

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD), twenty-second session
Geneva, 13-17 May 2019**

**High-level roundtable on “Progress made in the implementation of and
follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit of the Information Society at
the regional and international levels”**

Statement submitted by

European Union

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**Commission for Science and Technology
22nd Session –Geneva - May 13-17th 2019**

EU Speaking points on WSIS

Thank you Chair,

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I have the honor today to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

1. The European Union and its Member States wish to express their appreciation to the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development ("CSTD") and all its members and stakeholders for their intensive work in preparing the 22th session. The CSTD is a leading body for multistakeholder cooperation within the UN system and delivers good results that take into account the contributions from all stakeholders.
2. The EU and its Member States are fully committed to the success of the WSIS process, building on the work of the CSTD, UNESCO, UNCTAD, ITU, Internet Governance Forum and others.
(UK proposal) We welcome the fact that so many of the WSIS Action Line facilitators are mainstreaming information and communication technology into their work programmes. We have seen examples from agencies such as UNESCO, the FAO, the ILO and others of how different parts of the UN system are contributing to the WSIS Action Lines within their mandates and using ICTs to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. CSTD plays a major role in bringing this work together and we look forward to reflecting that in our discussions this week'.

3. We continue to strongly support the focus of the WSIS process which is to maximize the potential of ICT for development.
4. The EU increasingly prioritizes the digital dimension in our development policy. To this end, in 2017, the European Commission adopted the - 'Digital4Development' strategy, which identified the main areas for action in the digital realm. These include: investing in digital infrastructure, skills, entrepreneurship and e-commerce.
5. The EU's agenda is strongly linked to the global priorities recognized at the UN level. The 2030 Agenda acknowledges that the spread of ICTs and global connectivity has great potential to accelerate human progress, bridge the digital divide and develop knowledge societies. Digital skills will play a major role and should be prioritized. ICTs will also play an important role in providing digital monitoring rules to measure the progress made towards achieving the SDGs.
6. The EU and its member states strongly believe that human rights have a central role in creating a people-centered, development oriented and inclusive Information Society and achieving the SDGs. Thus all EU Member States supported the Joint Statement on New and Emerging Technologies and Human Rights delivered during the March session of the Human Rights Council.
7. The EU and its Member States recognize that effective participation, partnership and cooperation of all

relevant stakeholders, including governments, especially with balanced representation from developing countries, is vital in developing the Information Society and implementing the WSIS Outcomes. We reaffirm the value and principles of multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement that have characterized the WSIS process since its inception and that have been essential to its achievements so far.

8. We now look forward to the next steps for the CSTD in taking this important agenda forward:
 - i. We need to reconsider the WSIS resolution to reflect the developments in the field over the last year. We hope that the resolution this year will be shorter and more focused than in previous years. We should continue to focus on the future, how we can address the challenges facing us and how we can best align with the Sustainable Development Agenda, while bearing in mind developments in other UN fora and beyond.
 - ii. Finally, we continue to support the overarching role of CSTD in the overall implementation of WSIS.

The EU and its Member States look forward to working with all stakeholders in all these areas and to taking forward the WSIS agenda to build the Information Society for all.
