

**Statement by Mr. Santosh Jha, Joint Secretary (PP&R, GCI),  
Ministry of External Affairs during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Preparatory Meeting  
of the General Assembly's overall review of the implementation  
of the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society at  
UN Headquarters, New York on October 20, 2015**

At the outset, India would like to express appreciation for the commendable work put in by the Co-facilitators and the Secretariat in preparing the zero draft for UNGA's review of the outcome of the World Summit on Information Society.

In our view, the zero draft reflects the views of different member states in a balanced way and forms a good basis to carry forward our work. Overall, we would like to make the following seven points:

- (i) There is recognition in the zero draft of the need for participation of governments and all stakeholders, especially of balanced representation from developing countries. It is crucial in this context to ensure that the objective is substantive inclusion and not merely formal inclusion keeping in mind barriers which may hinder participation in processes that were nominally open to all.
- (ii) While considerable progress has been made in bridging the digital divide, much work remains to be done. It needs to be recognized that the next billion users of internet will come from developing countries. Therefore,

there is a need to take into account the aspirations and needs of the next billion users of internet.

- (iii) Bridging the digital divide would also require moving beyond access to addressing affordability issues. We must work to ensure equitable access to technology, focus on capacity building and promote joint R&D in the field of ICT to ensure that benefits of ICT are available across regions and countries and to all citizens within different regions and countries.
- (iv) In the context of the need for greater inclusion, especially of developing countries, my delegation would like the inclusion of a reference to the need for uniform distribution of critical resources of internet across the regions in the world.
- (v) An institutionalized financial mechanism with earmarked fund is needed to bridge the digital divide. There is thus a need to establish suitable financial mechanisms, including operationalization of Digital Solidarity Fund.
- (vi) The outcome document must also provide for efforts to seek clarification on public policy issues wherein governments have a critical role to play. This is especially true of national security issues where governments are ultimately responsible to its citizens to combat cyber crime and ensure cyber security. We may consider undertaking mapping of internet public policy

issue in various bodies working in the field of ICT. This will help in synergizing the efforts of UN agencies in the field of ICT.

- (vii) We recognize the unique role of IGF as a multi-stakeholder platform for discussion on internet governance issues. We would also like the outcome document to give a call for processes related to IGF to adhere to highest levels of openness, inclusiveness, transparency and accountability. We would like the outcome document to include a request to Commission on Science and Technology to facilitate a dialogue in this regard.

To conclude, we support the call for review of the implementation of WSIS outcome by the UNGA in 2020, the conclusions of which would feed into the review of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

We have separately submitted detailed comments on the zero draft and would be happy to engage in discussions over the next three days.

Thank you Co-facilitators for the opportunity to present the views of my delegation.

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