

FINISHED FILE
WSIS HIGH LEVEL SESSION 9
APRIL 10, 2019
10:00 A.M. CET
DIGITAL ECONOMY AND TRADE

Services Provided By:
Caption First, Inc.
P.O Box 3066
Monument, CO 80132
1-877-825-5234
+001-719-481-9835
Www.captionfirst.com

This text, document, or file is based on live transcription. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), captioning, and/or live transcription are provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This text, document or file is not to be distributed or used in any way that may violate copyright law.

>> TED CHEN: Good morning. We are about to start our session entitled Digital Economy and Trade. Can I invite the panelists to be on stage? Thank you.

Good morning. We will be starting session 11. So welcome everyone to session 11 entitled Digital Economy and Trade. My name is Ted from EverComm Singapore. Digital Economy and trade is a very broad subject. Today we will start the session with the development of e-commerce and move to the regulatory discussion and relations to Digital Economy. And finally touch on how new technologies such as AI and blockchain can potentially impact international trade. Just to remind everyone this is a new format. We are moving away from the traditional policy statements to policy sessions, and each distinguished panelist will be given no more than five minutes to respond to the questions. This is to make sure that we stay on time. Before we start I would just like to invite the WSIS action line facilitator to give his opening.

>> TORBJORN FREDRIKSSON: Thank you very much. Welcome back to the WSIS Forum. This is a very timely event. Geneva is a buzzing with discussions around e-commerce and digital trade. And only last week we had in UNCTAD, the e-commerce week with

1500 participants from 135 countries. We are continuing our collaboration here with all different tasks. We had 26 of the 30 e-trade for all partners actively involved in the e-commerce week last week. And we see that this area is growing very fast. We released numbers two weeks ago showing that global e-commerce sales reached 29 trillion in 2017. That's 13% up over the year before.

And what is interesting here since we are going to talk about trade as well is that the cross-border dimension of this is growing particularly fast. We saw, for instance, that share of online buyers or online shoppers that are buying things across the border has risen from 15% to 21% in only two years. So that's very important.

Now since we are in the UN context we should also keep in mind that we still have huge divides in this area whereas in most Developed Countries between 60 and 80% of the population are buying things online in the most Developing Countries and especially in Least Developed Countries far less than 5% of the population are doing so. We have a huge e-commerce divide. We see a massive need to give more attention and resources to make sure that Developing Countries and especially the Least Developed Countries can strengthen their readiness to participate in the e-commerce and Digital Economy. That is important to make sure that we -- that we derive positive development inclusive outcomes rather than widening divides and more inequalities. Thank you so much. Looking forward to the session.

>> TED CHEN: Thank you. So to help us kick start the session I would like to invite our first panelist the Minister from Cameroon. In general what is the level of e-commerce in your country and region? And what initiatives are in place for the development of e-commerce in your country.

>> LIBOM LI LIKENG: Thank you for giving me the floor. I would like to take this opportunity to express the deep gratitude of the Government of the Republic of Cameroon, to the host countries and organizers of this event for the exchange of good practices. I would like to say that the rule of authorities in developing socioeconomic in Cameroon takes place at two levels. A strong political level of the President of Cameroon to build a more equitable and inclusive society and a system through the majority, through the speeches and the economy development of Digital Economy is -- has priority in the plan, Governmental plan. The political level, this is very present.

Now with regard to the ICT sector which is adapting to innovation, we have adopted regulatory institutional, infrastructural measures that are promoted by the public

authorities to take and take out the convergence and technological innovation. This -- our major priority is a special plan. As I said the regulatory framework is constantly being reviewed and revised to take in to account the new threats linked to new technology, the use of electronic services by all layers of society, the protection of consumers and improvement of governance and quality of services.

So these are very important projects for developing infrastructure. Broadband infrastructure also have enabled Cameroon to have four points of collection for submarine cables, backbone of -- over fiber optics. Over 12,000 kilometers. We have two exchange points to have national infrastructure used by public services and without forgetting a special emergency response team.

