

Distinguished delegates, esteemed colleagues, and fellow stakeholders in our shared digital future,

We gather today at a pivotal moment, standing at the twenty-year milestone of the World Summit on the Information Society. Like ancient navigators who contemplated unexplored oceans from familiar shores, we find ourselves facing the vast digital horizon that extends beyond our current boundaries. Before us lies the Zero Draft, a document that serves as the architectural roadmap for the next chapter of our global Information Society.

The WSIS+20 Zero Draft document offer us a critical map of the undercurrents and shoals we must navigate to reach true ports of digital inclusion and Internet Governance. We commend the immense effort that has shaped this draft, recognizing in its pages a firm commitment to a people-centered, inclusive, and development-oriented digital world built on the essential principles of multistakeholder cooperation and respect for human rights.

However, a roadmap, no matter how well-intentioned, is only the first step. The presented analysis shows that, like a compass that constantly points toward magnetic north but not necessarily toward the desired destination, the WSIS+20 Zero Draft maintains a solid technical orientation but lacks the precision necessary to reach territories where the most vulnerable and diverse communities of our digital world reside.

The draft speaks eloquently of bridging digital divides, yet its vision of inclusion, at times, feels like a distant shore obscured by mist. Like islands that remain unmapped on official charts, there exists an archipelago of communities that the draft barely acknowledges. Who are these communities? They are the individuals experiencing homelessness, the informal and rural workers who are the bedrock of our economies, the migrants and refugees seeking a foothold in a new world.

The WSIS+20 document mentions "marginalized communities" like mirages on the horizon, recognizing their existence but without charting clear routes to reach them. To invite them into the complex chambers of Internet Governance, we must first build pathways they can walk. We cannot simply open the door to a library for those whose immediate needs are for shelter and sustenance; we must integrate the digital future into the fabric of their present reality.

Furthermore, our roadmap's color palette for gender remains strikingly binary. Our analysis presents a penetrating observation: the draft's gender vision remains trapped in binary coordinates, like a navigation system that only recognizes north and south, ignoring the multiple dimensions of the human landscape. In a world that increasingly understands and embraces a wider spectrum of gender identity and expression, this limited view is an architectural flaw.

Contemporary gender theories and the lived realities of individuals whose expressions transcend traditional categories remain like unnamed constellations in the night sky of digital policies, shining but not forming part of official guidance systems. We are attempting to paint a vibrant, global rainbow with only two colors, leaving countless individuals and their realities unseen.

This brings us to the future inhabitants of this structure: our youth. Youth barely appears in the document beyond the beginning, when in reality they constitute the native population of the digital territory we are attempting to administrate. We are charting a course for a great vessel, yet we have not adequately invited onto the bridge the very generation that will be tasked with sailing it through the uncharted waters of tomorrow.

Their energy, innovation, and innate digital fluency are not merely a resource to be acknowledged, but a force that must be actively woven into our governance models. Like recognizing that fish live in the ocean without consulting them about underwater currents, we risk building structures that ignore the wisdom of those who navigate these waters most naturally.

The spirit of the document rightfully champions the empowerment of the Global Majority. Yet, the language sometimes frames this empowerment as a project to be promoted *from* the Global North, rather than a capacity to be unlocked *within* the Global South. One of the sharpest observations shows that the draft constructs the inclusion of the Global Majority as a philanthropic project directed from the Global North, rather than recognizing it as a process of self-determination.

The draft speaks of planting seeds, but it must not forget that these lands are already fertile, rich with their own gardeners and ancient knowledge. Our shared task is not to plant *for* others, but to ensure everyone has the tools, the water, and the sunlight to cultivate their own digital harvest, to build their own unique corner of the global garden.

We also identify a fundamental problem: the lack of systematic integration between ITU actions, Internet Governance messages and objectives, the Global Digital Compact, and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. These initiatives float like separate islands instead of forming an archipelago connected by bridges of effective coordination.

The vital connection between the WSIS outcomes, the Global Digital Compact, and the Sustainable Development Goals cannot be a footnote; it must be the central, resounding chord that harmonizes every paragraph and every proposal. This alignment remains more as a cartographic aspiration than as a navigable reality.

To transform this roadmap into a living reality, we propose critical reinforcements:

First, let us imbue our commitments with unshakable resolve. A key proposal is to replace "shall" with "must" in relation to the Internet Governance Forum as a permanent forum. This linguistic distinction is like the difference between a traffic sign that suggests a direction and one that makes it mandatory. This is not a mere suggestion; it is an obligation to preserve the central pillar of our multistakeholder dialogue.

Second, our intentions must be fortified with clear, actionable mechanisms. Like architects who design bridges without specifying construction materials, the current draft lacks clear mechanisms for capacity building in the Global Majority. The document is filled with noble aspirations for capacity building and inclusion, but without the scaffolding of specified financial and structural supports, these aspirations risk remaining castles in the air.

Finally, when it comes to innovation and technology, not only are public and private sectors key actors, but civil society, academia, NGOs, and technical communities must be integral parts if we truly want human-centered technologies. Let us define the mechanisms that will empower civil society, academia, and the technical community, turning passive stakeholders into active architects.

The draft contains many intentions that lack language that truly includes everyone and grants them some sense of agency. The document becomes "just a roadmap for certain countries and realities" and may contribute exactly to what it is trying to avoid: "an internet where few can access and some few more can enjoy with all the freedom and openness that comes with it".

It's like having a beautifully illustrated map that shows all destinations but doesn't include the navigation tools necessary for travelers to chart their own routes. The language must be infused with a greater sense of agency for the communities it seeks to serve.

Despite the criticisms, the zero draft is establishing a path on how we can continue thinking about Internet governance as multistakeholder, including not only current actors, but those present now as youth, adolescents and children, and those yet to come.

Finally, as captains of a diverse fleet navigating toward a shared digital future, invite us to acknowledge that the challenge does not lie in abandoning the voyage, but in adjusting our sails to catch winds that propel all vessels in the digital convoy toward shores where each community, each language, each expression of identity, and each generation can find not just a place to dock, but a home to flourish in tomorrow's digital archipelago.

Let us refine this roadmap together. Let us not build a silent digital cathedral with closed doors, but a bustling, open-air public square where every voice, in every language, from every corner of our world, can join the conversation that shapes our collective destiny.

The waters we navigate are complex, but as these analyses remind us, the spirit of Internet - that persistent lighthouse that has guided our collective journey - continues to shine, inviting us to build not just technical connections, but human bridges toward a digital future where inclusion is not a cartographic aspiration, but a navigable reality for all.

In this convergence of critical analysis and architectural vision, we find our path forward: not as passive recipients of predetermined digital futures, but as active co-creators of an inclusive digital world that truly serves all of humanity.

Thank you.