WSIS+20 Stakeholder Consultations: MICROSOFT's Input to the Zero Draft

Introduction

Original text	Text proposals	Comments
Introduction		
3. We reaffirm the value and principles of multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement that have characterized the World Summit on the Information Society process since its inception, and recognise that effective participation, partnership and cooperation of Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organisations, the technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders, with balanced representation of all countries has been and continues to be vital in developing the Information Society, including the implementation of Summit outcomes.	3. We reaffirm the value and principles of meaningful multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement that have characterized the World Summit on the Information Society process since its inception, and recognise that effective participation, partnership and cooperation of Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organisations, the technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders, with balanced representation of all countries has been and continues to be vital in developing the Information Society, including the implementation of Summit outcomes.	We suggest incorporating term "meaningful" to more accurately describe stakeholder engagement throughout the WSIS process.
4. We reaffirm that the full inclusion of developing country governments and other stakeholders is critical to achieving the WSIS vision. Addressing this requires attention to capacity building, the sharing, transfer and development of technology, and financial resources to promote equitable access and innovation. We will address the diverse needs and challenges faced by countries in special situations, in particular African countries, Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).	4. We reaffirm that the full inclusion of developing country governments and other stakeholders is critical to achieving the WSIS vision. Addressing this requires attention to capacity building, the development, sharing and transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, and financial resources to promote equitable access and innovation. We will address the diverse needs and challenges faced by countries in special situations, in particular African countries, Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).	We recommend using precise, previously agreed language regarding technology transfer on mutually agreed terms.
5. We recognise that many developing nations face barriers to participating fully in global	5. We recognise that many developing nations face barriers to participating fully in global	We propose to strengthen the paragraph by affirming that all stakeholders, including civil

digital governance and policy-making processes due to financial, technical, and institutional constraints. We encourage governments and other stakeholders to ensure that decision-making processes concerned with the Information Society enable full and effective participation by developing countries.	digital governance and policy-making processes due to financial, technical, and institutional constraints. We encourage governments and other stakeholders to ensure that decision-making processes concerned with the Information Society enable full and effective participation of all stakeholders from developing countries.	society and private sector, from developing countries should be enabled to participate fully and effectively in global digital governance.
9.We recognise that the outcomes of the World Summit are anchored in international law, including international human rights law, and reaffirm that all human rights, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and fundamental freedoms, must be respected, protected and promoted online and offline.	9.We recognise that the outcomes of the World Summit are anchored in international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and reaffirm that all human rights, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and fundamental freedoms, must be respected, protected and promoted online and offline. We emphasize that progress towards the vision of the World Summit on the Information Society should be considered not only as a function of economic development and the spreading of information and communications technologies but also as a function of progress with respect to the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms.	We recommend adding a reference to international humanitarian law in this paragraph. We also propose to add that progress towards WSIS vision should also be considered as a function of progress with respect to the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms as this was reflected in the outcome document of the WSIS+10 review.
12. 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	12. 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 and realization of human right of expression, threaten to increase social and economic inequalities and may be exacerbated by new technological developments.	We propose to recognize the negative effect of digital divides on the realization of human right of expression.

measures concerned not just with connectivity but with 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 them requires measures concerned not just with connectivity but with 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.	
16. We also recognise that building confidence and security in ICTs is critical to ensuring the implementation of WSIS goals, and that advancing digital inclusion requires a predictable and transparent enabling environment that encompasses policy, legal and regulatory frameworks that support innovation, protect consumer rights, nurture digital talent and skills, promote fair competition and digital entrepreneurship, and enhance consumer confidence and trust in the digital economy.	16. We also recognise that building confidence and security in ICTs is critical to ensuring the implementation of WSIS goals, and that advancing digital inclusion requires a predictable and transparent enabling environment that encompasses policy, legal and regulatory frameworks that support innovation and digital rights, protect consumer rights, nurture digital talent and skills, promote fair competition and digital entrepreneurship, and enhance consumer confidence and trust in the digital economy.	In the context of policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks, the absence of mention of digital rights is a notable omission.
Information and communications technologies for development		
18. We are deeply concerned, however, that the capacity of these technologies to support development remains constrained by digital divides and inequalities between and within countries, regions and communities. A third of the world's population still does not make use of the Internet, while many people with access make little use of it for reasons that include lack of affordability, limited content including content in locally relevant languages, and limited digital skills. Strengthened international cooperation and enabling policy environments are required to address gaps in access and affordability, digital skills,	18. We are deeply concerned, however, that the capacity of these technologies to support development remains constrained by digital divides and inequalities between and within countries, regions and communities. A third of the world's population still does not make use of the Internet, while many people with access make little use of it for reasons that include lack of affordability, limited content including content in locally relevant languages, lack of basic infrastructure and limited digital skills. Strengthened international cooperation and enabling policy environments are required to address gaps in access and	We recommend including a reference to the lack of basic infrastructure as a key factor in fully characterizing existing digital divides.

