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

1. Multistakeholderism: Any future progression in the implementation and refinement of the WSIS framework must remain anchored in the inclusive multistakeholder approach that has characterized the process since its inception, ensuring the effective and meaningful participation of all stakeholder groups. This approach should be firmly rooted in the principles of transparency, openness, and inclusivity, which provide a structured foundation for equitable and balanced stakeholder engagement in global digital governance processes. India strongly endorses adopting a multistakeholder approach in all matters of internet governance except on issues related to national security where sovereign interests are paramount. The upcoming WSIS+20 review process where the future mandate of IGF will be decided, presents a critical opportunity to reaffirm and strengthen this inclusive model of engagement with participation of governments, the private sector, civil society, academia, and technical communities and democratisation of stakeholder participation by enabling wider societal engagement, particularly from grassroots communities, youth, and underrepresented groups, thereby ensuring that internet governance processes reflect diverse realities.

2. Internet Governance Forum (IGF)
The establishment and continuity of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) remains a defining institutional legacy, providing a space for multistakeholder dialogue on fast-evolving and often contentious digital issues. Its proliferation into national and regional formats has further democratized access to internet governance discussions. A key development has been the emergence of National and Regional Initiatives (NRIs) within IGF, which have made the WSIS vision more accessible and actionable at the grassroots.

3. Connectivity and Broadband Expansion: A significant achievement of the WSIS process has been its catalytic role in advancing global connectivity, particularly in underserved and remote regions. Globally, WSIS Action Line C2 (Information and Communication Infrastructure) has supported initiatives that prioritize universal, affordable, and resilient internet access, especially for least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. This focus on connectivity as a foundational pillar for inclusive development continues to resonate, and should be reaffirmed in the Zero Draft as a core success of the WSIS vision.

4.Digital Public Infrastructure: Another achievement of note is the rise of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) as a globally relevant model for inclusive digital transformation. these innovations represent an evolution of the internet's architecture and could serve as global model for a next- generation internet. These tools, rooted in the WSIS ideals of affordability and accessibility, have found interest and adoption globally, underscoring WSIS's role in encouraging the sharing of best practices and public digital goods.

5.Capacity Building and youth leadership:A defining achievement of the WSIS process has been its sustained emphasis on capacity building and the strategic engagement of youth in shaping a shared digital future. India has actively operationalised this vision through the creation of inclusive ecosystems that nurture youth leadership, grassroots innovation, and meaningful participation in global digital governance.

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? *

1. Bridging Digital Divides: Access disparities persist not only across regions but also within societies—rural and tribal communities, women, persons with disabilities, and linguistic minorities continue to face systemic barriers to meaningful digital participation. Addressing this multi-dimensional and widening digital divide—across access, affordability, language, ability, and innovation capacity—must be a central priority in the Zero Draft.

2.Establishing Trust through robust Cyber Security Measures:The WSIS+20 process must prioritise enhanced cooperation among governments, ICANN, and stakeholders for the following:
(i) User Verification and Accountability WSIS +20 Review Process should promote cooperation between member states and the multistakeholder community within ICANN on verifying user identities, alongwith commonly accepted digital identifiers such as email addresses and mobile numbers, while safeguarding individual privacy to curb misuse and ensure responsible digital behaviour.

(ii)Timely exchange of Information: the WSIS+20 review process must also underline the importance of mechanisms that facilitate enhanced cooperation between member states and the multistakeholder community within ICANN for timely disclosure of information in cases involving national security, child sexual abuse material (CSAM), and public order concerns. This includes ensuring that domain name registries, registrars and service providers share verified identity details with law enforcement agencies in a timely manner preferably within 24 hours without compromising on legitimate privacy safeguards.

3. Reinstating Multistakeholderism model for Internet Governance:A key challenge that merits attention in the Zero Draft is the consistent reinforcement of the multistakeholder model in global internet governance. The language used in para 59 of the Elements paper under Internet Governance Theme which uses outdated language from early WSIS process (prior to 2003-2005). India underscores that multistakeholderism must remain the default approach for internet governance and the Zero Draft must update the Internet governance language to reflect more recent understandings, especially from the WSIS +10 Outcome Document (2015), Netmundial +10 (2024) and the Global Digital Compact.

