will also need to devote more attention to discriminatory market practices concerning Internet content aimed at preventing monopolistic behaviour in the digital economy. States should develop appropriate knowledge and infrastructure required for tackling the emerging Internet challenges with due regard for human rights, including freedom of expression.

Internet exchange points, which must be accessible to all Internet service providers, are essential to the development and availability of the Internet. Slovenia has set up Internet exchange points on a non-profit basis, as all Slovenian Internet service providers can exchange traffic free of charge. This has enabled an affordable exchange of traffic at a national level and allowed other Internet service providers to enter the market, making the Internet more accessible to end users. Experience from other domains shows that open and accessible Internet exchange points may serve as a powerful lever in ensuring the development and accessibility of the Internet for end users and businesses.

Currently, we are introducing a new Internet Protocol version 6, which will most certainly revolutionize the development of Internet technologies and open up new opportunities in the area of digital economy. To avoid a new digital divide and prevent related negative consequences, developed countries should promote the transfer and exchange of knowledge with developing countries, using their know-how and infrastructure.

Societies must create the conditions for the introduction and development of new technologies that best suit their needs. Experience shows that open, democratic and development-oriented societies have the most success in introducing new technologies. Thus,

conclusions arising from the WSIS process should also refer to respect for human rights, including through implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), which we adopted a few months ago.

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the International Telecommunication Union on reaching its fiftieth year. I also commend the Union's many achievements as one of the oldest bodies of the United Nations system.

I also wish to salute the achievements of the co-facilitators, the representatives of the sisterly United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Latvia, and thank them for their efforts.

The importance of our meeting today lies in the fact that it coincides with the launch of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). Information and communication technologies (ICT) play a key role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the post-2015 era. The complexity and depth of the 2030 Agenda require the use of all the capabilities offered by the ICT revolution. The dream of the international community will be accomplished only if we bridge the digital divide between developing and developed nations.

In May 2012, the Kingdom of Bahrain launched its National e-Government Strategy 2016. That was an important step on our path to electronic government and has strengthened our status as an international electronic-services provider. More than 90 initiatives are included in the four-year period covered by the Strategy. They include, for example, legislation and laws that contribute to a secure electronic environment; the building of an advanced infrastructure in all Government agencies; the strengthening of services provided by the Government through the introduction of one-stop shops and new services; and the establishment of open data platforms to promote invention and initiatives in the area of development and new services applications. The National Strategy will also help increase the competitiveness of the next generations by providing effective high-quality services, promoting the active participation of our partners and establishing a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Two years ago, the Kingdom of Bahrain hosted the first United Nations Public Service Forum in the Middle East through the initiative of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. More than 600 leaders in

different areas, including intellectuals, politicians, entrepreneurs, international governance organizations and the private sector, from more than 80 States participated in the Forum. It was an opportunity for nations, particularly the least developed countries, to benefit from successful experiences in the field of e-government.

The Kingdom of Bahrain is prepared to become an information society. We have come a long way, and we want to become a knowledge society by enshrining the concept of a secure data environment and the privacy of individuals. In order to build a knowledge society, the Kingdom of Bahrain wants not only to build an information network but also to raise citizens' awareness of the importance of the knowledge economy and information society and to increase the use of electronic services provided by the Government and others. That project may be the hallmark of the Kingdom's technology initiatives, as, according to a 2010 United Nations report, the Kingdom of Bahrain was ranked first in the Arab region, third in Asia and thirteenth globally out of 192 nations in the area of information societies. We are also among the top five nations in Internet users.

It is also worth mentioning that the International Telecommunication Union granted His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain the Information and Communication Technology in Sustainable Development Award for 2015 for their efforts in the area of information and communications technologies. We are also proud to have been granted an award for promoting whole-of-Government approaches in the information age and a first place United Nations Public Service Award in 2012 in the area of advancing knowledge management in Government. The Kingdom of Bahrain will continue to develop those important frameworks in the area of information and communications technologies.

Mr. Wadet (Norway): Cyberspace has changed the world. It has changed the way we work, communicate, do business and live our lives. During the 10 years that have passed since the last World Summit on the Information Society, the development of cyberspace has provided us with opportunities that were unthinkable when we agreed on the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society. It is a significant enabler of sustainable development and will be instrumental in achieving internationally agreed development goals.

The Internet is today the world's most important infrastructure, getting even more important and connecting even more people every day. The Internet is estimated to contribute \$4 trillion to the world's top 20 economies each year. By 2020, some 60 per cent of the world's population could be able to access the Internet, with the multitude of opportunities and possibilities for development that go with it. Cyberspace is today crucial for global trade, the global economy and global security.

However, 10 years after the Tunis phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, the digital divide that the World Summit was intended to address persists. Making the Internet universally accessible and affordable is a global priority. Billions still do not have access to the Internet and are therefore excluded from the tremendous economic and social benefits that come with it. For every person connected to high-speed broadband, five are not. Four billion people do not have Internet access. Two billion do not use a mobile phone. The unfinished task of connecting everyone to the Internet remains an urgent policy priority, not just for economic reasons but also to promote universal values and a sense of belonging.

Access to the Internet is critical for development, but it is not sufficient. Let us not forget that whether or not digital technologies will make development more inclusive, efficient and innovative will be largely determined by policy choices that could also lead to more inequality, less development, greater control and new monopolies. Therefore, a vibrant business climate where companies can compete and innovate, skills and capacity that allow people to seize the opportunities provided by cyberspace, and capable and accountable institutions that use the Internet to empower citizens are elements that need to be promoted alongside Internet connection.

