

# Rwanda

## WSIS+10 HIGH LEVEL POLICYH STATEMENT

**Excellences Ministers, Heads of Delegations,  
ITU Elected Officials,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**First of all, I would like to thank the ITU for once again hosting this forum that provides us with an opportunity to contribute to the global development agenda. Indeed, the concept of the knowledge society goes beyond technology and emphasizes the human development processes that transform information into knowledge and enable governments, communities and organizations to profoundly change the economy and society.**

From its inception, the World Summit on Information Society had provided a platform through which all stakeholders could join hands to create an information society which is human-centered, inclusive and development-oriented.

I was in Tunis 10 years ago, as most of you here I believe. As you will recall, at that time, ICT was talked in terms of its potential for contributing to the MDGs. Everything was discussed in terms of what ICT "can" do.

10 Years later, I am here to testify that Rwanda took the WSIS outcomes seriously and committed to make the necessary investments in infrastructure and human capacity. As a result, Rwanda is on course to meet all MDGs with a great contribution of ICTs, especially broadband.

Today, we talk about ICT not only in terms of what it can do for us, but in terms of actual lives of children and mothers saved, a million people pulled out poverty in the last 5 years, a generation of young Rwandans empowered with access to world class education through ICT. We talk of the role of ICT in turning Rwanda into one of the best places to do business in Africa and the results in terms of FDI and jobs created.

As part of our vision 2020, Rwanda has positioned broadband as a driver of transformation of the country into a middle-income and transition from an agrarian economy to a knowledge-based society by 2020. After a decade of investment that has extended 2G and 3G connectivity to more than 99% of our population, we have now launched a national broadband project to link the national fiber optic backbone to a 4G LTE last mile network and provide 95% population coverage by 2017.

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As it has been emphasized by previous speakers, we know what the future that the world needs. We know the aspirations and expectations of our young generation, especially Africa where more than 70% of the population is under the age of 35. We know how to get there. We know the crucial role that ICTs have to play. What we don't know is when we will get

there. This depends on how fast we are able to move. 2015 was a great target to achieve a historic milestone. The post 2015 sustainable development needs to provide the world with another dream. But as we work to turn the dream into results, we know that the difference will only be in our respective commitment to translate intentions to action.

This in turn depends on our individual and collective leadership. I would like to take this opportunity to once gain thank the ITU for awarding the Global Information Society Prize last month to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Rwanda Paul Kagame. Rwanda is a committed partner of ITU and WSIS. This is why we decided for instance to join hands with other stakeholders to be a partner for Special activities for the WSIS.

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year, Rwanda and ITU co-hosted the Transofrmafrica Summit. A new dream of a Smart Africa was born. Heads of States present at the event and a few months later the entire AU Summit endorsed a vision that puts ICT of at the heart of the socio-economic transformation of the continent, a vision that encourages countries to make the necessary investment to deliver broadband to all citizen of the continent, a vision that commits to leverage ICT to improve public service delivery and Government openness and accountability, a vision that puts the private sector first, unleashes youth innovation, empowers women and cares for the marginalized groups and environment. I believe that the same principles should be captured in the post 2015 sustainable development agenda.

**I Thank you for your kind attention**