So the combined efforts of the public authorities from the public sector and private sector and Civil Society have enabled Cameroon to have an ICT ecosystem which is a driver of national and subregional commerce. And these trades are illustrated by the appearance of several online commerce platforms with many customers online. We have a penetration rate which is close to 85%. Exponential increase of the volume of transactions linked to electronic currency and payments by mobiles. Development of logistic sector and gradual implementation of digital infrastructure. Other initiatives are undertaken in order to benefit from the advantages of ICTs for the commercial sector.

Just as an example, the Government has undertaken as part of cooperating with the Universal Postal Union it has been establishing a platform for e-commerce in the Central African subregion. The progress achieved is real and tangible in developing Digital Economy and electronic commerce.

The report for 2018 of UNCTAD on e-commerce index in the Africa has placed Cameroon as the 10th African market of e-commerce and the first in Central Africa. Nonetheless, a lot remains to be done to achieve sustainable development objectives.

We would like to be able to count on the support of Developed and Emerging countries to allow the rest of the community of Africa and of Cameroon in particular to catch up in terms of broadband infrastructure and Internet. Thank you.

(Applause.)

>> TED CHEN: Thank you, Excellencies. Now moving to another region I would like to invite His Excellency, the Minister from the Republic of North Macedonia. The two questions, what is your vision for future actions with regards to Digital Economy as part of the Western Balkan? And what are the measures undertaken in your country of in view of e-services.

>> DAMJAN MANCHEVSKI: Finally I would say in the Balkans the digital agenda is very high on the political agenda. And the European level, the digital agenda is very high on every political Forum wherever we speak. And this is due to the digital transformation changed the way we live, the way we conduct business. The six countries from the Western Balkan have understood this. And this is why we are undergoing joint projects that are allowing our citizens and our businesses to communicate. By mid 2021 there will be no roaming between the Balkan countries. This is especially important regarding data and especially important for the businesses.

In parallel to this initiative, to this agreement we have already signed we are starting to sign agreements to mutually recognize our digital certificates. This is extremely going to influence the economy, especially the businesses because no matter what documents they are issued in any of the countries will be recognized as the domestic in the other countries as well. Balkans is part of Europe but still one of the least developed regions of Europe, especially in regards of infrastructure. And this infrastructural divide that we have we can easily bridge with digital technologies. We have understood that we are going to much easier -- much more easier to bring the institutions and the services to the citizens rather than to bring the citizens to the institutions because there is a lack of infrastructure.

But with the new technologies we can easily provide the citizens in the most rural areas with access to information, to services, to public services that will also influence the increase and the demand for electronic trade. So this will influence the business. When undergoing these initiatives together with the business community, with the association for e-trade and they see positive changes.

So parallel we need to work on the offer but also on the demand side. And this will, of course -- it is on the side of the state of the Government to provide access to the citizens. In North Macedonia we have adopted our new operational broadband plan which means that we plan to invest in the World Bank 50 million Euros to provide fast and ultrafast Internet connection to especially the rural areas. This should also help and stop the current migration from rural areas from not only North Macedonia but all over the Balkans because we are going to provide the citizens in all of these areas with access to electronic services but also to e-trade.

And when talking about this there are two aspects of issue. One is technical, to provide them connectivity, access to Internet but the other is the legislative framework, the environment. And lately we have also adopted several pieces of

legislation which will allow the citizens to activate the electronic identification. We are just in the final stages of installation of the hardware and software of the electronic register of population which is the basis to provide electronic services to the citizens. We have adopted the new law on electronic documents, electronic services and electronic identification and trusted services which is going to allow the citizens to not only get services from the institutions but also to be -- to feel safe, that these services and their data will be secure by the state and that all of our legislation is in line with the EU's regulation.

So in very few words we have understood that working together, connecting the people through digital connectivity will provide them with much better opportunities for living conditions but also to conduct business. Thank you.

>> TED CHEN: Thank you, Excellency. So moving to yet another region, I would like to invite His Excellency, Deputy Minister from the Russian Federations. The questions is how have e-commerce involving in Russia nowadays and what are the challenges and barriers that they face in the process of e-commerce in Russia and your approach to overcome them?

>> MIKHAIL MAMONOV: Thank you for your questions. Russia is now heavily investing in developing Internet infrastructure. Last year we launched a very ambitious plan to really finish the issue of closing the digital divide in Russia. I mean about 97% of the territory of the Russian Federation including the vast underpopulated areas beyond the arctic circle will be covered by satellite or mainly by broadband which, of course, contributes greatly to developing, increasing the development of e-commerce of e-payments that are to be done in Russian. We are working heavily on developing new legislation because, you know, basically the challenges that arise in developing e-commerce of those of protecting personal data, those of protecting consumers, those of protecting payment systems and these are legal challenges, technological challenges we have to deal with them.

