

Resolution

2010/2

Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society,¹

Recalling also its resolution 2006/46 of 28 July 2006 on the follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and review of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the mandate that it gave to the Commission,

Recalling further its resolution 2009/7 of 24 July 2009 on the assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 64/187 of 21 December 2009 on information and communications technologies for development,

Taking note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels,²

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

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

¹See A/C.2/59/3, annex, and A/60/687. The outcome documents are also available from www.itu.int/WSIS/index.html.

² A/65/64-E/2010/12.

³ E/CN.16/2010/3.

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

1. *Notes* the ongoing implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, emphasizing in particular its multi-stakeholder nature, the roles played in this regard by leading agencies as action line facilitators and the roles of the regional commissions and the United Nations Group on the Information Society, and expresses its appreciation for the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in assisting the Economic and Social Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up to the World Summit;

2. *Notes* the respective reports of many United Nations entities, with their own executive summaries, submitted as inputs for the elaboration of the annual report of the Secretary-General to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, and published on the website of the Commission as mandated in Economic and Social Council resolution 2007/8 of 25 July 2007, and recalls the importance of close coordination among the leading action line facilitators and with the secretariat of the Commission;

3. *Notes* the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional level facilitated by the regional commissions, as observed in the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels,⁴ including the steps taken in this respect, and emphasizes the need to continue to address issues of specific interest to each region, focusing on the challenges and obstacles that each may be facing with regard to the implementation of all goals and principles established by the World Summit, with particular attention to information and communications technology for development;

4. *Reiterates* the importance of maintaining a process of coordinating the multi-stakeholder implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit through effective tools, with the goal of exchanging information among action line facilitators, identifying issues that need improvement and discussing the modalities of reporting the overall implementation process, encourages all stakeholders to continue to contribute information to the stocktaking database maintained by the International Telecommunication Union on the implementation of the goals established by the World Summit, and invites United Nations entities to update information on their initiatives in the stocktaking database;

5. *Notes* the benefits of forums such as the ICT 4 All Forum convened by Tunisia, which provided an opportunity to share national experiences in the use of information and communications technology for the development and promotion of entrepreneurship and competitiveness;

⁴ A/65/64-E/2010/12.

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

7. *Notes* the holding of World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2010, organized by the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Development Programme as a multi-stakeholder platform for the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit and to facilitate the implementation of the Summit action lines;

8. *Calls upon* all States, in building the information society, to take steps to avoid and to refrain from taking any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impedes the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries and that hinders their well-being;

9. *Reaffirms* that while the digital divide may be shrinking in some areas, many challenges remain unaddressed with significant gaps existing within economies and societies that affect the demand for and the ability to use information and communications technologies;

10. *Notes with dissatisfaction* that, for the majority of the poor, the developmental promise of science and technology, including information and communications technologies, remains unfulfilled, and emphasizes the need to effectively harness technology, including information and communications technologies, to bridge the digital divide;

11. *Recognizes* that information and communications technologies present New opportunities and challenges and that there is a pressing need to address the major impediments that developing countries face in accessing the new technologies, such as insufficient resources, infrastructure, education, capacity, investment and connectivity and issues related to technology ownership, standards and flows, and in this regard calls upon all stakeholders to provide adequate resources, enhanced capacity-building and transfer of technology to developing countries, particularly the least developed countries;

12. *Expresses concern* regarding the widening gap in broadband connectivity among countries at different levels of development, which affects man economically and socially relevant applications in areas such as government,

business, health and education, and also expresses concern with regard to the special challenges faced in the area of broadband connectivity by the least developed countries, the small island developing States, the landlocked developing countries and the highly-indebted poor countries;

13. *Notes with concern* the inequality of access to broadband infrastructure and services between developed and developing nations and within nations, and in particular the broadband divide that further marginalizes the poor, the rural communities and other disadvantaged groups such as women, the disabled, and the elderly, and in this context recognizes the importance of current initiatives aimed at achieving rapid broadband deployment and the need to prioritize innovative approaches within national and regional development strategies in this regard;

14. *Welcomes* the recent establishment of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development at the initiative of the International Telecommunication Union and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, with the key aim of accelerating the attainment of the aforementioned goals through the introduction of ubiquitous access to broadband within the global partnership for development;

15. *Notes* that while a solid foundation for capacity-building in information and communications technology has been laid in many areas with regard to building the information society, there is still a need for continuing effort to address the ongoing challenges, especially for developing countries and the least developed countries, and draws attention to the positive impact of broadened capacity development that involves institutions, organizations and entities dealing with information and communications technologies and Internet governance issues;

16. *Recognizes* the need to focus on capacity development policies and sustainable support to further enhance the impact of activities and initiatives at the national and local levels aimed at providing advice, services and support with a view to building an inclusive, people-centred and development-oriented information society;