Norway has supported the World Summit process since the beginning, and it will continue to do so. We believe in the comprehensive approach of the World Summit agenda. Let me highlight three principles in the World Summit agenda that are of particular interest to Norway. They are all interconnected, and we are happy to see them reflected in the current version of the draft outcome document (A/70/L.33).

First, universal human rights apply online, as well as offline. Everyone everywhere should be able to express one's opinion and seek and receive information

and ideas without interference. The Internet has proven to be a very efficient tool in promoting human rights and democratic values. Norway has a long tradition of supporting people who seek to connect, and it will continue to do so also in cyberspace.

Secondly, a global culture of cybersecurity needs to be promoted and developed. A secure and robust cyberspace is necessary in order to utilize the development benefits of the Internet. Improved cybersecurity will benefit us all, developed and developing countries alike. An exchange of information and close cooperation with all stakeholders are key in that respect. We need a continued focus on capacity-building in order to handle cyberincidents and combat cybercrime globally, and we have to be aware of the overlap between security policy and development policy in cyberspace. If digital networks cannot be trusted, development and innovation will be hampered.

Thirdly, with regard to a continued multi-stakeholder process in Internet governance, the Internet is a tremendous success. Let us be cautious not to do anything that could undermine its continued benefit for development and innovation. The fast-growing importance of the Internet to a nation's economy and security might tempt States to try to bring Internet governance under tighter State control. That would be a mistake and could potentially jeopardize the fine architecture that the Internet is based upon and that has proven so successful.

International cyberpolitics, and perhaps Internet governance in particular, have provided us with new arenas for discussions and decision-making, arenas that are perhaps still unfamiliar to many of us who are used to solving international issues in strict multilateral settings, where States and States only are present. States are important stakeholders in Internet governance, but they are but one of many stakeholders. Let us not forget that all the stakeholders are equally important for the continued maintenance and development of the free, open, secure, robust and reliable Internet that we all depend on.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the President for convening this high-level meeting of the Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society and the adoption of its draft outcome document (A/70/L.33).

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/70/PV.76).

We would like to thank the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Latvia, for their wise leadership of the negotiations and their patience while we worked to reach a consensus document.

Despite all our hardships and obstacles, my country has made a great deal of progress in the area of information and communications technologies (ICT). The Sudan was one of the first countries in the world to use mobile phones. We currently have 28 million mobile phone subscribers. Of our 35 million inhabitants, 13 million are Internet users. We have three major companies working in telecommunications and related technologies, as well as two companies in the area of landline phones. We would like to point out that a Sudanese company, Sudatel, has three branches operating in the friendly African countries of Senegal, Mauritania and Djibouti. Sudan's telecom companies are working to move from 3G to 4G Internet services beginning on 1 January 2016. We wish to emphasize the vital leading role being taken by the private sector in this area.

ICT are an indispensable factor in our achievement of sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for financing for development stress the importance of technology transfer and the promotion and dissemination of science and knowledge in our efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

We want to emphasize a few points related to the topics in the draft outcome document to be adopted in the course of these meetings.

The first is the importance of bridging the digital divide between North and South and ensuring that developing countries have access to ICT through preferential agreements aimed at helping them to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, build capacity and enhance their infrastructure.

Second, while recognizing the role of civil society organizations and the private sector in this area, we must also acknowledge the vital role that Governments play in the responsibility to provide protection and expand

the population benefiting from technology, particularly through public policy and by disseminating ICT.

Third, a section on human rights was added to the draft outcome document. While we support and stress the necessity and importance of ensuring the protection and promotion of human rights, we should not approach the issue selectively. We must focus on internationally agreed human rights principles, including the right to development, within the context of the Charter of the United Nations, international law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, non-interference in countries' internal affairs and the protection of national sovereignty. Human rights that are linked to the social and economic aspects of our lives are what we should take into consideration and are closely tied to the World Summit and its outcomes.

Fourth, we should promote partnerships among Governments, civil society organizations and the private sector through complementarity and coordination of roles in order to ensure that ICT is focused on benefiting society and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals while improving education, rather than focusing on inciting and promoting a culture of violence or its uses for criminal purposes. We therefore stress the importance of cooperating on the issue of cybersecurity, while recognizing and acknowledging the indispensable role that Governments play in that context.

Fifth, turning to the Internet Governance Forum, we must ensure that there is a role for Governments in line with the responsibilities they bear, particularly in the area of public safety and security policies, without neglecting the part played by the private sector and civil society organizations in helping to ensure that we reap the maximum benefits that this partnership offers.

Sixth, we would like to highlight the draft outcome document's call for the need to refrain from imposing unilateral sanctions and coercive measures contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, which have a negative effect on countries' ability to achieve economic and social development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Seventh, we would like to stress the importance of ensuring universal Internet governance through the promotion of cooperation among Governments. It should be democratic and transparent, while building on a constructive partnership between the private sector

and the civil-society and international organizations concerned.

Eighth and last, we emphasize that the Geneva and Tunis documents were and remain the backbone of the progress that has been achieved in the area of ICT and in the promotion of the information society in the cause of sustainable development.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon): My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/70/PV.76).

We would first like to congratulate the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Latvia, for their able leadership and efforts to reach a comprehensive and consensus draft outcome document (A/70/L.33) on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

Development, human rights and security are three key elements in this review. Turning first to development, we see that since the adoption of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society 10 years ago, information and communications technologies (ICT) have evolved and developed tremendously. But today, while we live in an interconnected world, not everyone is connected. The digital divide remains a development disparity rather than a technological gap.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and the pledge to leave no one behind, today's review is an opportunity to reaffirm the basic right of every human being to access to information and communications technologies. Indeed, the role of ICT as a catalyst in the promotion of social, economic and political fights needs no demonstration. From rural areas to humanitarian and emergency situations, ICTs are reliable tools that are capable of reaching everyone and enabling full enjoyment of all human rights and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Addressing the gap in the gender digital divide also remains a priority.

