|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Document CWG-Internet-18/9** |
| **6 October 2023** |
| **English only** |
|  |  |
| Contribution by Saudi Arabia (Kingdom of), Bahrain (Kingdom of), Egypt (Arab Republic of), United Arab Emirates, Kuwait (State of), Morocco (Kingdom of), South Africa (Republic of) and Tunisia |
| TOPIC FOR NEXT OPEN CONSULTATION |

**Introduction**

The developmental aspects of the Internet has played a major role in the development of societies and economies around the world. It is important to note that the developmental aspects of the Internet are not evenly distributed. Developing countries often face challenges in accessing and using the Internet due to, among other factors, limited technical infrastructure, poor connectivity, weak security, and International public policy issues. However, efforts are underway to address these challenges and to make the Internet more accessible to everyone.

**Discussion**

The development Aspects of the internet has been driven by a number of factors, including technological Infrastructure, connectivity, security and International Public Policy Issues.

* **Technical Infrastructure:** A well-developed, accessible, and affordable information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and applications, tailored to regional, national, and local needs, can accelerate social and economic progress and improve the well-being of all. However, they are challenges such as investment, access, skills shortages, governance, security, and sustainability**.**
* **Connectivity:** Although progress in ICT connectivity, digital divides persist between and within countries, and between men and women. Accordance to [ITU’s Measuring digital development: Facts and Figures 2022](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/facts/default.aspx) as the world reaches 8 billion people, 5.3 billion people (66%) are using the internet. However, 2.7 billion people worldwide are still offline, and universal internet access is still a long way off in least developed and landlocked developing countries, where only 36% of the population is online. Enabling affordable access is one of the major obstacles to the generalization of sustainable connectivity.
* **Security:** A secure , resilient, and trustworthiness Internet is important for the overall health of the global economy and society because it provides a platform for trust and confidence. When people can trust that their data is safe and that their online transactions are secure, they are more likely to engage in economic and social activities online.
* **International Public Policy Issues:** International public policy has a significant impact on internet development and resilience, both positive and negative. It can shape the governance frameworks and regulations that govern the internet, impacting issues such as privacy, cybersecurity, and access to information. International public policies can also influence internet innovation and the development and deployment of internet infrastructure, as well as the regulation of cross-border data flows and increase the gap between developed countries and the rest of the world.

**Proposal**

Based on the above discussion, the following topic is suggested to the Council Working Group Internet next open consultation: "How to accelerate the developmental aspects of the internet to strengthen the reliance on ICTs?”

* **How to utilize the WSIS+20 review process and the ongoing global digital compact (GDC) negotiations to address aspects related to internet development, particularly in the areas of technical infrastructure, connectivity, security, and international public policy issues?**
* **What measures are necessary, to enhance Connectivity, to spread the Internet in the countries that are still offline?**
* **How to incentivize governments and stakeholders to invest more in internet infrastructure so that it can enable affordable and wide internet access??**
* **How can governments in developing countries create a more favorable regulatory environment for investment in internet infrastructure?**
* **What are the key challenges and opportunities in building a resilient and secure internet?**
* How can we address the digital divide and ensure that everyone has affordable access to the internet and its benefits?
* How can we promote international cooperation on international Public Policy Issues pertaining to internet?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_