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

18. *Reiterates* the importance of information and communications technology indicators as a monitoring and evaluation tool for measuring the digital divide among countries and within societies and in informing decision makers when formulating policies and strategies for social, cultural and economic development, and emphasizes that the standardization and harmonization of reliable and regularly updated information and communications technology indicators capturing the performance, efficiency, affordability and quality of goods and services is essential for implementing information and communications technology policies;

Internet governance

19. *Reaffirms* the principles enunciated at the World Summit that the Internet has evolved into a global facility available to the public, that its governance should constitute a core issue of the information society agenda and that the international management of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of Governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations and should ensure an equitable distribution of resources, facilitate access for all and ensure a stable and secure functioning of the Internet, taking into account multilingualism;

20. *Reaffirms also* paragraph 35 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society,⁵ which states that the management of the Internet encompasses both technical and public policy issues and should involve all stakeholders and relevant intergovernmental and international organizations and that:

(a) Policy authority for Internet-related public policy issues is the sovereign Right of States which have rights and responsibilities for international Internet related public policy issues;

(b) The private sector has had, and should continue to have, an important role in the development of the Internet, in both the technical and economic fields;

(c) Civil society has played an important role on Internet matters, especially at the community level, and should continue to play such a role;

(d) Intergovernmental organizations have had and should continue to have a facilitating role in the coordination of Internet-related public policy issues;

(e) International organizations have had and should continue to have an important role in the development of Internet-related technical standards and relevant policies;

⁵ See A/60/687.

21. *Recognizes* that the Internet governance-related outcomes of the World Summit, namely, the process towards enhanced cooperation and the convening of the Internet Governance Forum, are to be pursued by the Secretary-General of the United Nations through two distinct processes, and also recognizes that the two processes may be complementary;

22. *Recalls* paragraphs 68 to 71 of the Tunis Agenda;

23. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on enhanced cooperation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet,⁶ which summarizes the responses of international organizations to the request to provide an annual report on efforts made towards enhanced cooperation, and notes the interactive deliberations of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development at its thirteenth session regarding enhanced cooperation;

24. *Invites* the Secretary-General to convene open and inclusive consultations involving all Member States and all other stakeholders with a view to assisting the process towards enhanced cooperation in order to enable Governments on an equal footing to carry out their roles and responsibilities in respect of international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet but not in respect of the day-to-day technical and operational matters that do not impact upon those issues, through a balanced participation of all stakeholders in their respective roles and responsibilities, as stated in paragraph 35 of the Tunis Agenda, and requests that the consultations be held before the end of 2010 and their outcome reported to the General Assembly for consideration at its sixty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council;

Internet Governance Forum

25. *Takes note* of the deliberations of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the fourth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, from 15 to 18 November 2009;⁷

26. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work done by the Chair, the secretariat and the host Governments of the meetings of the Internet Governance Forum and looks forward to the results of the fifth meeting, to be held in Vilnius from 14 to 17 September 2010;

27. *Takes note* of the recent emergence of several forums on Internet governance at the regional and national levels;

⁶ E/2009/92.

⁷ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2010, Supplement No. 11* (E/2010/31), chap. III.

28. *Takes note also* of the deliberations of the meetings of the Internet Governance Forum, in which all stakeholders engage in a multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on a wide range of Internet governance issues, as mandated in paragraph 72 of the Tunis Agenda;

29. *Takes note further* of the interactive discussions of the fourth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, including those held during the stocktaking session chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs in response to paragraph 76 of the Tunis Agenda, in which the Secretary-General of the United Nations was requested to examine the desirability of the continuation of the Forum, in consultation with Forum participants, within five years of its creation and to make recommendations to the Member States in this regard, and notes the engagement of Forum participants through online contributions and through statements delivered during the stocktaking session;

30. *Invites* the Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to establish, in an open and inclusive manner, a working group which would seek, compile and review inputs from all Member States and all other stakeholders on improvements to the Internet Governance Forum, in line with the mandate set out in the Tunis Agenda, and would make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Commission at its fourteenth session in 2011, in a report that would constitute an input from the Commission to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, should the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum be extended;

The road ahead

31. *Urges* United Nations entities still not actively cooperating in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit through the United Nations system and in its follow-up to take the necessary steps and commit to people centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society and to catalyse the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;⁸

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

33. *Urges* all stakeholders to prioritize the development of innovative approaches that will stimulate the provision of universal access to affordable broadband infrastructure for developing countries and the use of relevant broadband services in order to ensure the development of an inclusive,

⁸ See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

development-orientated and people-centred information society, and to minimize the digital divide;

34. *Calls upon* international and regional organizations to continue to assess and report on a regular basis on the universal accessibility of nations to information and communications technologies, with the aim of creating equitable opportunities for the growth of the information and communications technology sectors of developing countries;

35. *Urges* all countries to make concrete efforts to fulfil their commitments under the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development;⁹

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

37. *Invites* the international community to make voluntary contributions to the special trust fund established by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to support the review and assessment work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development regarding follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society;

38. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, on a yearly basis, a report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in Economic and Social Council resolutions on the assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

*39th plenary meeting
19 July 2010*

⁹ *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18–22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex