As an expert in AI governance, technology diplomacy, and policy development, I am ready to formulate strong, actionable inputs reflecting the essential priorities of the Global South for the WSIS+20 Zero Draft.

These recommendations are anchored in principles of Digital Sovereignty, the FATER (Fairness, Accountability, Transparency, Ethics, and Rights-respecting) framework, and the imperative to translate broad commitments into resourced, measurable action, ensuring African perspectives fundamentally shape the future of global digital cooperation.

The following table provides the proposed written inputs in the form of specific textual amendments and additions to the WSIS+20 Zero Draft, organized by the eight mandated themes.

Strong Inputs from Global South Perspective: Textual Proposals for the WSIS+20 Zero Draft

Theme	Paragraph / Location in Zero Draft	Text Proposal (Addition or Amendment)	Supporting Reference(s)
Information and communications technologies for development	Paragraph 17 (Amendment)	We are convinced that information and communications technologies have demonstrated great potential to contribute to advancing human welfare and prosperity and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Their rapidly increasing capabilities and growing pervasiveness have enabled tremendous growth in the range of applications for development deployed by governments, the private sector and other stakeholders, creating new opportunities to improve productivity, prosperity and quality of life, **provided that a development-centered digital transformation is implemented, prioritizing technological resilience, local innovation, and actively addressing the root causes of digital dependency.**	

Information and communications technologies for development	New Paragraph (Following Para 18)	We emphasize the urgent need for a balanced approach to **safeguarding data rights and the public interest**, including **appropriate protection of intellectual property rights and copyright against unauthorized ingestion by commercial AI systems** to prevent exploitative data extraction and violation of communal intellectual assets.	
Bridging digital divides	Paragraph 12 (Amendment)	We are concerned that there remain critical digital divides between and within countries in access to and use of digital technologies. These constrain the achievement of WSIS goals, restrict the achievement of economic and social development, threaten to increase social and economic inequalities and may be exacerbated by new technological developments. Bridging them requires measures concerned not just with connectivity but with **Universal Meaningful Connectivity (UMC)**, the affordability of networks and devices, the availability of relevant content and services in local languages, and the development of digital skills, literacy and capabilities.	

Bridging digital divides	Paragraph 30 (Amendment)	We reiterate the need for the **prioritization, creation, and funding of culturally relevant local content** and services in a variety of languages and formats that are accessible to all people and recognise the vital importance of multilingualism to ensure the linguistic, cultural and historical diversity of all nations. We commend the work that has been done since the World Summit to extend the multilingual nature of the Internet, **including supporting resource-efficient tools such as Small Language Models (SLMs) and open-source corpora for low-resource languages,** and urge all stakeholders to ensure that the Internet and digital services become fully accessible to all, including Indigenous Peoples and speakers of minority languages.	
Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs	Paragraph 62 (Amendment)	We reaffirm that strengthening confidence and security in the use of information and communications technologies is a crucial driver for innovation and sustainable development. We reaffirm that building confidence and security in the use of information and communications technologies should be consistent with human rights, **and stress the imperative for all stakeholders to implement mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) across the entire technology lifecycle, including the supply chain of dual-use technologies.**	

Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs	New Paragraph (Following Para 89)	We call upon all Member States and other stakeholders to refrain from or cease the use of new and emerging technologies, **including biometric surveillance systems, spyware, and predictive policing applications,** that are fundamentally impossible to operate in compliance with international human rights law or that pose undue risks to the enjoyment of human rights, **and ensure stringent accountability for state and non-state actors engaged in arbitrary or unlawful surveillance.**	
Financial mechanisms	Paragraph 74 (Amendment)	We note that the Sevilla Commitment... recognised that closing the infrastructure gap in critical sectors... will greatly improve access to essential services... We reaffirm the call in the Sevilla Commitment for coordinated investment in digital infrastructure, including digital public infrastructure, and digital public goods, and international collaboration between governments, development partners and private sector actors, to support countries in their design of digital infrastructure, its financing models and impact assessment. **We further call for the establishment and institutionalization of a dedicated, sustainable financing mechanism, such as a Global Fund on AI Capacity Building (GDC Para 63) or the Digital Solidarity Fund, to sustainably fund equitable compute access, capacity building, and Global South-led AI research.**	

Human rights and ethical dimensions of the Information Society	Paragraph 81 (Amendment)	We commit to establish appropriate safeguards to prevent and address any adverse impact on human rights arising from the use of digital and emerging technologies and protect individuals against violations and abuses of their human rights in the digital space, including through human rights due diligence and establishing effective oversight and remedy mechanisms. **This must be anchored in the FATER (Fairness, Accountability, Transparency, Ethics, and Rights-respecting) framework, explicitly mandating mandatory Child Impact Assessments (CIAs) and Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) for all high-risk AI systems.**	
Human rights and ethical dimensions of the Information Society	New Paragraph (Following Para 87)	We stress the importance of moving beyond individual privacy rights to recognize and protect **collective rights and communal data assets**, ensuring that communities, particularly Indigenous Peoples, have demonstrable autonomy and equitable benefit-sharing from the utilization of their knowledge systems in AI training, thus preventing **algorithmic laundering** and reinforcing human dignity.	
Data governance	New Paragraph (Following Para 94)	We call for global action to counteract data extractivism and promote **Digital Sovereignty**, specifically through **Provenance by Design** standards. These standards must require verifiable documentation of data source, ethical context, and **Communal Consent** for datasets derived from shared knowledge or cultural heritage, aligning with national and regional data policy frameworks, including the African Union Data Policy Framework.	

Artificial intelligence	Paragraph 97 (Amendment)	We note the significant developments that have taken place in the Information Society with the emergence in the public sphere of artificial intelligence... and also acknowledge concerns about the potential negative impacts on employment, labour, the environment, human rights and information integrity. **We emphasize the urgent need to close the structural Multilingual Divide and the Compute Divide in AI development, promoting resource-efficient, open-source models, training on locally sourced, culturally-relevant corpora, and ensuring equitable access to high-performance compute infrastructure for developing countries.**	
Artificial intelligence	New Paragraph (Following Para 102 – *Process Recommendation*)	We request the Secretary General and Co-Facilitators to ensure the operational implementation of UN AI institutions, such as the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, includes **equitable geographic representation** in all leadership roles and expert membership, and mandate the provision of **dedicated financial resources** for Global South stakeholder travel, translation, and participation logistics to overcome systemic barriers to meaningful engagement.	

| Monitoring and measurement | Paragraph 69 (Amendment) | We recognise the need to build digital literacy in order to empower individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to identify reliable information that will help them to access opportunities and improve their quality of life, and to protect themselves against misinformation and abuse. We call on all stakeholders to promote digital literacy and awareness-raising efforts to empower individuals, especially those in vulnerable situations, to understand and exercise their data protection and privacy rights, make informed choices about their personal data and take appropriate steps to safeguard their online security and privacy. **We recognize the urgent need to move beyond simple access metrics by adopting a unified methodology for measuring Universal Meaningful Connectivity (UMC) and digital participation, disaggregated by linguistic representation, socioeconomic status, and digital literacy level, enabling the monitoring of algorithmic harm and digital equity.** | |