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HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE: Digital cooperation and partnerships
for inclusive sustainable development

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Thank you very much. We would now like to move on with
the next segment. It's the high-level dialogue on digital
cooperation and partnerships for inclusive sustainable develop
am.
We will invite the panelists and our moderator Mr. Cosas
Luckyson Zavazava, please welcome to the stage, and hand it over
to the Chairperson. Over to you, Chairperson.
>> CHAIR: Thank you so much. It is my great plesh hiewr
to introduce the high-level strategic dialogue, digital
cooperation and partnerships for inclusive sustainable
development. Good cooperation and partnerships are the key
ingredients for any successful strategy and project, today
especially in our area of work. I would like to invite
Dr. Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, BDT Director, to moderate the

strategic dialogue.

>> COSMAS LUCKYSON ZAVAZAVA: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, Madam Chair. Thank you very much for giving me the floor. Thank you, excellency. Good morning, everyone, once again. The presence of over 1500 diverse stakeholders from all over the world at the WSIS Forum is testament to the fact that the WSIS process has been a great incubator for stakeholders to partner, network, learn, and share.

Throughout the years, WSIS has served as the launching platform for consultations, projects, and exciting initiatives that are impacting people's lives. Digital cooperation and partnerships are at the heart of the work that we do to advance digital development.

Yesterday, for example, we announced that ITU joined the Public Goods Alliance so that together we can contribute to the development and the use of digital public goods to build safe, inclusive, and trusted digital public infrastructure. This is a remarkable example of the power of digital cooperation and partnerships. Let's now deep dive into the issue with our special guests. Our panel today consists of stakeholders representing the government, private sector, Civil Society, and technical community. Panelists will share their own experiences of digital cooperation and partnerships for inclusive, sustainable development. Each of our panelists will have 3 minutes. Let me introduce them one by one. Ms. Yoichi Kanda, Director of Global Strategy Division, global Strategy Japan. Also that Japan is our partner for specific activities.,
Dr. Maike Luiken, Chair IEEE, addressing sustainable environment stewardship and climate change. Mr. Ran Xiao Vice President Strategy and Industry Development, Huawei is a partner for specific activities. Ms. Janet Umutesi, Senior Manager, Quality Assurance, riew won do utilities regulatory authority, Rwanda, and Rwanda is also a contributing authority. Mr. Paul Gaskell, Deputy Director, International Digital Standards and Internet Governance United Kingdom, a contributing partner. Mr. Dawit Bekele, reejial Vice President of Africa, ISOC and contributing partner. Finally but not less, Veni Markovski, Vice President, ICANN.

Now we start the round of questions, and I encourage the panelists to respect the 3 minutes. First question to
Mr. Kanda, can you tell us about Japan's air force to realize inclusive and resilient sustainable society and economy, that's the first part of the question. The second part of the question is, what did you think ITU and ICU management should do to strengthen our activities to realize the Sustainable Development Goals in the future? The floor is yours.

>> YOICHI KANDA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for the

opportunity to give my presentation. In 2003 and 2005 under leadership of the Secretary-General, Mr. Utami, the ITU -- WSIS has ITU has contributed to WSIS + as facilitator of Action Lines. WSIS + has made great progresses and was realization of resilience and sustainable society and economies, and as it was aachieve the SDGs with multistakeholder engagement.

In order to realize universal connectivity without leaving anyone behind, it is necessary to involve the more developed countries and more -- make progress more inclusive.

Japan supported Mr. Unoa last Plenipotentiary Conference and he took his role as the Actor of Telecommunication Standardization Bureau in January and he aims to spread the ICT across the world in a timely manner through the standardization activities. And we fully recognize the importance of for realizing universal connectivities in WSIS processes.

So Japan decided to contribute to 2.7-million to ITU in order to support ITU activities, for example, by developing human resources for standardization in developing countries in order to achieve universal connectivity. Japan has also contributors of over 1-million USD to connect to the project against the reality of intensifying -- the resilience of infrastructure is urgent issues, so we have to contribute to the additional 300,000 USD.

Furthermore, Japan has contributed to the support to the innovation and alliance led by Dr. Zavazava, Director of BDT, Chair, to promote innovation in different countries. So, we have made various contributions, including sponsorship of WSIS Forum. The ITU with the WSIS process.

