

**CANZ Statement**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Preparatory Meeting  
15 October 2025 – ECOSOC Chamber, New York  
Duration: 5 Minutes

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. We appreciate the hard work of the co-facilitators and DESA to deliver an inclusive process and good zero draft.

I deliver this statement on behalf of Canada, New Zealand and my own country, Australia.

Over the past 20 years, we have seen the rapid deployment of the Internet and digital technologies across the world, facilitating communications and trade and bringing the world closer together. The WSIS is today the cornerstone of multistakeholder digital governance, with a legacy of success.

We remain committed to the WSIS vision and consider that the world must continue to harness it as a catalyst for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. WSIS+20 is the opportunity to write the next chapter of our digital future while simplifying governance and increasing measurable outcomes.

We wish to highlight a few important elements:

**First**, work remains to be done across all the 11 WSIS Action Lines to ensure global universal and meaningful connectivity. We must connect the 2.6 billion people who remain offline. We commend the proposal for new Action Line roadmaps but we wish to see their development accelerated to the 29<sup>th</sup> CSTD session in 2026 to ensure meaningful and measurable outcomes.

**Second**, WSIS+20 provides the chance to reflect upon the impact of technologies on our citizens and the environment, and to support ongoing digital transformation. It is an opportunity to close digital divides, including the gender divide, protect cultural diversity and heritage, empower youth and entrepreneurship, encourage multilingualism, support indigenous peoples, those with disabilities and other marginalised groups, and continue to foster an Internet for all. We are pleased to see these important topics recognised in the text, but would welcome an increased emphasis.

**Third**, digital transformation must not come at the expense of human rights, but rather serve as a vehicle to protect, promote, and fully realise them. We are encouraged that the zero draft has placed an important emphasis on human rights, grounded in international law. We are also pleased to see a formal role for OHCHR in the WSIS process, including through its Advisory Service on human rights in the digital space.

**Fourth**, we welcome the reaffirming of multistakeholder Internet governance. The private sector, civil society, the technical community, youth, and academia all bring unique contributions and their participation ensures inclusive and effective governance. Further strengthening this text, including by referencing the São Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines will ensure everyone is represented and can meaningfully participate, regardless of one's country, stakeholder group or financial means.

**Fifth**, the zero draft is a good initial step towards strengthening WSIS governance. Effective mechanisms, sufficient resources to enable meaningful participation from all, a permanent

Internet Governance Forum, and the integration of the Global Digital Compact, will provide the blueprint for ongoing progress. We welcome the opportunity to strengthen this text further to ensure these outcomes do actually benefit everyone, in particular to accelerate outcomes for those whose digital transformation journeys are only beginning.

We acknowledge the significance and complexity of **AI and data governance**. We therefore believe that existing commitments and initiatives on these issues should be reinforced and leveraged rather than being reopened or duplicated. Both AI and data have their own separate implementation processes through the GDC that should be allowed to take their course over the coming months.

As the WSIS New York phase commences, it brought from Geneva the spirit of delivery, collaboration, and inclusion that has been WSIS' cornerstone for the past 20 years; it should remain as such. We welcome the compromise that the zero draft represents, and commit to working with all Member States and stakeholders to achieve a consensus outcome that will deliver meaningful progress in the years ahead.

Thank you