



African Telecommunications Union

Inputs on the WSIS+20 Zero Draft

1. Recognising WSIS Institutional Framework

- Recalling that the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) originated from the decision taken at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)'s Plenipotentiary Conference in Minneapolis (1998), which laid the groundwork for a global dialogue on the information society, **we request that the Zero Draft explicitly reaffirm this provenance and ITU's convening and coordinating mandate for WSIS follow-up.**
- Acknowledging the ITU's role as the UN specialized agency and secretariat responsible for organizing the two WSIS phases in Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005), as well as for facilitating ongoing follow-up and implementation efforts, **we invite clear language confirming ITU's lead stewardship of these processes.**
- Noting with appreciation the leadership of institutions and entities involved in coordinating the WSIS follow-up process, including ITU—particularly in convening the annual WSIS Forum, maintaining the WSIS Stocktaking Database, organising the WSIS Prizes, and facilitating the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines—**we recommend that these instruments be identified as the principal vehicles for implementation over the next decade.**
- Welcoming the continued contributions of established WSIS mechanisms, such as the WSIS Forum and the WSIS Stocktaking process, as well as the active engagement of relevant UN agencies, regional organisations, and Action Line facilitators in advancing the implementation of WSIS outcomes, **we encourage explicit commitments to resource these mechanisms and broaden participation from developing countries.**
- Emphasising that the WSIS architecture, as reaffirmed in the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution [E/RES/2025/18: Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society](#), provides a solid and inclusive foundation for strengthening coordination, enhancing implementation, and guiding future digital cooperation efforts, **we propose that alignment with the Global Digital Compact build upon—rather than supersede—this architecture.**

2. WSIS Forum

- Welcoming and fully supporting the recognition of the WSIS Forum as a key multistakeholder platform—as articulated in the Zero Draft—and noting its role in elevating African regional priorities and collaboration, **We request that the outputs of the Forum be regularly transmitted to, and taken into account by, relevant UN processes, including the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) and ECOSOC.**
- Calling for the institutionalization of the WSIS Forum as a permanent multistakeholder platform, hosted in Geneva and led and coordinated by the ITU with continued engagement



of relevant UN organizations, **we propose sustainable funding arrangements and clear reporting linkages to WSIS follow-up.**

- Recognizing the WSIS Forum as a platform that facilitates inclusive dialogue, partnership-building, and the implementation of WSIS outcomes, **we request codification of its role as the principal review and cooperation platform for the Action Lines.**
- Emphasizing the importance of sustaining the WSIS Forum as an annual gathering that advances global digital cooperation and contributes to bridging the digital divide, **we propose modalities to increase participation from LDCs/LLDCs/SIDS (e.g., travel support and enhanced/inclusive remote participation).**
- Encouraging continued commitment and enhanced support from Member States, international organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure the WSIS Forum's ongoing relevance, increased participation of developing countries and marginalized communities, and delivery of tangible outcomes in line with the SDGs, **we request targeted support for regional tracks and youth participation.**

3. WSIS Stocktaking

- Recognizing the valuable role of the WSIS Stocktaking process in providing a platform to highlight development initiatives aligned with the WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs, **we invite a formal linkage with SDG monitoring to strengthen evidence-based follow-up.**
- Noting that the WSIS Prizes initiative—despite its absence from the Zero Draft—has played a significant role in promoting innovation and excellence with active African participation, **we request explicit reference to, and continuation of, the WSIS Prizes.**
- Encouraging the inclusion of language that acknowledges and strengthens both the WSIS Stocktaking process and the WSIS Prizes as essential tools for transparency, knowledge exchange, and inclusive digital development, **we propose periodic evaluation and attention to regional balance.**

4. WSIS Action Lines

- Stressing the importance of maintaining the WSIS Action Lines as a core framework of WSIS and ensuring their continued relevance and alignment with the Global Digital Compact, **we request that Action Line facilitators preserve continuity of scope and roles.**
- Calling for strengthened monitoring of the WSIS Action Lines through a robust, results-oriented framework with clear targets and indicators to track progress and support evidence-based policymaking, **we propose regionally disaggregated metrics and agreed baselines for Africa, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.**

5. Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)

- Acknowledging Digital Public Infrastructure—including platforms for digital identity, e-payments, e-government, and public broadband—as fundamental to modern governance and



effective service delivery, **we request alignment with ITU technical standards and national policy frameworks to ensure trust and resilience.**

- Recognizing its potential to democratize access, accelerate inclusion, and guarantee that every citizen can fully participate in the digital economy regardless of location or income, **we propose safeguards for privacy, competition, interoperability and inclusion.**
- Supporting efforts aligned with ITU's work on trusted digital infrastructure and digital inclusion, including initiatives such as the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition, to advance DPI that is open, secure, interoperable and governed by strong public-interest safeguards, **we request regular reporting of Partner2Connect DPI-related commitments within WSIS follow-up.**

6. Youth

- Affirming that Africa's digital transformation must be youth-driven and recognising the continent's young population as innovators, creators and entrepreneurs, **we propose the establishment of structured roles for youth in agenda-setting and review.**
- Calling for a shift from viewing youth as passive beneficiaries to recognising them as co-leaders in shaping digital policy, innovation and governance, **we propose youth representation within national, regional and global governance processes.**
- Urging national and regional strategies to prioritise digital skills development, entrepreneurship and youth participation in global digital dialogues, while recognising the importance of ITU initiatives such as Generation Connect and the WSIS Youth Special Track, **we request their recognition as permanent engagement tracks.**

7. Environmental Impacts

- Emphasizing the imperative to prioritize sustainability and climate resilience in Africa's digital transformation, **we propose measurable targets for energy efficiency, e-waste management and circularity across ICT value chains.**
- Highlighting Africa's commitment to green digital action—exemplified by the Green Data Centers Guidelines launched at the Africa Climate Summit with ITU, the World Bank, the Kenyan Ministry of ICT and Smart Africa—**we request explicit reference to this regional best practice for global uptake.**
- Recognizing this as a demonstration of Africa's leadership in integrating climate-conscious approaches within digital development and contributing to global initiatives such as ITU Green Digital Action, **we invite incorporation of such standards into international guidance, investment criteria and capacity-building programmes.**