Secondly, regarding human rights, one of the paradoxical challenges of ICT is the promotion and protection of freedom of opinion and expression. It is regrettable to see that in many places around the world such freedom is unrightfully denied, whereas in others it is being misused or abused to promote violent extremism and intolerance. The Internet should

remain a hub for intercultural exchange and dialogue. It is therefore important to preserve the world's cultural diversity by building digital capacities for all.

Thirdly, regarding security, it has been agreed since the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society was adopted 10 years ago that "the same rights that people have offline must be protected online". Cybersecurity therefore means not only protection against cybercrime, digital attacks, espionage and sabotage, but also the protection of privacy and personal data and communications. Government regulations in this regard should not impede essential human rights in the name of security.

In Lebanon, we started the development of broadband in 2010 by building a national fibre network — a fibre backbone covering the whole country. Heavy users, such as universities, hospitals, incubators and businesses, will soon be connected to this fibre. Ultimately, all homes will be connected with fibre to the home by 2020. Meanwhile, cooperation among all stakeholders has been vital to the management of country domain names and Internet Protocol version 6 advocacy option.

Finally, as we review the accomplishments since 2005, we praise the engagement of all stakeholders and their important contributions in the development of ICT. Such cooperation should remain the driving force to achieve an inclusive, people-centred, development-oriented global information society.

Mr. Mendonça e Moura (Portugal): It is an honour to be able to address the General Assembly on behalf of Portugal. Let me start by thanking the co-facilitators, Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and Mr. Jānis Mažeiks, Permanent Representative of Latvia, as well as all members and groups of States and representatives of different stakeholders, for their very hard and collaborative work on the 10-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society. We have achieved a balanced draft outcome document (A/70/L.33) that encompasses the foundations of our work for the next decade.

Information and communications technologies (ICT) have had a massive impact on economies, societies and individuals worldwide. ICT is the backbone of the Internet, a platform of universal value offering unlimited opportunities to access knowledge, enhance creativity and foster innovation. The 2030

Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), adopted in September 2015, explicitly recognizes the important role of education, science, technology and innovation in the fulfillment of universal aspirations, while leaving no one behind and protecting the planet from environmental deterioration. ICT and the Internet will have to play a crucial role in this endeavour.

We face new ICT challenges and emerging trends ahead — such as the Internet of Things, cloud computing, big data, machine-to-machine systems, mobile technologies, social networks and human-to-machine interaction — that have a deep impact on society, industry, organizations and businesses, and people's behaviour and conduct. Consequently, it is of the utmost importance to preserve the Internet as a single, open, people-centred, multilingual, secure, reliable, robust and not fragmented network that is supportive of social, cultural and sustainable development. It is no coincidence that the World Wide Web was developed at one of the most important international research laboratories — the European Organization for Nuclear Research — as an open instrument with free access to all researchers all over the world.

Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

On connectivity and access, despite significant progress and improvements to basic Internet services over recent years, we are still facing digital divides at different levels among countries, regardless of their stage of development, among rural and urban populations and among generations. Joint efforts need to be pursued further to ensure that the benefits of the information society can be enjoyed by everyone, improving the quality of life of vulnerable people and strengthening capacity-building. Only through a multi-stakeholder approach can we make that possible.

In Portugal, it is widely accepted that the development of public policies on the information society has to include such broad multi-stakeholder participation and discussion. That is why we applaud the extension of the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) for another 10 years. In effect, multi-stakeholder cooperation has demonstrated positive benefits contributing to shared best practices, knowledge transfer, capacity-building and common international understanding between and among different stakeholders, and between and among developed and developing countries. This will allow

better implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, such as freedom of expression, enhanced cooperation, safety, security and different jurisdictions, and will ultimately create confidence for the development of the digital economy and society at the worldwide level — all of this, I underline, in full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

On the IGF, it is unquestionable that it has influenced public policies over the past decade, and we acknowledge its unique role as a multi-stakeholder platform for the discussion of Internet governance issues. One of the major achievements of the IGF relies on the open working environment that emerges each year, making it portable, applicable and suitable to further advance work for any stakeholder group, namely, for policy- and decision-making. This open dialogue should be expanded, promoting stakeholders' engagement and broader participation. To that effect, we congratulate ourselves on the emergence and spread of regional and national IGF initiatives all over the world.

We should continuously develop the flexible dynamics that have led us to the current stage. As citizens, Governments, businesses, non-governmental organizations, technicians and scientists, we are proud to participate in this extraordinary human and scientific journey on which the development of social appropriation of the Internet will occur. Portugal is proud to have been the first country, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, to have bound together Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, sharing their cultures. We are therefore prepared and willing to embrace that endeavour.

Mr. Jawhara (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to thank the co-facilitators of the negotiations on 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 (A/70/L.33).

My country associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/70/PV.76).

The draft outcome document reminds us of the unfortunate fact that the ongoing digital divide between developed and developing countries is widening, despite great international efforts and our adoption

of dozens of resolutions stressing the need to enhance international cooperation and implement obligations to bridge that gap and narrow it as soon as possible. In the face of that reality, we have become more aware of the fact that, in order to narrow that gap and for the developing countries to benefit from the information and communications technologies (ICT) sector and to support their development efforts, developed countries must shoulder their historic responsibilities and take the lead by providing developing countries with the necessary financing, technology transfer and capacity-building. We would also like to stress the need for technology transfer to developing countries and the strengthening of its role.