Another part of our Digital Economy and national program is developing legislation. And part of it is dedicated to the legislation related to e-payments. As you know nowadays e-commerce has developed two trends. One is moving towards mobile devices. And the second one is moving from trade to logistics in a way. Russia's -- Russia's post this year is -- is becoming a public company. So we as a ministry supervising all of this process. Very much concerned about how new business models will develop with the Russian post.

The Russian post is the major logistical company for moving e-commerce goods both export and inputs in Russia. We try to

invest heavily in developing a smart logistic system based on smart fulfillment to ensure that the last mile is as smooth as possible for the consumers. E-commerce is not only B to C or B to B but it is also the movement of goods and movement through the territory of Russia. In case we are able to develop the so-called space of digital trust with all partners on the duration of economic union, we are working on that, we will be able to ensure the paperless transition of goods through the territory of Russia from China to Europe and backwards. Thus making it possible to move containers through the continental part of Russia within maybe ten days or so using high speed, using also high speed railways.

So in our mind it is a huge development. It will distribute greatly to the development of e-commerce and e-trade and general -- general traditional trade in general. So we are now also heavily investing our effort and money both public and private in securing the payment systems. As you know lots of cybercrimes are now related to violating the control, the security of the payment systems. Russian solutions such as Info Watch are well-known worldwide. Our banks are now developing their own payment systems. They are maybe not as competitive worldwide but they are quite robust. And they are moving even beyond the borders of Russia. Ensuring greater involvement engagement of citizens in using mobile devices to make their payments.

I'm happy to usually move around Moscow even without cash. So I can use my cell phone wherever I can to pay for my goods. This is becoming more of a trend in Russia. So I think this is a small token of how our e-citizens and e-commerce is developing. Thank you.

>> TED CHEN: Thank you, Excellency. To switch over a little bit away from e-commerce and talk more about the Digital Economy I would like to invite the Director-General from the Ministry of Communication and Informatics from Indonesia. Can you give some example of Indonesia's policies have paid off boosting the Digital Economy? And what are your hopes of WSIS boosting through the Digital Economy?

>> AHMAD RAMLI: Thank you. Let me answer your question by giving you the background of Indonesia. In Indonesia we have at least 268 million peoples. And the penetration of Internet users is 150 million Internet users in Indonesia. In that context to support the growth of Indonesia Digital Economy the Government of Indonesia focuses on implementing several programs such as ICT infrastructure and digital literacy skills.

Indonesia relies that the maximum benefit from the Digital Economy is yet to be made. Continuously digital ecosystem to further accelerate this Digital Economy and trade in order to

create positive impact and boost the overall economy.

The Government itself has shifted its policies from regulator to driven facilitator. Indonesia has contributed to the achievement of WSIS Action Lines in which we introduce several ICT policies that I am to minimize the telecommunication accessibility and affordability gap in Indonesia through deploying a national high capacity backbone network called Varvaring project, which is in the final leg of completion providing high speed Internet access to more than 440 cities and municipalities in Meyer Island of Indonesia.

Digital Economy with ICT infrastructure needs to be bolstered by our field, such as cybersecurity, data privacy, digital literacy and education in order to increase adoption of digital goods and services. To strengthening the ecosystem of the Digital Economy the Government has conducted the following, one basic education on ICT skill and knowledge known as digital literacy program in collaboration with cybercrime, digital literacy. Intermediate and advanced education skill, we have created a digital scholarship program to getting 20,000 individuals to gain ICT certification for the following fields such as EI, Big Data analytics, cloud computing, IoT, et cetera. Through establishing a thousand national digital startup programs which I'm to develop startup ecosystem in Indonesia through provision of seed funding for 1,000 digital startups by 2020. For providing linkage for new startup to become a new unicorn in this context.

The next program, therefore we invite investors around the world to join our next program. Besides the program of and policies that I have previously mentioned, Indonesia's Government also strives to create a sharing economy workforce, digitization and digital financial inclusion. Thank you.

