

# Informal Multistakeholder Sounding Board (IMSB) Reflections on Revision 2 of the WSIS+20 Outcomes Document

*9 December 2025*

The Informal Multistakeholder Sounding Board (IMSB) appreciates the efforts by all contributing to Revision 2 of the WSIS+20 outcomes document, including inputs from those participating in the [consultations held 8 December](#) in support of the Co-Facilitators and WSIS+20 process. This submission provided by the IMSB seeks to provide IMSB reflections, and input from the 8 December consultations. It does not seek to replace stakeholder contributions published on the dedicated page linked above.

We appreciate the continued efforts of achieving a good balance in Rev 2, and as noted in our prior reflections continue to support the streamlining of the document to focus clearly on the WSIS vision, strengthening the WSIS architecture - especially its multistakeholder foundations, and acknowledging the importance of global connectivity in bringing this people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society.

The IMSB in its review of Rev 2, and in the consultations notes areas of strong convergence across a diverse range of stakeholders and areas as highlighted in prior submissions to retain, in particular in the following areas:

- Strong recognition and appreciation of the process undertaken by the co-facilitators to reflect consultations with all stakeholders.
- Reaffirming multistakeholder cooperation as the guiding principle and foundational value of the WSIS. In addition, taking note of the NETmundial+10 guidelines for multistakeholder collaboration and consensus-building.
- Appreciation of Rev 2 and the work that has gone into it as a more balanced document for the final WSIS outcome document.
- Strong support for the permanent mandate of the Internet Governance Forum, recognition of the value of the IGF, NRIs and the full range of intersessional work: Dynamic Coalitions, Best Practice Forums and Policy Networks.
- Broad recognition of the importance of sustainable funding for IGF, particularly the IGF Secretariat and related work.
- Addressing Internet fragmentation is essential for enabling delivery on all WSIS action lines, with this in mind it is important to strengthen language to para 91 to reflect Internet architecture.
- Importance of inclusivity, including the multilingual nature of the Internet, including introduction of Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) and progress towards Universal Acceptance (UA).

- Ensuring digital inclusion for all, the protection of human rights for all, including the needs of all people (including for example, persons with disabilities, youth and other marginalized communities).
- Anchoring the WSIS in international human rights law and the UN human rights system by restoring the language in the Zero Draft (paragraphs 73 and 89 in particular), which offered a solid basis for integrating human rights in digital development and the governance of digital technologies.

Specifically in relation to key areas where strong convergence also with specific suggestions, are by example (but not limited to) the following areas:

### **Key aspects to retain in the next revision of the Outcome Document**

- The WSIS vision (paras 3, 5, 105 and 119) reaffirming multistakeholder cooperation as the guiding principle and foundational value of the WSIS.
- The permanent mandate of the Internet Governance Forum (para 100), recognition of the IGF, NRIs and the full range of intersessional work: Dynamic Coalitions, Best Practice Forums and Policy Networks (para 98).
- WSIS-GDC-SDG coherence (paras 24, 104-106, 111, 113, 120-126), avoiding duplication, and strong commitments to follow-up and review.
- Closing all digital divides (paras 9-12, 16, 18- 27) - “closing all” in Rev2, another step up from “closing” in Rev1 indicates the increased importance and acknowledgment. In addition, the acknowledgment that strengthened international cooperation from all stakeholders to address quality and affordability of connectivity (paras 25, 26) is particularly important for developing countries.
- Addressing Internet fragmentation is essential for enabling delivery on all WSIS action lines (para 91).
- Financial mechanisms (paras 61-65, including suggested edits to para 66)

### **On Financial Mechanisms**

The IMSB has followed the development of this section of the draft closely, and has noted the widespread support for concrete action with regard to financial mechanisms that will facilitate progress towards the WSIS vision. We also note the growing consensus that this WSIS review can most effectively foster such concrete action via the formation of a multistakeholder task force with a clear goal, mandate and timeline.

The concerns that we have heard regarding the current draft relate to the modalities of the task force and its reporting line; in particular, that a reporting line directly to the General Assembly may jeopardise or inhibit the open, frank, and truly multistakeholder dialogue that will be essential if the task force is to make progress. Following previous WSIS practice, a dedicated working group could be convened under the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) with the collaboration of the WSIS implementing agencies. We would support the suggestion that the task force report into the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, whose 29th session in April 2026 will include "representatives of

governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector." Such an approach would also allow for integration and coordination with discussions in the Internet Governance Forum, national, regional and youth Internet governance initiatives, and the WSIS Forum, helping to ensure input from all interested stakeholders.