My delegation supports the reference in the draft document to the need to focus attention on assisting the States and peoples who are facing exceptional circumstances, such as the people suffering under the yoke of foreign occupation, including our people in the occupied Syrian Golan and the Palestinian people. My delegation strongly supports the reference to the need for commitment and cooperation by countries to prevent the abuse of that technology by terrorists and criminals to perpetrate criminal acts against innocent people all over the world. My country, Syria, which is suffering from the scourge of transborder terrorism, is at the forefront of the countries that area in dire need of such international cooperation and coordination.

Terrorists in Syria are unfortunately capable of using ICT to promote their operations, engage new recruits and mercenaries from all four corners of the globe, and perpetrate the most horrific crimes against Syrians. They are using ICT to finance their activities and acts, to purchase weapons, to transfer funds into accounts, for piracy and to market their stolen products. In that context, we underline the responsibility of the developed countries and their companies, which control most of the ICT networks and facilities throughout the world, to confront the misuse or abuse of ICT by terrorists. In that regard, we strongly condemn some European companies that are providing terrorists in Syria with ICT services, as revealed by the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, which has reported that some European companies have provided technical means and services, via Turkish middlemen, for the operationalization of Internet systems via satellite in areas in Syria and Iraq where the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant terrorists are located. That violates the

core of our Organization's resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 2199 (2015).

The Government of Syria, in cooperation with its local United Nations and international partners, is making great efforts to ensure the continuity and quality of the services provided to Syrian citizens, including those related to ICT, in particular to maintain the ability of citizens and institutions to connect with Internet networks and satellites, despite the systematic targeting of the facilities and networks by armed terrorist groups. That sector, its facilities and networks are also being targeted, as are all other vital sectors in Syria, by a continued series of unilateral coercive economic measures imposed by certain countries, such as the controls placed on Internet websites and ICT services and the dissemination of certain Syrian media companies via satellite, in addition to isolating vital Syrian sectors, such as the civil aviation sector, from relevant global networks.

What is unfortunate, in that context, is the fact that, while Syria is facing all those sanctions, cyberspace remains open and free of restriction, technology is being developed and freedom granted to the media institutions and websites of our region — the same websites that are supporting the spread of the poison of sectarian incitement among Syrians and the peoples of the region, promoting hatred and the culture of extremism, recruiting terrorists from all over the world and brainwashing children and youth. As a result, we are witnessing a plague of extremism and terrorist acts all over the world.

In conclusion, my delegation stresses the need for coherent efforts to support ICT for development while abiding by our international obligations in line with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law. We stress the need to fully implement the draft outcome document without any politicization or discrimination, including the need for Member States to put an end to unilateral coercive measures that hinder international development, in particular in developing countries.

Mr. Mendoza-García (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of South Africa, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by the representative of Ecuador, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (see A/70/PV.76). We acknowledge and commend the outstanding and

difficult work of the co-facilitators in the review process, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Latvia, as well as their respective working teams.

This year will be remembered as one in which crucial agreements were reached, including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 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 (A/70/L.33). It could not have been a better year. We have redefined our understanding of development and the future we want to build for ourselves and future generations. The challenge now is to implement those agreements.

When it comes to the information society, we believe that the draft outcome document to be adopted at this high-level meeting is the result of an adequate balance that underscores the most pressing complexities of the current information society and the progress made in the field of information and communications technologies and Internet governance and fully complies with the fundamental principles of the World Summit on the Information Society, which are to create an information society that is based on social, cultural, economic and technical development.

We wish to highlight the importance of recognizing the role of multi-stakeholders in this process. The Internet governance model must be based on a multi-stakeholder approach, independent of our political, corporate or financial power, and should aim for three main objectives: first, to support a free and open Internet; secondly, to support a model that ensures privacy and security; and, thirdly, to support the universally accepted principles in the field of human rights.

The balance of power in the governance model is critical if the Internet is to remain a creative and permanently innovative space. Achieving sustainable development in our societies will depend largely on our ability to maintain this innovative and transformative capacity, which should be reflected in particular in our patterns of consumption and production, as well

as in more horizontal and dynamic power structures that enable the participation of all people and diverse stakeholders.

Costa Rica believes in the global commitment to achieving an information society that is inclusive, people-centred and development-oriented, and that promotes and guarantees the recognition of all human rights offline and online. That is how we express our strong support for the inclusion in the draft outcome document of the section on human rights in the information society. In so doing, we will guarantee respect for fundamental freedoms, the freedoms of opinion and expression, assembly and association, an independent press, and the protection of journalists, bloggers and human rights defenders. These are principles to which we are committed and that we are promoting through our presidency of the Freedom Online Coalition this year.

We therefore believe in the need to create synergies among this process, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It is crucial that human rights be duly reflected in the action lines that we define. Such coordination will promote the implementation of these agreements and contribute to the building of more peaceful, inclusive societies, which will also benefit from the transformative potential of information and communication technologies (ICT).

Information and communications technologies and the digitization process remain crucial to economic growth worldwide and in Costa Rica. In our case, the sector accounts for about 3 per cent of gross domestic product, and has huge potential for growth. In the past five years, the country has moved up 23 positions in the *ICT Development Index*, and was named the most dynamic country in that period by the International Telecommunication Union. The number of households connected to the Internet doubled, increasing from 24 per cent to 55 per cent. Cellular mobile penetration also rose by 150 per cent, while broadband subscriptions have increased tenfold. These results reflect how the sustained efforts of public stakeholders, with the support of private actors, have grown to make the country poised to serve as a model for the region. That encourages us to continue promoting public policy actions toward that end.