>> TED CHEN: Thank you. Throughout this discussion we continue to hear the importance of regulatory framework in the Digital Economy. So to defer in to the regulatory aspect of the Digital Economy I would like to invite the executive director for communication regulatory commission from Colombia. What should be the role of the regulator in a digital economy? And how a country should measure the Digital Economy in a global context?

>> GERMAN DARIO ARIAS: Thank you for your question. We would like to talk in Spanish. First and foremost, I would like to say in Colombia we are developing a roadmap going forward for telecoms. And we are seeking to look at things in a very wholistic way, provide all the various challenges that we have that are posed by Digital Economy. What we have seen is that Digital Economy is in a transverse way, cross-cutting way. We have seen very often states are not actually designed for

Digital Economy. So because most of the Governments have a vertical structure, each ministry structure has its own regulatory body and the policy making structure, but we discuss different themes such as this transport, hotels and things. We see that very often these themes are not vertical but rather horizontal, cross-cutting. Recommending for Colombia is to look at things in a transverse way, a cross-cutting way where we can look at such themes that are cross-cutting. What we are seeing in the world, question of regulation with sanctions on Google and Facebook and themes of data protection, author's rights, security, these themes actually concern all the regulatory bodies.

And so what we are seeking to do is put in place a roadmap that will help the country look things in the wholistic way and be able to rise to our challenges. There are many challenges we have to look at. And I would to mention some of them human resources, for example. But we see every citizen in Colombia also has to deal with the questions of payment. So a lot of people are not actually considered as employees but they are paying in to Social Security. And so this can give rise to some problems in the future when it comes to questions of pensions, Social Security. And so this theme has to be looked at very carefully to see what can be done when it comes to health care systems, Social Security and pensions. Many implications for this.

Now also taxes. For example, very often we are buying things outside of our country. But dealing with this question of payment of taxes is another very major problem or challenge we have to rise to. For example, looking at Internet, multimedia. Very often companies that do business in Colombia don't pay taxes there. And so this is money that's not being paid in Colombia. We have to see what are the sources of funding of financing of countries. If you have an all embracing vision you have to look at all these various aspects and also handling personal data. Privacy. If the data people put on Facebook or Google well, who whose property are these data, in fact, once they are the net? And so to what extent does the user have the right to actually control the use of the data that emanates from them.

So what we are saying is we don't have to necessarily regulate more but regulate in a more intelligent way. And we have to understand the dynamics of the Digital Economy to understand when we need to regulate. Sometimes not regulating is actually regulating or regulating through a mission. And so when it is necessary, the state can be there to actually intervene as needed. Thank you.

>> TED CHEN: Thank you. So moving on to some of the

forecasts and potential on the Digital Economy, I would like to invite the Deputy Secretary-General of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity. The Asia-Pacific region is forecasted to have great potential. Do you think it is ready to transform itself to the Digital Economy and considering issues to be tackled? What will APT do to realize the Digital Economy potentials in that region?

>> MASANORI KONDO: Thank you. APT is the only Intergovernmental organization focusing on ICT in the region. And as you said we foresee the market size of the Asia and Pacific region will be very big and important for global economy. So and transformation to the digital economy is an ongoing process. And it is not something that we can wait until we are ready. So therefore the question is rather how much first can we adjust or more proactively how much first can we promote transformation to Digital Economy. So to answer that question, I would like to stress three points as an important factor. First, policy and regulatory framework which facilitates the development of innovative ICT products and services. In this regard the mindset of policymakers should be also subject to the creative destruction.

Second, international common business platform where economic activity can flourish. Basic element of economic activity is exchange. So whether it is product service data or finance, service flow is the key for Digital Economy. Then third, Digital Economy should be a place where people can embrace it. Without having a shared positive view for Digital Economy, it can't be sustainable. So with regard to the second question, what APT can do for those issues. I think the APT can do several things in that regard. First and foremost APT can provide a platform to discuss related ICT policy issues and share experiences among member countries. Second, APT can conduct research work in order to analyze current situation in the region. The result of such activities would contribute to member countries' discussion. Third, APT can facilitate and coordinate with other international organizations so that member countries can discuss and consider close sectorial issues.