4. Duplication of Internet Governance Frameworks: Another key concern is the growing duplication of frameworks in the internet governance landscape. The proliferation of new bodies and initiatives—such as the Office on Digital and Emerging Technologies (ODET), multiple initiatives on AI Governance and parallel processes like the Global Digital Compact (GDC)—may lead to overlapping mandates and ambiguities regarding their respective roles in relation to the WSIS+20 framework. This kind of institutional proliferation risks creating an even more fragmented digital governance landscape, making it increasingly difficult for stakeholders to navigate these processes and influence the outcomes effectively. From India's perspective, it is imperative that clarity and complementarity be established among these various processes to avoid duplicating discussions and ensure a cohesive approach to shaping the digital future.

5. Ensuring Interoperability and Open Standards: A critical challenge that the WSIS+20 Zero Draft must address is the preservation of interoperability and the promotion of open standards as foundational pillars of an inclusive and equitable information society. The Zero Draft should elevate the need for global alignment on open standards and interoperable protocols.

6. Monitoring and measurement: India proposes the development of a coherent and adaptable global measurement framework, which should provide broad guiding principles while allowing individual countries the flexibility to customize indicators in accordance with their unique socio-economic conditions and development goals.

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? *

1. Broadening the horizon of Internet Governance: Over the past two decades since the adoption of the Geneva and Tunis Agenda, the scope of what we now consider "governance" in the digital realm has expanded significantly. What began primarily as a discussion around domain names, IP addresses, and internet connectivity has evolved into a broader conversation on digital governance. The elements paper has acknowledged this shift by inclusion of themes such as digital economy, data governance, AI, capacity building and environmental sustainability. However, the framework of the zero draft should be calibrated to address multidimensional challenges— ensuring that digital governance is responsive, future-ready, and aligned with the developmental aspirations of the Global South.

2. Internet Governance Forum:
a. Strengthening the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum:While the IGF has been instrumental in fostering open and inclusive dialogue, stakeholders increasingly call for concrete, actionable outputs that can directly influence policy decisions at national and international levels. To enhance IGF's impact, it is essential to improve its working methods by introducing clear follow-up mechanisms, thematic focus areas, and actionable recommendations that can feed into decision-making processes of relevant bodies, including the UN and national governments. extending and strengthening the IGF's mandate beyond 2025 with a more action-oriented approach to feed in to multilateral and other processes will ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in shaping the future of the global digital ecosystem.

b. Funding of IGF:India has strongly advocated for funding of IGF by the United Nations. IGF should function with the financial support by the UN as UN Member States contribute financially to the organization's general budget. Therefore, it is both reasonable and strategically important for the UN to allocate a stable funding stream to the IGF. This would ensure its independence, continuity, and ability to scale multi-stakeholder dialogues
3.Capacity Building:Strengthening capacity-building and digital literacy must be a foundational priority for advancing a people-centred and inclusive Information Society. WSIS+20 offers an opportunity to embed such holistic and scalable models into global digital cooperation frameworks, ensuring capacity-building is treated not as an adjunct but as a central pillar of inclusive digital development.

4. 4. Circular Economy as a solution to Electronic Waste: Electronic waste (E-waste) is a global challenge and growing exponentially due to advancement in technology. The availability of primary sources are limited in mother earth, however, demand is increasing day by day. Circular Economy only may be the sustainable solution to make the input material supply chain required for ICT sector. WSIS forum may promote the Circular Economy approach in the member countries by creating awareness, sharing best practices and technologies, Eco-labeling of EEE products, standards for secondary raw materials, refurbishment and repairing etc.

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

1. Security and Resilience of Critical Internet Infrastructure: India recommends including the term "critical Internet resources/infrastructure" within para 57 to 64 of the Theme Internet Governance and the relevant text of the Zero Draft to reflect the evolving dependencies on digital infrastructure across sectors. With the expansion of cloud-based services, submarine cables, root servers, and interconnection points, the stability and security of these core systems must be treated as a foundational priority. The Elements Paper should incorporate updated language that recognizes both legacy and emerging dependencies—such as cloud computing, DNS, routing systems, and undersea infrastructure—and promote a multistakeholder approach to their protection, resilience, and transparent governance.