financing and technological resources.	affordability, digital skills, financing and technological resources.	
20. We acknowledge that developing digital public goods and digital public infrastructure are critical drivers of inclusive digital transformation and innovation and recognise the need to increase investment in their successful development with the participation of all stakeholders. Digital public goods include open-source software, open data, open artificial intelligence models, open standards and open content that adhere to privacy and other applicable international laws, standards and best practices and do no harm, empower societies and individuals to direct digital technologies to their development needs and can facilitate digital cooperation and investment. Resilient, safe, inclusive and interoperable digital public infrastructure has the potential to deliver services at scale and increase social and economic opportunities for all. We recognise that there are multiple models of digital public infrastructure, and we recognise that each society will develop and use shared digital systems according to its particular priorities and needs.	20. We acknowledge that developing digital public goods and digital public infrastructure are critical drivers of inclusive digital transformation and innovation and recognise the need to increase investment in their successful development with the participation of all stakeholders. Digital public goods include open-source software, open data, open artificial intelligence models, open standards and open content that adhere to privacy and other applicable international laws, standards and best practices and do no harm, empower societies and individuals to direct digital technologies to their development needs and can facilitate digital cooperation and investment. Resilient, safe, inclusive and interoperable digital public infrastructure that may include a cost-effective combination of digital public goods and proprietary code and infrastructure has the potential to deliver services at scale and increase social and economic opportunities for all. We recognise that there are multiple models of digital public infrastructure, and we recognise that each society will develop and use shared digital systems according to its particular priorities and needs.	We suggest recognizing various models of digital public infrastructure.
Bridging digital divides		
22. We note that the growth of information and communications infrastructure and services since the World Summit has been achieved through a combination of private sector and public investment.	22. We note that the growth of information and communications infrastructure and services since the World Summit has been achieved through a combination of private sector and public investment and the applicability of rights-respecting policy	We recommend acknowledging the influence of policy environments on the growth of information and communications infrastructure and services. We welcome the acknowledgment of the value of public-private partnerships and advocate for

	environments for online communications and information. We encourage these public-private partnerships to continue to address the concerns outlined in the subsequent paragraphs.	their continued use in the future.
28. We are determined to ensure the achievement of universal meaningful and affordable access to the Internet and digital services, including the availability of networks offering higher capabilities, the affordability of access, data and devices, the availability of content and services that respond to users' priorities and needs, the extent to which these are multilingual, and the capabilities and resources required to make effective use of them, including information literacy, and to ensure that no one will be left behind in the Information Society.	28. We are determined to ensure the achievement of universal meaningful and affordable access to the Internet and digital services, including the availability of networks offering higher capabilities, the affordability of access, ~~data~~ and devices, the availability of content and services that respond to users' rights to access information as well as priorities and needs, the extent to which these are multilingual, and the capabilities and resources required to make effective use of them, including information literacy, and to ensure that no one will be left behind in the Information Society.	We recommend removing the reference to data affordability, as it is contextually misaligned, and propose incorporating language that affirms users' rights to access information.
32. We call on governments, multilateral development banks, relevant international organisations and the private sector to develop financing mechanisms and incentives to connect the unconnected to the Internet and to improve the quality and affordability of connectivity.		Paragraph 32 would benefit from further clarification, particularly regarding the role of the private sector in this context.
The digital economy		
35. We recognise that equitable and meaningful inclusion in the digital economy requires efforts to tackle concentrations of technological capacity and market power in order to ensure that the benefits of digital cooperation are fairly distributed and do not exacerbate existing inequalities or impede the full achievement of sustainable development.		Paragraph 35 would benefit from more precise and balanced language. It is important to ensure that the wording does not invite interpretations that could unintentionally result in excessive regulation, protectionist measures, or structural interventions that may hinder investment, innovation, competition, and cross-border commerce.
Social and economic development		