So since transformation to Digital Economy prevails everywhere and every aspect no one, no one country or organization to -- can deal with alone. So therefore bottom line is corroboration and APT would like to be a catalyst for APT in the area of Digital Economy.

>> TED CHEN: Thank you. Being based in Asia-Pacific myself it is exciting to see how the region can transform. Every opportunity comes with risk and threat. I would like to invite the Chairman of MLI Group on the following questions. So what unprecedented threats are faced by the local and Digital

Economies in trade today? And are current strategies and regulatory framework adequate to mitigate these new threats? If not, any quick suggestions for us?

>> KHALED FATTAL: Good morning, Ted and good morning, everyone. I am glad we are addressing the issue of threats from the angle of Digital Economy. If we recall at the beginning of the interventions and some of our fellow panelists 27 trillion dollars is the value of the global Digital Economy today. Well, I have some news for you. We are in unprecedented times. And these unprecedented times are bringing threats to local, regional and global economies. And people's lives and livelihoods are at stake. I'm actually pleased that some of the panelists have addressed some of this stuff, but I fear we are not doing enough. Let's -- let me put it in to proper context. We live in 2019 in the 21st Century living and that no longer matches with the 20th Century model of governance, economics, and mechanisms of how we legislate, regulate or defend. And that's a challenge. So if you think -- by the way, a raise of hands, if anybody thinks I'm scare mongering here. Not a single hand. Might as well stop.

Let's put it in to perspective. I am going to give you some facts. Each one is a game-changer that you think who are in authority, responsible for defending the nation state or businesses who are responsible for securing the organizations would stop thinking not just outside of the box but thinking innovatively what is it they must do to defend.

For example, today Governments and organizations are being cyber attacked on unprecedented scales and that's on global levels. We have a new breed of destruction motivated cyber terrorist that are now on the rise. Artificial Intelligence is not only going at a huge speed, it is actually being weaponized. The sophistication of cyber criminals is on such a speed there is no chance for law enforcement to keep it up. When you put it all in perspective and you add the technology and artificial intelligence and is there any chance that any regulatory regime that we are implementing today that can keep up, I am asking this to my panelists. I am asking this to Government Delegates and the answer is no. We need to ask ourselves what must we do. We propose that a change of mindset matched with a new description.

First of all, cybersecurity is no longer the key word. You need to start focusing on survivability. That's national and corporate. And if you are a nation state leader whether you are a regulator and Minister or even a head of state, the question you need to ask is what type of national cyber survivability strategy with legislative roadmap do I need to implement so that I can secure my nation state. The truth of the matter is the

nation state and citizens are at risk without a single military installation being attacked without a single critical infrastructure being attacked and this is real. From a corporate point of view you have to ask the same thing. What type of a corporate cyber survivability strategy, what is it that I am actually not implementing to append to the things that must be done very well. And if you don't ask that question you have to challenge yourself enough. That's what I would actually leave you with is this thought. I'm happy to answer any other questions. So this is really the high level message I would pass on.

>> TED CHEN: Thank you. I think this is a great segway to our next question. So to help us imagine and think ahead to the year of 2030 with these in mind, I would like to invite the international secretary from ASDF International. How do you see the Digital Economy in 2030? And do you think that trade can be facilitated in the universal currency?

>> KOKULA KRISHNA HARI KUNASEKARAN: Thank you for the floor. I wanted to go for 30 years before the present -- 1989. And if you have been seeing like we have been using the paper currencies and coins like it used to be heavy and nowadays it become the cards and probably in 2000s was the debit cards and credit cards. These cards have replaced the cash, paper money and this technological world is replacing the digital cards in to your digital phones or in to your smartwatches or in to the Artificial Intelligence or IoTs. In 2030 probably like, you know, we don't see the existence of paper money or coins. And probably answering for your next question, like about universal currency, yes, I think there will be a universal currency because now we have been seeing massive changes in the blockchain payments and bit coins. And some 85,000 types of bit coins are available in the digital market. And this is going to be a massive change and massive breakthrough. And certain countries have legalized the usage of bit coins also which is, you know, which is a good move I think. And probably like many coming up for the universal currency. Knowing about the three major players Visa, MasterCard and American Express. It is coming in line with Government at relations and it may be replacing the cards in order to give you new brand interface for doing the transactions.