We suggest rewording the last sentence of paragraph 66:

66. We invite the Secretary-General, within existing mandates and resources and in coordination with WSIS action lines facilitators and other relevant United Nations entities, ~~to establish consider the establishment of~~ a task force to examine future financial mechanisms for digital development, building on and complementing ongoing financing initiatives and mechanisms and involving all stakeholders, including multilateral financial institutions and other development partners, and to report on its outcomes to the ~~81st session of the General Assembly~~ 29th session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in 2026.

## On Artificial Intelligence

The IMSB strongly welcomes and supports the language added in paragraph 84, particularly the reference to leveraging "existing United Nations and multi-stakeholder mechanisms". We note with concern, however, that the section on artificial intelligence does not recognise the long-standing and substantive work on artificial intelligence (including governance of artificial intelligence) that has occurred under the auspices of the WSIS architecture, including the Internet Governance Forum. The IGF Policy Network on Artificial Intelligence has issued substantive annual Policy Briefs since 2023, while AI has been a central topic of discussion at all levels of the IGF program, including workshops, main sessions, and High-Level sessions.

We suggest two edits to address this absence; either or both could be included.

Option A - an additional paragraph:

83 bis. We recognise the significant work done on artificial intelligence-related issues within the WSIS framework, including the multistakeholder efforts convened under the Internet Governance Forum and the WSIS Forum. We request the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Artificial Intelligence (IAWGAI) to take account of these activities in its ongoing coordination efforts.

Option B - edit:

84. We encourage the development of international partnerships on artificial intelligence capacity-building to develop education and training programmes, increase access to resources including open artificial intelligence models and systems, open training data and compute, facilitate artificial intelligence model training and development, and promote the

participation of micro -, small and medium-sized enterprises in the digital economy. We will leverage existing United Nations and multi-stakeholder mechanisms, **including the Internet Governance Forum and the WSIS Forum**, to support artificial intelligence capacity building to bridge artificial intelligence divides, facilitate access to artificial intelligence applications and build capacity in high-performance computing and related skills in developing countries.

## **On Internet governance**

It is important to note that the Tunis Agenda not only contains a definition of Internet Governance, but also paragraphs on the fact that Internet governance encompasses technical and policy issues. In this regard, the consultations identified some specific suggested language worth considering as additions to provide this clarification. Some specific language suggestions are below

88. We reaffirm the ~~description~~**working definition** of Internet governance in the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, **with a working definition** as the development and application by governments, the private sector and civil society, in their respective roles, of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programmes that shape the evolution and use of the Internet.

89. We ~~reaffirm~~**recognize** that Internet governance **encompasses both technical and public policy issues and** must continue to be global and multistakeholder in nature with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society, technical and academic communities, international organisations, and all other relevant stakeholders in accordance with their respective roles and responsibilities.

Additionally, in the interests of clarity and efficiency, the IMSB suggests consolidating the references to the IGF Secretariat in paragraphs 100 and 103. A suggestion for reformatting and editing the language in these two paragraphs:

100. We decide that the Internet Governance Forum shall be made a permanent forum of the United Nations, **maintaining the current arrangement under which the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs provides its Secretariat. We call for the strengthening of this Secretariat, on a stable and sustainable basis and in accordance with United Nations budgetary procedures, to enable it to continue its development, implement further improvements and support the work of National and Regional Internet Governance Forums and Internet Governance Forum intersessional activities.**

103. We ~~call for the strengthening of the Secretariat of the Internet Governance Forum, to enable it to continue its development, implement further improvements and support the work of National and Regional Internet Governance Forums and intersessional activities, and~~ invite the Secretary-General to submit a proposal to the General Assembly during its eightieth session to ensure stable and sustainable funding for the Forum, combining a mix of core UN funding and voluntary contributions.

Finally, the IMSB would like to take this opportunity to express strong appreciation for the initiative to establish the IMSB as part of this WSIS+20 process, and our appreciation working with all stakeholders, the Co-Facilitators, to the Secretariat, and all staff. We appreciate the tireless efforts to seek inclusion through multistakeholder mechanisms to this important process impacting all in today's and the future Information Society.