2. Ensuring Technology-Agnostic Drafting and Future-Proof Norms: India emphasizes the need for the Elements Paper to adopt atechnology- agnostic approach in its articulation of principles, commitments, and recommendations. As digital technologies evolve rapidly—from quantum computing and advanced biometrics to neurotechnology—it is critical that the normative foundation of WSIS remains adaptable and forward-compatible. Framing the WSIS architecture in principle-based terms ensures that future innovations can be assessed and governed without the need for wholesale normative overhaul. This will also enhance coherence across emerging global governance instruments.

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

1. Under Theme "Introduction"

India proposes to comment on the following para 10:
Para 10: The language used in Paragraph 10 of the Elements Paper reflects a lack of conceptual clarity. The stated intent to align the implementation of WSIS outcomes with the GDC could be interpreted as either the formulation of a parallel and potentially duplicative process or as an attempt to subsume other existing global initiatives, such as the GDC, into the WSIS framework without sufficient clarity on scope, mandate, or institutional setting. This conceptual ambiguity risks overlap, institutional redundancy, and governance inefficiencies arising from such convergence without proper delineation. Any alignment between WSIS and other initiatives like the GDC be approached with a clear articulation.

2. Under the Theme "The enabling environment"- suggested addition in capital letters and bracket
Para 37: Challenges persist in aligning digital governance with broader policy areas such as privacy, consumer rights, TRADE, TAXATION, COMPETITION, and intellectual property. Managing radio frequency spectrum and adapting laws to evolving technologies also require coordinated action.

India's proposed additions are essential to ensure a comprehensive and future-oriented policy framing.

3. Under the Theme: Internet Governance- deletion in bracket and addition in capital letters
Para 59: The governance of the Internet should be (multilateral)/ (MULTISTAKEHOLDER, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organisations.

India underscores that multistakeholderism must remain the default approach for internet governance and the Zero Draft must update the Internet governance language to reflect more recent understandings, especially from the WSIS +10 Outcome Document (2015), NetMundial +10 (2024) and the Global Digital Compact.

4. Under the theme: Data Governance- addition in capital letters
Para 68: We need to emphasize the need for responsible, EQUITABLE interoperable data governance and stronger national capacities, especially in the Global South. Growing concerns around algorithmic transparency, surveillance, and unequal protection frameworks underscore the need for global standards, trust-based data flows, and inclusive policymaking.

India advocates for equitable data governance to ensure that developing countries are not cornered to be just the data generators while value addition, innovation, and policy influence remain concentrated in a few jurisdictions. Equitability entails fair access to data infrastructure, capacity building, value chains, and standards-setting processes, particularly for countries of the Global South.

5. Under the theme Artificial intelligence- addition in capital letters
Para 72: The concentration of artificial intelligence research and development in a small number of countries has raised concerns about the potential for new digital divides in the adoption, impact and governance of AI to emerge between developed and developing countries. International cooperation, including capacity building towards, equitable access to compute resources, high quality-data sets, AI research partnerships, capacity development for public institutions, civil servants, and regulators; and the maintenance of open, INTEROPERABLE, inclusive AI ecosystems will be crucial to ensuring the full participation of developing countries in AI development and in AI governance.

India emphasizes that ensuring interoperability in AI ecosystems is essential to bridge the growing digital and technological divides between developed and developing countries.

6. Under the Theme: Monitoring and measurement
India proposes to comment on para 83 and 84:India seeks a consolidated overview of all post-2015 global targets, including references to the bodies that have adopted them, to ensure transparency, clarity, and effective benchmarking.

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

Updating the Action Lines to include contemporary priorities such as Digital Public Infrastructure, digital resilience, green ICT, and platform accountability will ensure relevance.
1. Funding for IGF: As already highlighted under the challenges in the WSIS Outcomes, India has raised concern of funding of IGF by the United Nations. In the current scenario there is a strong requirement to secure more/predictable funding to support grassroots-level initiatives and capacity-building efforts that promote broader participation from diverse communities.