The country has presented its national development plan for telecommunications, entitled *A Connected Society 2015-2021*, which is based on three fundamental pillars: digital inclusion, transparent and electronic Government, and the digital economy. Our goal is to overcome the existing gaps in infrastructure, gender and access to ICT that are characteristic of many middle-income countries, whose specific challenges must be overcome with the support of the international community. Three of our main goals are to increase the population's Internet use and ownership with a view to attaining the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member country average with regard to the percentage of Internet users; to provide 100 per cent of households with digital television by 2017; and to increase the quality of broadband, thereby ensuring that 80 per cent of the population has access to broadband at a speed consistent with the OECD member country average.

The digital inclusion pillar is part of the Digital Costa Rica strategy, which is geared towards resolving problems of access to telecommunications services for vulnerable groups, including disabled and indigenous persons; and on the need to foster the development of skills, knowledge and expertise for the productive and meaningful use of ICT. Those efforts are complemented by the Connected Household programme, through which almost 10 per cent of households across the country will receive a subsidy for Internet services and for the purchase of a device for their use in 2018. In addition to that programme, there is another that specifically benefits those households headed by women entrepreneurs and businesswomen, with a view to enabling them to overcome barriers to access. We have proposed making telecommunications services available to all, reaching those parts of the country where it is not financially profitable for network operators. Through the Connected Communities programme, we will provide access to fixed voice services and Internet to communities that suffer the connectivity gap.

Empowering young people through the use of ICT is without a doubt an urgent task. This is an issue that we have brought to the attention of the Council of the International Telecommunication Union, which this year adopted a resolution on empowering youth through ICT. Furthermore, President Luis Guillermo Solís has been named this year's International Telecommunication Union Patron for Youth and ICT. Therefore, in the framework of the meetings

of the Permanent Consultative Committee of the Inter-American Telecommunications Communication of the Organization of American States, we submitted a draft regional action plan to achieve youth empowerment through telecommunications and ICT, which was adopted a few weeks ago, and through which we have strengthened our commitment to youth.

Our main objective is to transform Costa Rica into a connected society, based on an inclusive approach to the access, use and ownership of ICT in a safe, responsible and productive way. In that vein we are developing, as described, specific policies that will contribute to our efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Nina (Albania): Allow me first to congratulate the President of the General Assembly for convening this high-level meeting on the World Summit on the Information Society.

Albania welcomes the forthcoming adoption of the draft outcome document of the high-level meeting and would like to thank the co-facilitators for their efforts in this process (A/70/L.33).

Nowadays, one of the biggest challenges is how to be more responsive to the dynamics of globalization. A strong, fast, open and free information society is one of the keys. Albania, similarly to other countries worldwide, is embracing the digital revolution by creating new opportunities for citizens and businesses. My Government has made a strong commitment to supporting and promoting digital initiatives, which are powerful tools that lead to modernization, governance, an open society and sustainable economic development for citizens. Our efforts in that regard are intended to foster regional cooperation and are coordinated with the European legal and institutional framework in the framework of Albania's integration into the European Union.

In that regard, the cross-cutting Digital Agenda defines our vision for a new generation of the information society in the European context. That is why Albania has adapted its legal framework on the information society to comply with the European Union Community acquis while constantly remaining in touch with the dynamic developments of the digital single market. The Government Data Centre, established in line with international standards, fully serves the local and central institutions. The unique public service portal, on the other hand, is offering a growing number

of e-services. The Government is investing in digital education, both for equipment and curricula, and different projects offer incentives in order to encourage innovative initiatives among the youth.

In Albania, the electronic communication sector alone, as a part of information and communication technologies (ICT), contributes to the gross domestic product at a calculated rate of 5 to 6 per cent. Among the long-term priorities foreseen in the Digital Agenda Strategy 2015-2020, I would like to highlight several points, the first of which is the improvement of national ICT infrastructure, the main pillar for the rapid development of the information society and growth of electronic readiness. High-speed access should be increased to at least 100 megabits per second for 50 per cent of families and to, at least, 30 megabits per second for the whole population. The percentage of the population that utilizes the Internet should grow to 90 per cent by the end of 2020; the number of businesses using ICT for e-commerce purposes should be approximately 50 per cent; and, lastly, all schools should have access to broadband Internet.

The development of electronic governance and the provision of interactive public services through the Internet for citizens and businesses is another focus of Government efforts. ICT and digitalization processes at the national level support modernization, with regard to economic processes, through the improvement of production capacities based on ICT, the knowledge economy and the establishment of start-ups, the development of innovative and intelligent activities in cities and communities, production growth in agriculture, and social enterprises. With regard to social processes, this is done through the improvement of services provided to the community and that of the joint goods production, the stimulation and facilitation of social innovation, joint establishment and utilization of resources and financing. Finally, with regard to institutional and administrative processes, this is done through e-Government services, digital identity, facilitation of inter-institutional interaction, simplification of institutional and administrative procedures, delivery of online auxiliary assistance, and the participation of citizens and businesses in the decision-making process, etc.

Within our vision for ICT is a society based on knowledge and information through the consolidation of digital infrastructure in the entire territory of our Republic, improvement of the quality of online public

services and increased governance transparency. To that end, in conclusion, I would like to highlight that technology is the future of world economic development. Our mission is to use it as a tool to ensure good governance and create development opportunities for the next generation.

Mr. Thornberry (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the Government of Peru, to congratulate the co-facilitators for their deft stewardship of the intergovernmental negotiations over the past few weeks. We are certain that their efforts are reflected in the draft outcome document of this meeting (A/70/L.33), and are very grateful to them for the work accomplished.

