

World Summit on the Information Society

Government of Jordan Statement

Plenary Session

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Speech of HE Dr. Fawaz Zu'bi

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Jordan

Mr. Chairman,

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan stands poised to harness the potential of information and communications technology, ensuring that our citizens are enabled to make a dramatic leap into the networked world.

His Majesty King Abdullah II recently stated:

“Bridging the digital gap provides an enormous economic opportunity for the poorest nations to be inserted into the global economy at a faster pace than ever before.”

We understand that the global information society is evolving at breakneck speed. So while we understand that opportunity is there, we also see that we must seize the moment to make it happen.

Commercial, social and professional opportunities are exploding as new markets open to competition and foreign investment and participation.

Our modern world is undergoing a dynamic process that promises a fundamental change in all aspects of our lives, including knowledge dissemination, social interaction, economic and business practices, political engagement, media, education, health, leisure and entertainment. We are in the midst of a revolution, perhaps the greatest that humanity has ever experienced. To ensure the greatest benefit to

the world community requires the global discussion that we are participating in today.

we gratefully acknowledge all the hard work that has shaped the WSIS, the efforts of its visionaries and organizers including our host country the Swiss Confederation, the United Nations, the ITU and the 2005 host Tunisia, and the commitment of all its contributors, participants and supporters, all of whom that brought us all together as connectivity partners.

It is a long process that we have just begun, and one that is full of challenges. These challenges include cultural diversity, different community standards, different legal systems, and disproportionate concentration of economic power.

Jordan understands these challenges, and regardless of their outcome, we are certain that the future will look brighter as we move from Geneva to Tunis.

For its part, Jordan aspires to contribute to the global dialogue in the venue of this gathering, through showcasing what can be accomplished when visionary and dedicated leadership, strong public-private partnership, an enabling environment, and access and connectivity to citizens converge together.

With the young, literate and well-educated workforce, Jordan is moving forward to ensure that its citizens play an important role in the development of the Information Society and a Knowledge-Based Economy.

We believe we are well on our way.

We understand that Information has become a source of wealth in its own right; we are emphasizing the development of industries associated with the manipulation, transmission, storage and retrieval of information or ICT. They have become the drivers of significant change in countries able to harness their potential. We began our national dialogue through a public-private partnership dedicated to developing a joint ICT strategy for the nations. With over US\$ 1 billion in investments attracted, 10,000 jobs created, and a growing export rate, we are confident that the future holds great promise.

While we pride ourselves with the ability to develop Jordanian solutions, we all acknowledge the assistance of our international partners who have contributed their experience and best practices to shaping our strategy forward.

Mr. Chairman,

In reviewing the objectives, goals, and targets set forth in the Action Plan of the World Summit on the Information Society, Jordan can realistically state that it could meet its targets.

Through our commitment to a National Broadband Learning and Research Network we will be taking the lead to bring high speed, broad-band connectivity to all the nation's schools, universities, community colleges, and public access points by the end of 2006. This Network would ensure that at least one-third of all Jordanians have access to the networked world.

Through our e-Government Program, we are redefining government, as an efficient service provider, dedicated to providing the best possible service at the lowest possible cost to the citizens of the country.

Our nation's future lies with its children. A new pedagogical approach that makes use of IT, not merely as a tool but as the basis of a new educational paradigm has already begun through our Education Reform for a Knowledge Economy program, a 5-year and a US\$ 500m effort for fundamentally redefine learning outcomes in our schools.

These efforts are coupled with a Forward Agenda, which, through a broadband based information society, will ensure that all Jordanians have the ICT access and skills needed to improve the prosperity of themselves, their families, businesses, communities, and country.

With Jordan has achieved the above level of connectivity, it will proved to have become among the most connected countries in the world. Connectivity is not a luxury, even for a developing country like Jordan. Instead, it is a necessity, and we intend to see that through access to the networked world, every Jordanian has the opportunity to realize his or her potential.

We are committed to sharing our experience and to working together to making the Summit a success.

We look forward to partnering with each of the showing global success on the issues of information society in Tunisia.

Thank you very much.