2. IGF Structurally linked to other decision-making bodies(WSIS, ICANN etc,.) : India recognizes the significance of structurally linking the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) with broader global digital decision-making processes such as the WSIS, ICANN etc., with an intent to supplement each other and not create duplicity.. While the IGF plays a critical role as an open, multi stakeholder platform for dialogue, its impact can be enhanced by ensuring that its outputs meaningfully inform and influence formal intergovernmental and multilateral decision-making processes. India, therefore, advocates for institutional pathways that connect IGF discussions to actionable recommendations within the WSIS+20 review and other relevant UN bodies. Such linkage would strengthen policy coherence, amplify multi stakeholder inputs, and ensure that perspectives from the Global South are adequately reflected in global digital governance outcomes.

3. Referencing Model for WSIS Global Community: India invites the global community to explore and adopt its successful digital public initiatives as replicable case studies under the WSIS framework. India recommends that the WSIS framework encourage the adoption of universal service mechanisms like India's globally, especially in the Global South, to operationalize inclusive digital development. Embedding such models within WSIS follow-up mechanisms will help Member States identify actionable policy tools for resource mobilization, inclusive infrastructure, and grassroots capacity building which are the core elements to achieving the SDGs through ICTs.

4. Strengthen the WSIS framework and its future-oriented implementation: India proposes the creation of collaborative, multistakeholder digital mentoring platforms that facilitate cross- border knowledge exchange, especially for capacity building in emerging economies. These platforms should support the development of domain-specific, regionally contextualized knowledge bases, enabling local solutions in areas such as agriculture, health, education, digital governance, and climate resilience. India recommends establishing open-access datasets and interoperable AI/ML models, co-developed through inclusive partnerships, that are aligned with WSIS Action Lines on capacity building (C4), access to information (C3), and ICT applications (C7).To support global digital cooperation, India also calls for the development of machine-readable, multilingual global knowledge repositories, embedded with public-interest standards to enable seamless integration across national and sectoral systems.

5. Strengthening the WSIS+20 Process- Conduct, Financing, and Inclusive Engagement: India emphasizes the need to enhance the WSIS+20 process through more structured, transparent, and inclusive dialogues, enabling meaningful participation from all stakeholders, especially from the Global South. To ensure effective delivery, India calls for predictable and equitable financing mechanisms, such as multi-donor models and regional capacity- building funds. Greater institutional coherence across WSIS Action Lines, IGF, UNGIS, and related platforms is essential to avoid duplication and strengthen linkages with the SDGs. India also recommends that WSIS+20 outcomes be tied to a clear implementation roadmap with measurable goals and regular review.

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

Government of India, wishes to extend its sincere appreciation to the Co- Facilitators of the WSIS+20 Review Process—Permanent Representatives of Albania and Kenya—and to the Secretariat for their diligent efforts in preparing the Elements Paper.
We commend the Co-Facilitators for their inclusive, transparent, and well- structured approach—anchored in open consultations and seeking written inputs from wide spectrum of stakeholders i.e., the Member States, technical experts, civil society, private sector entities, and other stakeholders.

India's submission reaffirms its strong commitment to the WSIS vision of a people-centric, inclusive, and development-oriented Information Society. It inter alia emphasizes the need to:

(i) Preserve and strengthen the multistakeholder model of Internet governance,
(ii) Promote a universal, open, unfragmented, safe, reliable, stable, accessible, multilingual, interoperable, free and secure use of and access to the Internet.
(iii) Ensure equitable participation of developing countries in digital policy processes,
(iv) Promote affordable and inclusive access to digital infrastructure,
(v) Support the evolution of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) as a key institutional platform through stable funding and actionable outputs
(vi) Advance the role of capacity building in bridging the global digital divide.

Our inputs aim to strengthen the Elements Paper with actionable proposals that reflect both our national experience and our belief in a collaborative global digital future.

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

Soumya Nair, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of India to the UN

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

Please enter an email