Your question, ITU put many resolution at the Plenipotentiary Conference last year, and in particular -- in particular, resolution 182 of ICT for climate challenges and environmental protection is important. The earlier is closely related to the SDG 13 -- as shown in the matrix of WSIS process, WSIS Action Lines and SDGs.

Actually studied in ITU-T, the use of data center and optical technology is urgent issue, not only in developed countries, but as in developing countries. So ITU as specialized agency of the United Nations for ICT, is highly significant in the ITU-T activities that can be related to solving the climate issues.

Finally, Japan hosts the Internet Governance Forum in Kioto this October, so it is very important platform for stakeholders on balancing issues, including the public policy on the Internet, increase universal connectivity and climate change issues. We hope that you will come to Japan to participate in the IGF and hope that you will enjoy tradition in Japan and landscape. Thank you.

>> COSMAS LUCKYSON ZAVAZAVA: Thank you very much. One of the biggest challenges of our time is climate change. I would like to turn to Dr. Maiken. How do you see this work contributing to the UN sustainable develop am goals?

>> MAIKE LUIKEN: Thank you very much. Thank you very much for the questions. Excellencies, honorable Ministers distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I'm honored to be here today and speak on behalf of the IEEE as a specific activity partner in this 2023 WSIS Forum.

As the world's largest technical professional association, IEEE represents over 420,000 members from 160 countries, and it has a vital role in impactful technology development and standardization. Thousands of IEEE members from around the world work to create ICT for current and future applications.

As we step closer to 2030 and embrace and navigate the complexities and the pursuit of the SDGs and addressing climate change and related challenges, there is a need to consider large diversity and culture in local, regional, and global conditions an needs and varying context around the globe. This requires flexibility and diversity of approaches used to create -- used to create a planet-positive society.

It also requires practical guidance on decisions and the implementation of these decisions by individuals, communities, companies, organizations, and governments. For example, the IEEE standards for wireless or WiFi connectivity are key to enabling data movement, and more so to enable people to communicate and share information and knowledge that can be vital in addressing the global challenges we face today and enabling sustainable development solutions for the future.

The technical work that IEEE members do is increasingly expanding to new areas of technology and beyond technical solutions to include ethical -- I'm sorry -- and human values and well-being considerations, and addressing sustainable development and climate change challenges.

For example, IEEE is focusing on best practices and standards for addressing sustainability, environmental stewardship and climate change challenges through a proactive, pragmatic lens, such as in a developing standard or recommended practice addressing sustainability, environmental stewardship and climate change challenges in professional practice. Not just for engineers, but technologists and all professional, as well as IEEE standard in development is 70.10.1 on SDG action implementation and wants to incorporate social responsibility.

Working in partnership with many organizations, IEEE has stood up a collection of programs and initiatives and are delivering outputs such as best practices, standards, and certification programs that are open for those around the world

to join and use in their efforts to advance the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Using technology responsibly and solutions and innovations that can be adopted and practically deployed together we can go beyond traditional approaches and sustainability targets to provide a powerful, culture-wide foundation for guiding our efforts as caretakers of a flourishing planet. I thank you very much for your kind attention. Thank you.

>> COSMAS LUCKYSON ZAVAZAVA: Thank you very much. For the panelists, the organizers have been very generous, they provided a screen here which shows you the time. You may want to from time to time to refer to the time. Right. So now for our way, Mr., when you say the mission is bringing digital to every person, home, and organization. We know our way is a global leading operator for telecom operators, how does it help. Second is as a technology company, what did you think digital technologies can help the world achieve, an inclusive and sustainable world.

>> RAN XIAO: Thank you for the introduction and these two interesting questions. I come from Huawei and standardization. Global standardization is so important for the information. First question is as technical innovation-based commercial global company, our Huawei strategy is very simple. We focus on ICT infrastructure and our mission is to bring digital to every person, home, organization to a fully connected and intelligent world.

As we all know the company, carrier, popular smart devices in the consumer market, and I want to update we have more complete portfolio, for connectivity, computing, smart, cloud and some components with intelligent vehicle.

Another one is digital power. We think that this portfolio has digital infrastructure, has more opportunity to bring the value to the digital transformation.

Huawei invests in R&D and innovation of digital infrastructure. This allows us to work very broadly and worldwide with our customers and partners. It's most important that we hope to integrate ICT technology with our what you call industry partner and user.

