

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

WSIS has been pivotal in advancing the people-centered, inclusive, and development-oriented Information through its multi-stakeholder process. WSIS provides a transparent, open environment for bringing together leaders in government, industry, civil society, the technical community, and academia to collaborate on complex policy questions. Each member of the UN system has a unique set of circumstances and challenges depending on geographic location and resources. One of WSIS's most important achievements is drawing attention to development of the Global South, women's access, youth empowerment and entrepreneurship for SME's. This emphasis should continue while recognizing that the Global North is facing its own challenges and that coordination on global issues is key to creating best practices, balanced practices, and appropriate resource sharing. The result is promoting opportunity and choice for all along the spectrum in global innovation – whether providing access to electricity or enabling production of complex hardware and software for AI systems. The WSIS Action Lines provide guidance and enable the formulation of achievable goals within each UN member jurisdiction. Concrete outcomes include: 1) The WSIS' robust multistakeholder process has been critical in shaping global digital governance, as seen in the establishment and continuation of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF). 2) Progress on WSIS Action Lines and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The WSIS Action Lines, outlined in the Geneva Plan of Action, have provided a framework for leveraging ICTs to achieve development goals. Notable achievements include connecting villages, schools, health centers, and government departments to ICTs, as well as promoting universal access to television and radio services. The alignment of WSIS Action Lines with the SDGs, particularly in areas like education, health, and gender equality, has been a cornerstone of WSIS's deliberations and impact. 3) Emphasis on Human Rights and Net Neutrality: The WSIS+10 Zero Draft introduced net neutrality for the first time in UN negotiations, marking a significant step toward ensuring an open and equitable Internet. It also reinforced the importance of human rights online, including freedom of expression and privacy. 4) Support for Emerging Technologies and Innovation: WSIS has facilitated discussions on emerging technologies like AI, Internet of Things (IoT), and blockchain, as seen in the WSIS Forum 2019 and 2020. Initiatives like the WSIS Prizes and hackathons have shown innovative ICT projects.

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? \*

There have been well noted concerns about the WSIS's ability to make decisions and report achievable outcomes. However, WSIS is designed for collaboration and for each member of the UN system to use WSIS projects as models for their own development and improvement. This design is intentional and should not be underestimated. Where WSIS could be improved is the development of proposed and socialized voluntary best practices to improve outcomes. This best practices approach could be implemented with Memoranda of Understanding or other writings that are deemed necessary to guide outcomes. INTA generally supports best practices and voluntary compliance as the first line of approach to complex governance issues especially those that surround AI development and digital advancement in general. In the last resort, treaties could be a solution where there is broad consensus that certain goals of digital governance are best served by international enforcement.

Further, neither WSIS nor IGF has placed enough emphasis on the importance and relevance of Intellectual Property Protection in the area of development of ICTs. Studies have shown that economies that are focused on strong intellectual property regimes benefit from increased growth and employment opportunities. This is key to the elements of building confidence and security in the use of ICTs; internet governance, data governance and capacity building. WSIS should actively seek out and engage intellectual property experts and associations like INTA to advise on key issues and create accessible resources to provide key information on IP protection especially to small businesses and entrepreneurs.

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? \*

Strengthen Multistakeholder Engagement: The Zero Draft should emphasize the success of the inclusive Multistakeholder approach, which has ensured diverse voices in digital policy discussions, fostering collaboration and innovation. It should also emphasize the need for continued and enhanced multistakeholder participation, drawing on INTA's model of collaboration across all sectors. It should call for inclusive processes that ensure non-governmental stakeholders, including IP professionals, have a meaningful voice in WSIS+20 negotiations, as outlined in the São Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines. Support IP Protection in Digital Transformation: The Zero Draft should highlight the role of IP protection in fostering innovation and economic growth, aligning with WSIS Action Lines and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). INTA's work on AI, blockchain, and digital inclusion for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) can be showcased as a model for integrating IP considerations into digital policy frameworks. Highlight the Commitments to Human Rights and Net Neutrality: The Zero Draft should highlight WSIS' commitment to Human Rights and Net Neutrality, emphasizing their role in fostering trust and protecting fundamental rights in the digital space. Advocate for IGF's Permanent Extension: As supported by INTA and over 100 NGOs in the WSIS+20 process, the Zero Draft should advocate for a permanent extension of the IGF's mandate to ensure sustained collaboration among stakeholders.

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

The Elements should integrate Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) into WSIS-SDG Alignment: The Zero Draft should link IPR protection to the SDGs, particularly SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). INTA's work on harmonizing IP laws and fostering innovation can be highlighted as a key enabler of sustainable digital development.

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

We have no additional comments on Elements Paper.

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

Our suggestions are captured in Questions 3 and 4 Above.

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

INTA has always appreciated the openness, inclusivity, and transparency of the WSIS framework. These are key to the multistakeholder approach and they are essential to develop practical solutions based on data and technical expertise. Multistakeholder engagement must be continued emphasized as the world becomes more interconnected with new technology at increasing speed. Neither governments nor the private sector have the resources to solve the panoply of challenges that occur within and beyond national borders. It requires coalitions from all sectors. The multistakeholder approach gives us the best change of "getting it right" when it comes to gathering the knowledge, skills, ability to tackle complex technical matters.

As a not-for-profit association, INTA's role is to serve our members, the profession, and society as a trusted and influential advocate for the economic and social value of brands. We were founded in 1878 by 17 merchants and manufacturers who saw a need for an organization "to protect and promote the rights of trademark owners, to secure useful legislation, and to give aid and encouragement to all efforts for the advancement and observance of trademark rights." Since then, we have grown into a global community, with members around the world and offices in multiple regions. We have nearly 7,000 members and 30,000 volunteers in over 160 jurisdictions. INTA is unique as a global leader in intellectual property expertise and welcomes the opportunity to continue to participate in the WSIS framework and build awareness of the importance of intellectual property to foster consumer trust, economic growth, and innovation. We are committed to building a better society through brands.

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

Lori Schulman, Senior Director, Internet Policy, on behalf of: International Trademark Association. International Headquarters: New York, NY, USA. Global Offices: Belgium, Chile, China, Dubai, India, Singapore. Private Sector stakeholder. [www.inta.org](http://www.inta.org)

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

Please enter an email