And now, for example, like we will take the case as European Union. So earlier we had Swiss francs and other currencies for local currencies. Now what we have is the Euro. And I have been involved in discussion in the ASEAN about creating a new currency for the ASEAN zone, the ten countries particularly like Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia and other countries in the ASEAN zone.

Implementations are coming up. We call like local, European Union is having a Euro and ASEAN is going to have their own currency and United States is going to have the dollars. Once had this is going to be like major stakeholders probably in 2030 all will be merging together to form a universal currency. Yes, there are lots of difficulties in implementing the digital currencies. And those will be discussed further in order to -- in to the quorum of currency values and national level of importance. Thank you.

>> TED CHEN: Thank you. We cannot talk about Digital Economy without addressing getting in to details on some of the technologies some. Last but not least I would like to invite the CEO of Open Health Network to give you the perspective of how technology can impact trade. What is the impact of Artificial Intelligence is on international trade? And what is the potential impact of blockchain technology on international trade?

> TATYANA KANAZAVELI: Good morning, and happy to be here. And from previous discussions from panelists you have heard good and bad things that technologies can bring us. If you look at technology I think we don't all agree what those things are. If you look at Artificial Intelligence, it encompasses so many different things, such as neural networks, machine learning, also Internet of Things, drones and natural language processing. So when we talk about AI, we have to understand what type of things we actually mean. When you talk about blockchain and currency, yes, there is, you know, electronic currency but there are a lot of applications of a blockchain outside of any currency.

And what is blockchain? And how blockchain can address some of the issues that have been raised here on security and privacy of the data. Panelists have mentioned that we are concerned as consumers how the data we publish can be used against us. So we have developed in my company an architecture that enables people to democratize use of the health data. So they can control who, when and how does with health data. It can be applicable to other areas. If you look at AI, let's look at the supply chain. We can build, they predict plans that enable you to plan your production. We can use devices with neural networks. And we can predict tailor of the major equipment that can disrupt production and disrupt supply chain. Look at the agriculture. We can predict crops. We can predict demand but also in the blockchain side which became a huge issue using blockchain and AI we can trace regions of the produce. So there is an outbreak of certain diseases. Technologies is a blockchain can trace produce back to the farm where it was produced. So we can isolate major issues fast.

I was pleased to hear examples of use of AI from Oman where they mention using AI in image processing to increase detection of breast cancer. So when we are looking at those examples of AI and the things that blockchain and AI can deliver, we need to understand ethics and implications and security. But at the same time what we have dealt with before, we dealt with centralized databases. How secure is that. Now blockchain enables you to store data in secure distributed databases, A. B it is an infrastructure that allows you to keep data in blocks but it is not just that. You cannot change anything. So it is highly secure. Every block has reference to previous and next block. So it is very difficult to make data insecure and it is traceable. So how this type of technologies can help us to address most of the issues that have been raised for across many industries, that's the thing. And we need also, of course, to understand all the implications that come with that. Like, for example, we can blame AI on lack of privacy and using data against us. But at the same time we have to understand that we are the ones who post everything on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and everywhere else.

Our friends, our family members I can use social network and find out where you were and were not, what you have done. And guess what, your insurance company can decline your life insurance without ever talking to you just based on your social footprints. So as in any technology there are good and bad things, but you cannot stop progression of the world. AI blockchain, other disruptive technologies will be there. So we have to train, understand, address from policy security issues but embrace them. Thank you.

>> TED CHEN: Thank you. Thank you very much for addressing those points. We are very much on time and we do have -- I think we can open to -- yeah, we have ten minutes. So I think we can open to the floor for some questions if anyone has. Anyone would like to --

>> Can we ask questions of the audience? Ask the questions of the audience and not wait for the audience to ask them? Would you ask the audience what is --

>> We need a microphone.

>> Instead of waiting for you to ask us a question, I am going to ask you a question. You have been here for two days. You are now engaging in a Forum, in a mechanism that is what I would call from the 20th Century. And we have to find a way of bridging, moving in to the 21st Century and the way we live and the way we are threatened and what we need to do. And how we need to move forward. So my question to you there are many players here, many attendees who are decision makers. Do you feel that you are challenging yourself on what you need to do

differently? And if anybody is happy to raise their hand and volunteer, that would be wonderful because we -- we can no longer afford to be passengers on this train. We have to be driving the train. Each one of us who has a role within their organization or their Government has a role to drive that train. And if we don't drive that train because everything we are in is unchartered waters and unless we drive it we create the right mechanisms, guess what, it is not good. The ball is in your court.