42.We recognise that information and communications technologies have fundamentally impacted the ways in which individuals and communities interact, consume and spend their time. While many of these impacts have been positive, others have raised concerns, including for human rights, health, employment and the welfare of individuals and communities.	42.We recognise that information and communications technologies have fundamentally impacted the ways in which individuals and communities interact, consume and spend their time. While many of these impacts have been positive and advanced human rights, others have raised concerns, including for human rights, health, employment and the welfare of individuals and communities.	We recommend a thorough characterization of the beneficial effects of information and communications technologies.
Environmental impacts		
49.We welcome the ways in which digital technologies support environmental sustainability by enhancing monitoring and measurement of environmental change and hazards, implementing early warning systems in response to environmental threats, and enabling governments and development partners to prioritise interventions, protect those at greatest risk and forecast priorities for future action. Digital technologies can also enable improvements in the efficient use of energy and other resources through 'smart' management of economic, social and environmental systems and facilitating more efficient delivery of public services. Our cooperation will leverage digital technologies for sustainability while minimizing their negative environmental impacts.	49.We welcome the ways in which digital technologies support environmental sustainability by enhancing monitoring and measurement of environmental change and hazards, implementing early warning systems in response to environmental threats, and enabling governments and development partners to prioritise interventions, protect those at greatest risk and forecast priorities for future action. Digital technologies can also enable improvements in the efficient use of energy and other resources through 'smart' management of economic, social and environmental systems and facilitating more efficient permitting decisions and delivery of public services. Our cooperation will leverage digital technologies for sustainability while minimizing their negative environmental impacts.	We recommend a thorough characterization of the beneficial effects of digital technologies.
50. We are concerned, however, about growing levels of energy consumption arising from digitalisation and consequential impacts on greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change, including those arising from growth in the manufacture and use of digital devices, the volume of data traffic, the number and impact of data centres, growing use of	50. We are concerned, however, about growing levels of energy consumption arising from digitalisation and consequential impacts on greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change, including those arising from growth in the manufacture and use of digital devices, the volume of data traffic, the number and impact of data centres, growing use of	The paragraph proposes the establishment of global reporting standards on environmental impacts, which may introduce new obligations for the private sector. This implication should carry out an impact assessment to clearly articulate the impact and desired outcomes.

the Internet of Things and rapid growth in the energy requirements of artificial intelligence. We call for the development of global reporting standards on environmental impacts and cooperation by all stakeholders to ensure the environmental sustainability of digital transformation.	the Internet of Things and rapid growth in the energy requirements of artificial intelligence. We ~~call for the development of global reporting standards~~ note, however, the development of the CSRD by the EU, alongside the CS3D and EU Taxonomy, that will ensure more detailed reporting by organisations in scope on environmental impacts ~~and cooperation by all stakeholders~~ to ensure the environmental sustainability of digital transformation. Any additional requirements or reporting regimes should carry out an impact assessment to clearly articulate the impact and desired outcomes.	
53. We recognise the need to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, including sustainable lifestyles, and circular economy approaches. We call on governments and the private sector to develop global standards for the design of sustainable digital products as well as for reuse, repair and recycling.	53. We recognise the need to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, including sustainable lifestyles, and circular economy approaches. ~~We call on governments and the private sector to develop global standards for the design of sustainable digital products as well as for reuse, repair and recycling~~, and welcome the work undertaken by the GRI and the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) Reporting in driving alignment between their regimes. Such an approach is worth exploring further in the development of standards to support a circular economy and in line with obligations introduced by regimes such as the EU's CSRD.	The paragraph proposes the development of global standards, which may introduce new obligations for the private sector, therefore we suggest an alternative text that supports the work undertaken by GRI and ISSB.
Human rights and ethical dimensions of the Information Society		
80. We recall the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 78/213 on 22 December 2023, which set out principles and actions concerning the promotion and protection of human rights in	80. We recall the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 78/213 on 22 December 2023, which set out principles and actions concerning the promotion and	This paragraph would benefit from clarification of the concept of upholding human rights throughout the lifecycle of digital technologies and improvement of the commitment to ensure human

