

Intervention by Mr. Nauman Bashir Bhatti, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Pakistan a Preparatory Meeting of the Overall review of Implementation of WSIS Outcomes (WSIS+10)

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We align with the intervention by the distinguished delegate of South Africa on behalf of the group of 77 and china.

Harnessing the full potential of ICTs for sustainable development is extremely important for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and we therefore believe that the linkages with the SDGs should be strengthened in the final outcome of the WSIS review.

We would like to stress the need for measures to build capacities and to enable countries for better absorption and adoption of ICT solutions for socio economic to benefit various strata of societies.

We understand that this was one of the main reasons of digital divide among countries where we can see from various global studies that even countries with roughly similar infrastructure and access coverage stand substantially apart in ICT absorption and information society measuring indices.

While measures to bridge the inter country digital divided will intrinsically be helpful to reduce the inter-gender digital divide within societies, revamping of universal service policies to enable funding of ICT based applications and programs to bridge inter-gender skill and competency gaps can go a long way in reducing the digital divide between men and women particularly in developing countries.

In view of the fact that in most countries the financing of public telecoms networks as well as ICT services is private sector driven, incentivized access to private finance is crucial for services to expand even to underserved areas.

To ensure inclusive participation of all citizens in the information society, we consider that there is a need for a renewed focus on Public Private Arrangements such as those carried through the Universal Service Funds or similar arrangements.

With a view to achieve the development goals innovative reform in universal service policies has to be brought about with guidance of international

organizations.

Also, the focus of the Universal Service Funds should not only be on promoting access in underserved areas and for extending national fiber backbones to the un-served regions but also the policies need to be revamped to include the whole value chain of ICT service supply including measures to promote broadband demand through citizen centric e-services in the underserved areas.