



## Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

### WSIS+10 Review: First preparatory Meeting – 1 July 2015

Co-Facilitators,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

First, we would like to thank you for organising this preparatory meeting and for giving us the opportunity to outline our views on the WSIS+10 High Level Review Meeting outcome. We would also like to thank you for the revised Roadmap, which we can support.

Co-Facilitators,

**WSIS is about development and innovation** – promoting the practical steps that will help developing countries to harness the benefits of the Information Society and bridge the digital divide.

As we take stock of the WSIS it is important to acknowledge that **significant progress has been made** in the last decade, particularly in access to basic services. The Geneva Programme of Action target that over half the world's population should have access to ICTs will soon be achieved. The progress that has been achieved in increasing access to ICTs has largely been driven by private sector investment, and has taken place because governments have created the right enabling environments for that investment.

The timing of this review offers us an opportunity to **align the WSIS agenda with post-2015 and the SDGs**, and through this, to bring greater focus to our efforts.

Through the pace of technological progress, **new challenges have emerged, but also new opportunities** to build upon this progress and drive forward implementation. This review should address both.

We must also **ensure that the review addresses the full breadth of the WSIS agenda** in a balanced way.

Furthermore, we must – as has been stated by many during the preparatory process – renew the commitments made in the Geneva Plan of Action and Tunis Agenda to human rights, including freedom of expression and privacy, as well as media independence and plurality.

We must also do more to promote knowledge and access to information, the development of local content and services, gender equality, and the protection of journalists.

Co-Facilitators,

This final stage of the WSIS review builds on a number of years of preparatory work, including major reviews coordinated by the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), UNESCO and the ITU. Many member states, as well as other stakeholders, have made substantial contributions to the preparatory processes. **The outputs from this preparatory work should serve as the basis for this review.**

The Internet Governance Forum has continued to improve and build on success in bringing together all stakeholders to exchange experience and best practice on issues relating to the Internet. **We support the many member states as well as other stakeholders who have already called for an extension of the IGF mandate.**

In the last decade we have witnessed the development of many different kinds of cooperation and partnership to address different challenges as they arise. This review should encourage WSIS stakeholders to continue to respond flexibly and cooperatively to the new challenges that will emerge as technology develops.

Finally, we would like to reiterate the importance the EU and its Member States attach to the **multi-stakeholder model of internet governance, and to ensuring active and meaningful participation, inputs and engagement by all stakeholders** – not just in the interactive hearings but throughout the preparatory process and at the High Level Meeting itself.

Co-Facilitators,

Let me close by assuring you of the EU and its Member States' continued active and constructive engagement with this process going forward.

Thank you.