the context of digital technologies, and commit to respect, protect and promote human rights in the digital space. We will uphold international human rights law throughout the life cycle of digital and emerging technologies, so that users can safely benefit from digital technologies and are protected from violations, abuses and all forms of discrimination.	protection of human rights in the context of digital technologies, and commit to respect, protect and promote human rights in the digital space. We will uphold international human rights law throughout the life cycle of digital and emerging technologies, so that users can safely ~~benefit from digital technologies and are protected from violations, abuses and all forms of discrimination~~ exercise their rights in the digital space.	rights protections in the digital space.
81. 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.	81. 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~~ provide individuals with grievance mechanisms and rights of remedy for violations and abuses of their human rights in the digital space, including through human rights due diligence and establishing effective oversight and remedy mechanisms.	We suggest improving the text of paragraph 81 to more accurately describe ways to address any adverse impact on human rights arising from the use of digital and emerging technologies.
82. We encourage all Member-States to promote an open, safe, secure, stable, free, interoperable, inclusive, accessible and peaceful digital technology environment in accordance with international law, including the obligations enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international human rights law.	82. We encourage all Member-States to promote an open, safe, secure, stable, free, interoperable, inclusive, accessible and peaceful digital technology environment in accordance with international law, including the obligations enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international human rights law and the obligations of Member States to protect human rights.	In relation to paragraph 82 we propose emphasizing the obligations of Member States to protect human rights.
83.We recognise the responsibilities of all stakeholders in this endeavour. We call on the private sector	83.We recognise the responsibilities of all stakeholders in this endeavour. We call on the private sector	In relation to paragraph 83 we propose clarifying the obligations of the private sector to respect human rights.

and all relevant stakeholders to ensure that respect for human rights is incorporated into the conception, design, development, deployment, operation, use, evaluation and regulation of all new and emerging digital technologies and to provide for redress and effective remedy for the human rights abuses that they may cause, contribute to, or to which they may be directly linked. We also call on the private sector to apply the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.	~~and all relevant stakeholders~~ to ~~ensure that~~ incorporate respect for human rights ~~is incorporated~~ into ~~the conception, design, development, deployment, operation, use, evaluation and regulation of all new and emerging~~ digital technologies and to provide for redress and effective remedy for the human rights ~~abuses~~ harms that ~~they~~ development, deployment, or use of such technologies may cause, contribute to, or to which they may be directly linked. We also call on the private sector to apply the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to guide approaches to development and deployment of digital technologies.	
89.We express deep concern regarding the development of technologies and practices that facilitate surveillance that may jeopardise the right to privacy. We call on Member States to ensure that targeted surveillance technologies are only used in accordance with the human rights principles of legality, necessity and proportionality, and that legal mechanisms of redress and effective remedies are available for victims of surveillance related violations and abuses.	89.We express deep concern regarding the development of technologies and practices that facilitate Member State surveillance of civilian populations that may jeopardise the right to privacy. We call on Member States to ensure that targeted surveillance technologies are only used in accordance with the human rights principles of legality, necessity and proportionality, and that legal mechanisms of redress and effective remedies are available for victims of surveillance related violations and abuses.	We recommend improving the text of paragraph 89 by clarifying the notion of surveillance.
93. We recognise that children and young people are among the most active users of the Internet and online services. We commit to strengthen legal and policy frameworks to protect the rights of the child in the digital space, in line with international	93. We recognise that children and young people are among the most active users of the Internet and online services. We commit to strengthen legal and policy frameworks to protect the rights of the child in the digital space, in line with international	We observed that the final sentence of paragraph 93 is incomplete due to a missing word.

human rights law, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We welcome the comprehensive approach to promoting children's digital rights and the best interests of the child in the digital	human rights law, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We welcome the comprehensive approach to promoting children's digital rights and the best interests of the child in the digital space.	
Artificial intelligence		
97. We note the significant developments that have taken place in the Information Society with the emergence in the public sphere of artificial intelligence, which significantly advances the pace and scale with which artificial intelligence is expected to have an impact on many aspects of human societies, and also acknowledge concerns about the potential negative impacts on employment, labour, the environment, human rights and information integrity.	97. We note the significant developments that have taken place in the Information Society with the emergence in the public sphere of artificial intelligence, which significantly advances the pace and scale with which artificial intelligence is expected to have an impact on many aspects of human societies, and while acknowledging opportunities of this technology to advance human rights, we also acknowledge concerns about the potential negative impacts on employment, labour, the environment, human rights and information integrity.	We propose revising paragraph 97 to present a more balanced perspective that acknowledges both the opportunities and the concerns.
Monitoring and measurement		
138.We recognise the need for further funding and capacity-building of national statistical systems to enable all countries to meet the demand for improved data and statistics, and call on development partners to provide additional resources, share best practices, and support capacity development, particularly in developing countries. We also urge the private sector to contribute by making appropriate data available to support the gathering and analysis of statistical evidence on the development of the Information Society, thereby strengthening research, policy development, and the work of governments, civil society, academia and other stakeholders.		This paragraph would benefit from clarification and refinement, particularly concerning the request for the private sector to share data relevant to the development of the Information Society.