(Laughter).

>> TED CHEN: Amazing. So anyone like to -- oh. That gentleman.

>> We have a victim.

>> Thank you very much.

>> I'm sorry, I am not going to answer the question. I want to ask a question to the Minister from Cameroon. And my question is does countries in Africa, especially countries like Cameroon, do they see the Internet as a threat to democracy? Thank you.

>> LIBOM LI LIKENG: I would like to thank you for the question that you have put to me. I would like to say the following. I would like to say that yes or no, that's not really going to work. But nuance things we have to say that the entire world has decided to get involved in the dynamic, the development of the Digital Economy through the internet. It has to span the entire population and city dwellers and Internet seeks to be used by people, people who haven't even been to school. For us the people who govern the countries, has a very positive side, a very good side but, of course, there can be no doubt that at the same time the Internet can be weaponized, weaponized by the Government because, in fact, we are working at a time when the user, the consumer people in the population have the power.

And so if you like overnight in the 21st Century hand power to all of the population, the people who can express themselves, who can chose but all too often the people have not received the proper information. So decision maker, policymaker be it the ministry or President of a country they have a very important role. They have an objective they are pursuing, but they can't receive a buy-in or backing from the population. The challenge that we see is a challenge for Governments not only from Africa but everywhere. And through the social networks, for example, well, it is possible for people who are having problems with mental health and also to speak their mind all too often. But people who don't have a high level education take that for granted but where is the truth? Where does the truth lie? So what we have to do and we have committed ourselves to this, and

the Government are doing this try to moderate things a little bit. For example, the worldwide level, there is no full regulation of Internet but through local measures to try to channel our population. Say the Internet has good sides and bad sides. We try to our play our own role and not be adding some spice or salt to a sauce that's being cooked. We go on to take a back seat to what's going on.

>> The gentleman who asked about democracy, can you please stand up? Thank you. Very good question. But let me just rephrase your question. Democracy is an unprecedented threat not only in Cameroon but globally. If any of you have heard of Cambridge Analytica you know how it was involved in the advancement of many elections in many parts of the world including some African elections. So you already know about that. The challenge here is if you don't take part in reclaiming your democracy, guess what? It will be dead and that's the thing that I was talking about where we need to make 21st Century living match with the models of the 20th Century. And unless we find the solutions moving forward, democracy will actually die. So it is up to you to be active. And as a matter of fact, we are doing something about it. I am happy to share with you. It is Google era, the unprecedented online.

>> TED CHEN: Do we have time for one more question? Sure. Gentleman.

>> Thank you very much. I think one of the challenges that Government faces today is, you know, they want to regulate everything. And when we look at adoption of new technologies there is a gap between the innovator and regulator. One of the case studies that we see in Oman, for example, whenever there is new technologies you find the regulator always say they will not allow it. Because it is a new thing, they don't have -- they don't have a previous experience. So what we did in Oman, we created what we call a sandbox or center of excellence for IR technologies where we are bringing the innovators and technologies and trends, AI, blockchain, IoT platforms and the regulator together. So we are -- we created a very fast impact on the adoption of new technologies. When we talk about the adoption of, you know, the Press Council diagnosis uses Artificial Intelligence to not come without bringing all those -- the regulator to share their data or the policymaker to share their data and to find a solution for their concern. Because always regulators, they are concerned that we have to ensure that their -- their concern is -- we address.

In this case we have this platform and I argue -- the countries really to look at this as a very important experience. It helps us to make the right policies and also to help the policymaker and the regulator to move forward and adopt the new

technology.

>> TED CHEN: Thank you. Thank you for your inputs. In the interest of time I would like to conclude the session and thank the panelists. The final summary will be provided in the concluding session today. And thank you to the audience and we will move on to the next panel. Thank you. Bye-bye.

This text, document, or file is based on live transcription. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), captioning, and/or live transcription are provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This text, document or file is not to be distributed or used in any way that may violate copyright law.
