
Canada

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STATEMENT BY

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CANADA'S STATEMENT ON THE FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING OF THE OVERALL REVIEW OF
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOMES OF
THE WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY (WSIS)

NEW YORK, 1ST JULY 2015

Thank you, Ambassador.

Canada has three key priorities as we prepare for the UNGA review of implementation of outcomes from the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the WSIS+10 High-Level Review Meeting in December.

Firstly, we wish to focus our attention on what mobilized the international community a decade ago: to leverage the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to enhance opportunities for all people worldwide. ICTs can support peoples' efforts to lift themselves out of poverty and to improve their quality of life. Focusing on enabling the full development potential of ICTs is particularly relevant as the international community sets out the Sustainable Development Goals this year.

We have seen significant progress over the past ten years. Increasingly available and affordable ICTs – thanks to the rapid growth of wireless networks and the adoption and use of mobile phones – has had a significant impact on economic, social, political, and cultural development worldwide. Under favourable conditions, we have seen that people's access to and use of ICTs are reducing inequalities, transforming health and education outcomes, spurring job creation, enabling the exercise of human rights, and driving economic growth.

We must continue to make steady progress toward closing the digital divide. While it is important to be careful about extrapolating lessons from the past, we should look to the last decade of accumulated experience for guidance on how we can do more to harness ICTs to achieve sustainable development results. We know that many factors facilitate developmental gains, including enabling environments that encourage competition, investment and public-private partnerships; respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law; national strategies designed to leverage greater use and impact from ICTs; and training and capacity building to ensure that people have the appropriate skills and capabilities to use ICTs.

Secondly, we must not lose sight of the critical role of multi-stakeholder cooperation. We can all agree that achievements made in mobilizing ICTs for development over the past decade is a result of all stakeholders working together. We have seen progress because governments are not acting alone.

For this reason, it is essential that voices from the broad stakeholder community are taken into full account in this preparatory process and in the High-Level Meeting in December. We look forward to the input from the stakeholder consultations tomorrow, and details for the second stakeholder consultation to be held in conjunction with the second preparatory meeting.

Canada shares the view that the Internet Governance Forum serves as an important capacity-building forum where stakeholders can come together and share different perspectives concerning the Internet's development.

Finally, Canada is keen to build a common assessment of progress achieved since WSIS and the challenges that remain. Let us not get sidetracked by political discussions on issues that detract from our focus on putting ICTs at the service of development. There is no doubt that we can find common ground in order to complete the task at hand.

Canada continues to share the vision that the international community set out ten years ago. We envision a future in which individuals in every corner of the globe can create, access, utilize, and share