We reiterate our full commitment to the principles of the Geneva Declaration, the Geneva Plan of Action and its action lines, the Tunis Commitment, the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society and the conclusions of the Global Network, and wish to stress the two major challenges that we face here today: the opportunity to assess the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process, and the opportunity to reach an agreement on the means to bolster the fundamental values, targets and goals that we will introduce in coming years.

We are the privileged witnesses of a technological revolution. Having access to the Internet and Internet-related technologies should allow people of all origins to improve their lives in every possible way. Unfortunately, this has not been the case so far. The digital divide is real and growing exponentially. Global inequality is inherently unjust and not a problem that affects only the marginalized. We need to address and confront the digital divide from all sides: accessibility, capacity-building and training. A global understanding of digital inequality is necessary to confront the huge challenge it represents. On this occasion, we have also focused on the issues of cooperation, Internet governance, security and confidence-building, and have acknowledged the significant efforts that we have already made in order to reach this stage.

Peru believes that transparency, inclusive responsibility and good Internet governance can be reached only through a legal framework based on the Charter of the United Nations and applied to international law and international covenants, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In that regard, Peru also supports international Internet administration as part

of a multilateral solution that would include a structure comprised of multiple relevant stakeholders. We should all be ready and willing to achieve this future scenario with the same innovative and open spirit demonstrated during the WSIS process. Peru proposes to initiate a multi-stakeholder debate with a view to achieving the specific goal of reaching a global consensus on the establishment of the applicable legal framework necessary to achieving the global reach and acceptance of Internet governance.

Finally, there are numerous examples of similar processes in which our countries have participated in the past. In each case, the international community was able to enrich the international legal framework through the introduction of a series of important agreements that serve as benchmarks in an array of issues. We should do the same with respect to Internet governance.

Mr. Larhmaid (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Morocco associates itself with the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/70/PV.76).

The delegation of Morocco wishes to thank and congratulate the two co-facilitators, the Ambassadors of the United Arab Emirates and Latvia, for their excellent work throughout the negotiating process to reach a consensus on the draft outcome document (A/70/L.33) we will adopt later today.

Morocco actively participated in the World Summit on the Information Society held in Tunis and is committed to the spirit of the principles set out in the Geneva Declaration with a view to strengthening its national capacities in the area of information systems as a tool for economic and social development. This commitment will be determined by my country as it endeavours to strengthen its digital system, thereby allowing us to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Developing (resolution 70/1), while drawing inspiration from the opportunities offered by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

The delegation of Morocco believes that the challenges of Internet governance at the international level should be discussed and managed within a multilateral framework in a transparent and democratic manner, with the participation of all stakeholders and civil society, while respecting the sovereignty and integrity of States. In that regard, my delegation supports the extension of the mandate of the Internet

Governance Forum with a view to strengthening multi-stakeholder dialogue on public policies related to Internet governance.

In keeping with the instructions handed down by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, in 2009 the Moroccan Government adopted the Digital Morocco 2013 plan to integrate Morocco into the world economy through a simplified and broadly disseminated integration of information technologies at all State levels, with the involvement all actors of society and business. That is how the Kingdom of Morocco has made information and communications technology a means of fighting regional and social disparities, while ensuring a balance between market demands and general interest needs. That approach is framed by a societal model of citizenship in Morocco that puts human development at the centre of the digital revolution.

In the context of the progress made by Morocco in terms of democratization and more widespread access to telecommunications services, by the end of 2014 total Internet coverage had reached 10 million subscribers or 30.5 per cent. Similarly, by late 2014 mobile telephone coverage had reached 44 million subscribers, representing a total penetration of 133 per cent. Moreover, Morocco has made offshoring activities development based on information technology one of the pillars of its economic development strategy, and has implemented a voluntarist strategy for making Morocco more attractive to foreign clients. That can be clearly seen in the number of multinationals that have set up shop in our country.

Given the positive results achieved by the implementation of the Digital Morocco 2013 plan, which has enabled Morocco to become a regional leader in this area, the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Investment and Digital Economy decided to prepare the Digital Strategy 2020, based on the progress achieved in the information society. Developing that new Strategy will be based on a participatory approach that takes into account the accomplishments and lessons learned from Digital Morocco 2013. The project focuses on four main targets: citizens, companies, the business environment and the optimization of administration. In terms of innovation, priority would be placed on telecommunications and Internet infrastructure. It revolves specifically around Morocco's broadband high-speed Internet connection and finding a way to provide Internet service to the most remote areas. At the same time, Africa finds itself at the heart of the

new strategy to strengthen partnership among African countries in the context of South-South cooperation. In that context, in cooperation with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Morocco is organizing the Media Forum for the African Continent: Image and Opportunities, in Marrakech, from 17 to 19 December.

In order to counter the rise in cybercrime, since 2011 Morocco has been committed to strengthening national capacity in the area of information systems security. The General Directorate of Information Systems Security was established at that time as the national authority for cybersecurity. With that in mind, in 2012 the Moroccan Government adopted a national cybersecurity strategy to begin the process of setting up a Moroccan mechanism for providing security for information systems and vital infrastructure and institutions. Similarly, a national directive on information systems security was adopted in 2014 to include other measures to promote greater homogeneity and a higher level of protection and security for information systems as a whole, including in administration and public entities.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that in the absence of an international instrument on cybercrime, it will be necessary to strengthen technical cooperation at the international and regional levels in order to contend with the scourge. Such cooperation should include, among other things, paying particular attention to providing assistance to developing countries to build their capacity in the area of information systems security.

Mrs. Byaje (Rwanda): At the outset, let me thank the facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Latvia, for their commendable leadership in bringing to life the document on the overall review of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, recognized in its outcome document the critical role of information and communications technologies (ICT) in accelerating the implementation of sustainable development commitments. There is no doubt that ICT continues to transform the way we live, exchange and interact with one another and the way we conduct business. It is therefore imperative that we try to cope with new technology and increasing advancement if we are to reap their full potential. This subject is therefore a timely account taken on the recently

adopted universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals, especially and considering the progress achieved in my country, Rwanda, where the ICT mobile communications industry has made an outstanding breakthrough.

Rwanda has invested massively in broadband penetration, as we believe that it will have a genuine impact on sustainable, economic and social growth. Only the proliferation between the two can ensure a sustainable future for all if we are to build a more inclusive society. Rwanda understands the nexus between ICT and sustainable development due to the challenges originating from its unique features as a least developed country and a landlocked country. The only way to sustain its growth is through ICT and broadband connectivity to ensure access to universal and reliable services to support the economic and social needs of the country as well as to maximize opportunities derived from the digital divide in the fields of innovation, job creation, entrepreneurship and trade.

The Millennium Development Goals set a stepping stone by lifting millions of people out of poverty and by empowering developing nations to undertake the primary role in shaping their own development agenda in accordance with national priorities and specific needs. Since then, we have learned that ICT is more than a key enabler. It is essential to the well-being of people as we increasingly become more dependent on access to timely and correct information in the health service sector and other sectors such as education, agriculture, business, trade, and so on. It is therefore imperative to fully ensure broadband infrastructure to rural areas to promote digital inclusion. For post-2015 development, it is our common desire to ensure inclusive and sustained economic growth in a progressive development agenda to which information and communications technologies will continue to be central. It is in line with our Vision 2020, in which we aim to transform Rwanda into a middle-income country with ICT at its core.

To transition from an agriculture-based economy to a knowledge-based economy, we have to strengthen our infrastructure policies and enhance our public-private sector partnerships. For Rwanda, ICT is a fundamental enabler in creating an environment conducive to enhancing service delivery, education, health care, agriculture, Government and business. Furthermore, we strongly believe that information and communications technologies can enable Rwanda to leapfrog the key stages of industrialization and allow us

to invest in good infrastructure and energy generation that foster an innovative human resources base to position our country as an ICT hub for our region.

To reach our goals, emphasis has been put on five areas that will continue to accelerate services development and fuel continued growth while at the same time ensuring transparency and accountability. First, we are emphasizing skills development, with the aim of developing high-quality skills and a broad knowledge base by leveraging ICT. Secondly, we are stressing private-sector development aimed at developing a vibrant, competitive and innovative ICT sector and an ICT-enabled private sector. Thirdly, we are underscoring community development to empower and transform communities through improved access to information and services. Fourthly, an emphasis is being placed on e-government in order to enhance Government's operational efficiency and service delivery. Finally, we are emphasizing cybersecurity, aiming at securing Rwanda's cyberspace and information assets.

To foster ICT development, we have initiated Smart Kigali, a project that puts free public wireless Internet access in city buses, commercial buildings and other public spaces. With regard to Internet penetration, our aim is to reach 95 per cent coverage by 2017. I would like to highlight at this stage a few of our achievements in the ICT area.

We have made tremendous strides in ICT development, particularly in infrastructure development using fibre-optics to cover the whole nation. Rwanda will be among the few African countries to link every corner of its territory when it rolls out the first-ever 4G LTE broadband network in the region. The new technology offers high-speed Internet and has propelled Rwanda to the leading place in Internet delivery in Africa. We are even aiming at developing a 5G LTE network for super-high connectivity.

With human resources development, we are currently investing in quality education and training to bridge skills gaps and have managed to attract big players like Harvard University and Carnegie-Mellon University. The One Laptop per Child programme has made laptops available to hundreds of students in Rwandan schools. In addition, we have an ICT incubator, kLab, which is an open space for information technology entrepreneurs to collaborate and innovate while building capacity for global competition.

The free WiFi public spaces are now benefiting those who could not afford a monthly subscription. Technology has more importantly benefited rural women in their daily use of mobile money and digital payment, where Rwanda is a leader in the field. We have embraced all those changes to afford our citizens with the best education, health care and lifestyle possible, with a special emphasis on women and girls to make sure that they are not left behind. In a bid to be transparent and inclusive, through Goal 16, which has already been implemented, since Rwanda has been serving as pilot country for the United Nations Development Programme, we have given a voice to our citizens by encouraging them to rate service delivery and their leaders for accountability purposes, as most Government services are accessible online.

In closing, it takes an enlightened leadership and robust governance to ensure sustained growth and well-being for a country's people. In this respect, Rwanda is on track to fulfil the agenda put forward in our Vision 2020 to transform our country into a hub for global business, investment and innovation in order to fast-track economic development with ICT as a major enabler. To bridge the digital divide, we have decided to upgrade Internet connectivity to improve our economic situation, which is tied to our being a landlocked country, with a view to responding to unemployment in youth and women and boosting entrepreneurship.

Finally, Rwanda would like to assure the General Assembly of its commitment to working in line with the World Summit on the Information Society vision to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented society where all individuals can create, access and utilize information and knowledge to achieve their full potential.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): Before we proceed, I would like to consult Member States about giving the floor during the high-level meeting to representatives of the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Development Programme, the agencies that play leading facilitating roles in the implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action, as mandated by the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, as well as the representative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, which provides secretariat support to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the body mandated by the Economic and Social Council in its

resolution 2006/46 to effectively assist the Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up of the World Summit on the Information Society.

The representatives are Mr. Malcolm Johnson, Deputy Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union; Mr. Getachew Engida, Deputy Director-General and Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; Mr. Patrick Keuleers, Director and Chief of Profession for Governance and Peacebuilding at the United Nations Development Programme; and Mr. Torbjörn Fredriksson, Officer in Charge of the Science, Technology and ICT Branch of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

If there is no objection, I shall take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly, without setting a precedent, to invite the aforementioned United Nations agency representatives to make a statement at this high-level meeting.

It was so decided.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the decision just taken, I give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union.

Mr. Johnson (International Telecommunication Union): It is an honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) at this high-level meeting on the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), especially since this is the year that we are celebrating the ITU's 150th anniversary.

I would like to congratulate the facilitators, the Member States and all the stakeholders that have contributed to this successful review, which has culminated in the excellent draft outcome document (A/70/L.33), which will provide the basis for implementing the WSIS action lines in the coming years.

Since 1998, when the ITU's membership first proposed a World Summit on the Information Society, there have been incredible advances in information and communications technologies (ICT). Nonetheless, as we all know, there is still much to be done. In the developing world, almost two thirds of people still have no access to the Internet, and in the United Nations-designated least developed countries only one person

in 10 is online. With well over half the world's people still unconnected to the Internet, it is still much too early to talk about the Information Society in a global sense. The ITU's mission is to connect the world, and we shall continue the effort to bring the citizens of the world to the benefits of the Information Society — in developed and developing countries, in rural and urban areas — regardless of their gender and regardless of any disabilities.

The year 2015 has been an important and successful year with the adoption of the agreement on financing for development in July, of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September and of the Paris agreement at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change just last week, and now the conclusion of the overall review of the WSIS. ICT will be key to implementing all of these challenging agreements.

The ITU, with its broad membership of 700 private-sector entities, over 100 universities and civil-society entities, in addition to the 193 States Members of the United Nations, is ideally placed to actively contribute to all these efforts. The annual WSIS Forum, hosted by the ITU and co-organized with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Development Programme, and in collaboration with many other United Nations agencies, has become a global multi-stakeholder platform for the coordination and implementation of the WSIS outcomes, information exchange, knowledge creation and the sharing of best practices, and I would like to thank all WSIS stakeholders for their commitment and dedication to the WSIS Forum.

The Forum will continue to evolve by strengthening the synergies between the WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs, taking into account the outcomes of the overall review. At this year's WSIS Forum, the ITU coordinated the WSIS Action Lines and SDG Matrix, a tool developed with a number of United Nations agencies to map how ICT through the WSIS Action Lines could contribute to the implementation of the SDGs. We hope that the Matrix will serve as an easy reference for stakeholders engaged in shaping the future of both the SDGs and the WSIS process beyond 2015 and be the basis for future work in the WSIS Forum.

I call for the Assembly's support for the WSIS Forum and look forward to welcoming participants

to the ITU and to the next Forum, which will be held from 2 to 6 May 2016. I would also encourage participants to contribute to the development of the themes, programme, agenda and format of the Forum through the open consultation process that we hold, with the aim of improving the Forum's efficiency and effectiveness. The open consultation process has involved Governments, civil society, academia and businesses.

One of the most important priorities at the WSIS Forum is the sharing of best practices. In this context, we have announced just this week more than 150 initial nominations for the 2016 WSIS Prizes, which will be awarded during the Forum in 2016. The nominees are projects that support the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines and by doing so the implementation of the SDGs. I would encourage all participants to engage in the contest, which is open to all WSIS stakeholders.

So the WSIS vision is more valid than ever, and the ITU remains fully committed to strengthening and implementing the WSIS outcomes. The year 2015 has been a historic one, a very busy and ultimately successful year. I would wish participants a good end-of-year holiday and a very healthy, prosperous and successful 2016.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the decision previously taken, I now give the floor to Mr. Getachew Engida, Deputy Director-General and Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Mr. Engida (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization): The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is ready to move forward to implement the agreed draft review outcome document (A/70/L.33) of the Open Consultation Process on Overall Review of the Implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society Outcomes (WSIS). UNESCO contributed substantially to the 10-year review process, and I would like first of all to thank and congratulate the two facilitators for their successful work. UNESCO's themes figure prominently in the draft outcome document. We are very grateful to the many Member

States and partners who strongly support the work of UNESCO.

UNESCO brings to the table the concept of Internet universality, which guides our work by promoting an Internet that embodies human rights and is open, inclusively accessible and driven by multi-stakeholder participation. On this basis, UNESCO will continue and deepen a substantive contribution to the WSIS implementation. UNESCO is a main soft-power actor in the World Summit follow-up. We facilitate the implementation of 6 of the 18 WSIS action lines.

How are the soft issues relevant? What are the two key lessons we should take home from the WSIS review? The first lesson, I would suggest, is that while infrastructure, devices and connectivity are important, they are worth very little if girls, women, boys and men do not know how to use them, do not have the knowledge to develop content in local languages or experience cultural diversity in the Internet space, do not have the right to freedom of expression, privacy or access to information and knowledge, and if enabling policies are not supported more generally. It is only if these important soft dimensions are included that technology will deliver on its promise. UNESCO is committed precisely to achieving this end.

My suggestion for a second takeaway point involves the move from the information society towards more inclusive knowledge societies. Today we need to transform information into knowledge, make it actionable, relevant and tailored for sustainable development. In this age, where the limits of our exploitation of the planet are so evident, we must invest in our ultimate renewable resource, which is human freedom, ingenuity, creativity and knowledge. We need the post-2015 WSIS and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) to make the most of education, the sciences, culture and communication and information. Therefore, I propose that among participants' takeaways from this milestone meeting is the fact that UNESCO is here to assist them to advance towards the inclusive and peaceful knowledge societies that our planet so urgently needs.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.