

Statement by Mohammad Abdul Haque Anu

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WSIS+20 Interactive Stakeholders Consultation (Asia Pacific)

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Excellencies, distinguished delegates, and respected stakeholders,

I extend my sincere apologies for being unable to participate in this important consultation in real time, due to the time zone difference at 6:00 AM in Bangladesh. However, I am fully aligned with the objectives of the WSIS+20 review and wish to contribute my perspectives through this written statement.

Twenty years since the inception of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), we recognize notable progress in digital development, yet substantial gaps remain in achieving a truly inclusive, rights-based, and development-driven information society. The Bangladesh Internet Governance Forum (BIGF) remains deeply committed to upholding the WSIS vision and advocates for its continued evolution through multistakeholder and context-sensitive approaches.

In the Asia-Pacific region, where digital disparities are significant and socio-economic contexts are diverse, we must ensure that WSIS+20 becomes a platform for renewed commitment to digital equity, local empowerment, and sustainable digital transformation.

We believe the time has come to strengthen WSIS and the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) as institutional pillars of inclusive digital governance. In this regard, I propose the following recommendations, aligned with UN principles and the regional needs of Asia-Pacific:

Recommendations:

1. Mainstream WSIS processes within national digital development agendas, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), through integration with the UN Resident Coordinator system for inclusive, country-level monitoring and implementation.
2. Enhance coordination between WSIS, the IGF, and the Global Digital Compact (GDC) to establish coherence across global, regional, and national digital governance mechanisms, ensuring rights-based and inclusive digital cooperation.

3. Support the localization of WSIS Action Lines (C1–C11) by empowering national and regional IGFs, and establishing multi-stakeholder digital policy forums that include public institutions, civil society, technical community, private sector, and academia.

4. Ensure inclusive and equitable stakeholder participation, especially youth, women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and underrepresented communities, through sustained funding, digital literacy initiatives, and capacity development programs.

5. Institutionalize an annual WSIS+ review mechanism, aligned with the SDG review process and national digital transformation strategies, with transparent reporting and multistakeholder engagement at all levels.

Let us collectively reaffirm our commitment to a people-centered, inclusive, and just digital future—where no one is left behind in the evolving information society.