

1. What are the most important **achievements** arising from WSIS that should be highlighted in the Zero Draft? *

Over the past two decades, the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) has made significant contributions to shaping a people-centered, inclusive, and development-oriented Information Society. The Dominican Republic recognizes the following as key achievements that should be highlighted in the Zero Draft:

- Establishment of a Multistakeholder Ecosystem. WSIS has successfully fostered a collaborative environment where governments, the private sector, civil society, academia, and the technical community work together. This inclusive model has become a global standard for digital cooperation and policy development.
- Global Awareness and Capacity Building. WSIS has raised awareness of the transformative power of ICTs and supported capacity-building initiatives, particularly in developing countries. This has enabled many nations to develop national digital strategies, expand connectivity, and improve digital literacy.
- Expansion of Connectivity and Access. There has been remarkable progress in broadband deployment, mobile penetration, and Internet access. These advances have enabled millions of people to participate in the digital economy and access essential services.
- Institutional Frameworks and Platforms. The creation and consolidation of mechanisms such as the WSIS Forum, the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), and the UN Group on the Information Society (UNGIS) have provided structured spaces for dialogue, cooperation, and monitoring of progress.
- Integration with the Sustainable Development Agenda. WSIS has aligned its vision with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, reinforcing the role of ICTs as enablers of all SDGs.
- Promotion of Human Rights Online. WSIS has emphasized the importance of protecting human rights in the digital space, including freedom of expression, privacy, and access to information.
- Digital Resilience During Crises. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the critical role of ICTs in ensuring continuity of education, health services, and economic activity, validating the WSIS vision.

From the Dominican Republic's perspective, WSIS has not only advanced digital development but also cultivated a global culture of cooperation, innovation, and shared responsibility. These achievements must be preserved and built upon in the next phase of the WSIS process.

2. What are the most important **challenges** to the achievement of WSIS outcomes to date and in the future that need to be addressed in the Zero Draft? *

Despite the significant progress made under the WSIS framework, several persistent and emerging challenges continue to hinder the full realization of its vision. The Dominican Republic identifies the following as the most pressing challenges that should be addressed in the Zero Draft:

- Persistent and Deepening Digital Divides. While connectivity has expanded, meaningful and affordable access remains elusive for many, particularly in rural areas, among women and girls, persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities. The digital divide is no longer just about access, but also about quality, relevance, and the ability to use digital tools effectively.
- Fragmentation of the Internet. The risk of Internet fragmentation threatens the global, interoperable nature of the Internet. The Dominican Republic emphasizes the need to preserve the integrity of the Internet as a unified platform for innovation, communication, and development.
- Limited Participation of Developing Countries. Many developing nations face barriers to participating fully in global digital governance and policy-making processes due to financial, technical, and institutional constraints. This limits their ability to shape the digital future in line with their development priorities.
- Emerging Technologies and Governance Gaps. The rapid evolution of technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and quantum computing has outpaced the development of inclusive and ethical governance frameworks. This creates risks related to bias, surveillance, job displacement, and environmental impact.
- Cybersecurity and Trust Deficits. There is a need for stronger international cooperation and capacity building to ensure a safe and secure digital environment.
- Environmental Sustainability. The environmental footprint of ICTs, including energy consumption and e-waste, poses a growing challenge. Integrating sustainability into digital development is essential to align WSIS outcomes with the SDGs and climate goals.
- Underrepresentation of Youth and Marginalized Communities. Young people and other underrepresented groups often lack meaningful participation in digital policy-making. Ensuring their inclusion is essential to design policies that are inclusive, forward-looking, and responsive to diverse social realities.

The Dominican Republic believes that addressing these challenges requires reinforcing the multistakeholder model, strengthening international cooperation, and adapting existing WSIS Action Lines to the realities of today's digital ecosystem. The Zero Draft should reflect a renewed commitment to equity, sustainability, and human rights in the digital age.

3. What are the most important **priorities** for action to achieve the WSIS vision of a 'people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society' in the future, taking into account emerging trends? *

Modernize WSIS Action Lines to address emerging technologies such as AI, IoT, and quantum computing, ensuring ethical governance and equitable access.

Advance meaningful connectivity by promoting access that is affordable, reliable, and impactful, especially in remote and underserved areas.

Integrate environmental sustainability across digital strategies, including circular economy practices, green infrastructure, and responsible e-waste management.

Strengthen digital rights protections, including privacy, data protection, and freedom of expression, while addressing online harms and disinformation.

Institutionalize youth participation in digital policy-making through permanent mechanisms that recognize their role as co-creators of the digital future.

Promote smart and resilient cities as part of WSIS, encouraging investment in digital public services, mobility, and citizen engagement.

Ensure alignment with the Global Digital Compact, avoiding duplication and fostering coherence across UN digital initiatives.

4. What **additional themes/issues**, if any, should be included in the Elements Paper? *

The Dominican Republic recommends the inclusion or strengthening of the following themes in the Zero Draft:

Smart and Resilient Cities. While the Elements Paper addresses digital infrastructure and public services, it does not explicitly recognize smart cities as a strategic component. We propose their formal inclusion within the WSIS framework to promote urban innovation, sustainability, and people-centered digital transformation, especially in developing countries.

Institutionalized Youth Participation. Although youth are mentioned as a priority group, the Paper does not propose mechanisms to ensure their sustained involvement. We recommend establishing permanent structures for youth engagement in digital policy-making and implementation.

WSIS+20 Monitoring Platform. To enhance accountability and cooperation, we propose the creation of a digital platform for tracking national and global progress on WSIS commitments, aligned with the SDGs and enabling access to technical assistance and peer learning.

Operational Alignment with the Global Digital Compact. While the Paper acknowledges the need for coherence, it should go further by proposing concrete mechanisms to harmonize WSIS Action Lines with the Global Digital Compact, avoiding duplication and ensuring institutional synergy.

5. Do you wish to comment on **particular themes/issues/paragraphs** in the Elements Paper? *

The Dominican Republic acknowledges the comprehensive nature of the Elements Paper and appreciates the inclusion of key issues aligned with our national priorities. At this stage, we do not have additional comments on specific themes or paragraphs, as our main observations and proposals have been addressed in our responses to the previous questions.

6. What suggestions do you have to support the development of the **WSIS framework** (WSIS Action Lines, IGF, WSIS Forum, UNGIS etc.)? *

The Dominican Republic acknowledges that the Elements Paper provides a solid foundation for strengthening the WSIS framework. We have already addressed our key suggestions in previous responses, including:

The need to adapt existing Action Lines to address emerging technologies and sustainability.

The importance of institutional coherence between WSIS and the Global Digital Compact.

The proposal to create a WSIS+20 monitoring platform to track progress and share best practices.

The call to institutionalize youth participation across WSIS processes.

The recommendation to enhance the IGF's inclusiveness, especially for developing countries.

7. Do you have any **other** comments? *

N/A

8. Who is **submitting** this input? *

Kindly provide the name of the person submitting this input, as well as the associated country, organization, stakeholder type, and relevant contact information

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9. Please provide your **e-mail** address: *

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