

Monsieur Le Président, Monsieur Le Director, vos excellences, chères déléguées, chers collègues, mesdames et messieurs,

Je veut remercie au Monsieur Le Président de la 69eme Assemblée General des Nations Unies, pour l'invitation a participer dans les consultations interactives de WSIS+10.

Being a Rector of the University of Information Science and Technology Ohrid, and President of the Rectors' Conference of the Republic of Macedonia, I would like to draw attention to the importance of education and research in bridging the digital divide and to the information society in general. I have over 16 years international experience including Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne and Haute Ecole-ARC Neuchatel Switzerland, Nokia Research in Finland, University of Hawaii and Princeton University in the United States and Universitet i Oslo in Norway. I also held lectures in more than 20 countries on all continents, including Japan, UK, Israel, Russia, Brazil, Portugal, Czech Republic, Hong Kong SAR, Australia, and South Africa. Since 2012, I have been constantly transferring my knowledge and experience acquired internationally, to contribute to the growth to my university, my country, and the whole region.

Education, through research and innovation in ICT is the most fundamental pillar for progress in the modern society. It is constantly solving important challenges. I would like to narrate a success "fairy" tale about a university from our small country - Republic of Macedonia. In 6 years of existence we are constantly growing and making giant steps towards progress. We believe to contribute improving the digital divide since we are indeed a cosmopolitan bridge that connects students and faculty from over 50 countries on all continents - a real "little UN". The idea that came from our Prime Minister to build a multicultural internationally recognized environment that creates motivation and enthusiasm for our students and at the same time intellectual capital for our country. Interestingly, it changed the culture and lifestyle of the entire local community in Ohrid, a double UNESCO town in the southwest of the country. Surprisingly enough for an engineering university, we have 25% female students and 50% female employees. Our outreach and social responsibility resulted in developing a system for waste management, recycling, various software, mobile applications, web services, even serious games for the museums, libraries, and also some sport associations, including the Football Federation. Last year I started the initiative "1000 ideas for better Ohrid" and the goal is really to use our knowledge and creativity to make it an intelligent city. Our Government continues to offer scholarships for the best students from all over the world so we will be happy to welcome students from your countries as well dear colleagues.

What is next that will bring to further closure of the digital divide? One fundamental point is the internationalization through developing quality online courses and the international projects and activities. We have already started quite fruitful collaborations with universities from Brazil, Switzerland, Sweden, The Netherlands, Estonia, UK, USA, South Africa, Zambia, through Israel, Romania, and Russia all the way to China, Japan and Australia. There is a variety of topics: from protecting the data privacy and cyber security in Europe, intelligent public transport in Brazil, vehicles of the future with the UK, sensors for water management in Africa, job matching platform in the Nordic countries, mobile financial services with ITU in Geneva and supply chain security globally in cooperation with WTO, INTERPOL and World Customs Organization.

As we used to have the postal service, telegraph, telephone, and email in the past, mobile and smart phones, social networks, cloud and fog computing today to bridge the divide, we believe that topics that will bring further impact in the information society on medium and long term are mobile money, the use of big and open Data and the Internet-of-Things to create ambient intelligence. Last but not least, we have to be careful that the price we are paying to use these services is not very high, in terms of giving away our privacy, i.e., all misuse and inappropriate behavior has to be protected and defended to the greatest extent by further innovative solutions.

So ladies and gentlemen, we are constantly looking partners from all over the world to join our projects on the abovementioned topics, and for those of you who are interested feel free to contact me such that we can work deeper to strengthen the information society.

Vi blagodaram mnogu i Vi posakuvam toplo dobrodojde voprвата prilika da ja posetite nasata ubava zemja Makedonija.

Thank you very much and I look forward to warmly welcoming you to our beautiful country Macedonia.