So we think the key message for depending on this digital transformation and unlocking the value is to find the right technology for the right scenario. In the future, Huawei, we hope we can keep working with a partner to innovate digital infrastructure and unleash the potential of digital productivity. So as good news, we have already worked with a ecosystem, so together with the global industry organization and industry experts, Huawei has developed and released over 100 digital transformation-related standards for the electrical

power, highway, and so on. Applies knowledge and experience, and managers will be able to calculate payments dedicated to ICT application and innovation.

We look forward to the cooperation with global partner and customer because we think to do the digital transformation, we need ecosystem and need to bring the value together with our partner.

As a second question, I also think it's also what Huawei, very interesting, based on ITU report digital technology to achieve the SDGs mentioned that ICT can help accelerate progress towards every single one of 17 United Nations SDGs.

Huawei has ITU infrastructure wonder, we think ICT can support SDG in supporting two aspects at least. Firstly, Huawei consistently develop greener ICT solution innovations for greener ICT operation and support more. For example, greener optical network and the greener 5G and 6 network and solar ICT site data center with water cooling system and so on.

And further, we think and we are happy to contribute to with ITU-T as 1333 network carbon intensity standard, and we think is as international standard is more important to do the standard with the more and greener ICT.

Secondly, we believe ICT can contribute to what you call industry greener development, such as UN CCC and with related green initiative. For example, for the carbon, did through the use of ICT.

>> COSMAS LUCKYSON ZAVAZAVA: Thank you, Mr., I'm sorry to interrupt you. When the bell has rung, it's to remind us when we run out of time. I thank you for your cooperation and thank you for the great intervention. Thank you.

Ms. Janet Umutesi, Rwanda, what do you consider leading to sustainable development. And second question how can public and private relationships contribute to achieving the goal of digital cooperation and partnerships for inclusive sustainable development? The floor is yours, please.

>> JANET UMUTESI: Thank you. Thank you very much, Dr. Cosmas, for the questions. Good morning, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, excellencies. I believe one of the most significant challenges we face is the digital divide, that refers to the uneven distribution of technology and Internet access. This divide must be addressed to ensure that all people, regardless of their location, have access to the tools and resources they need to participate in the digital economy.

Another challenge is ensuring that digital partnerships prioritize sustainability and inclusivity. I would like to insist on inclusivity, mentioning that we would include women, people living with different abilities. I like to mention that we earlier talked about it with Dr. Maike. Sudden we call it

people living with disabilities or people living with different abilities. That's something that we should think about.

So this means that the partnership must keep into account the needs of the marginalized communities and prioritize the long-term environmental impact of technology solutions. It's also important to recognize that digital solutions are not a one-size-fits-all approach and different communities may require different solutions to achieve inclusivity and sustainability.

In the second part, Dr. Cosmas, public/private partnerships can play a significant role in achieving the global digital cooperation and partnerships for inclusive sustainable development. By bringing together the expertise of the public and private sectors, these partnerships, I believe, can create innovative solutions to complex challenges, such as the digital divide and sustainable development. Public/private partnerships can leverage the strength of both sector to increase the skill and impact of digital initiatives.

However, it's essential to ensure that these partnerships -- excuse me -- these partnerships are grounded in a shared vision and commitment to sustainability and inclusivity. This requires active engagement with communities, Civil Society organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that solutions are co-created and meet the needs of those intended to serve.

Co-creation to achieve digital partnership for sustainable development, with he must address the digital divide, prioritize sustainability and inclusivity and engage in meaningful public/private partnerships that are grounded in a shared vision and commitment to sustainability and inclusivity.

I thank you for your attention.

 >> COSMAS LUCKYSON ZAVAZAVA: Thank you very much. You stopped on time. We are thankful and thank you for reminding us that disability does not mean inability. Thank you. I want to move on to Mr. Paul Gaskell from the United Kingdom. How important is data cooperation for global sustainable development? The second part of the question is what is the UK contributing to sustainable development? The floor is yours.

 >> PAUL GASKELL: Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Zavazava. Your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, so thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today at the WSIS Forum 2023. The UK is very grateful to the ITU and the wider UN Family including UNESCO, UNDP, and UNCTAD for hosting this important annual forum in Geneva.

As we know the WSIS Forum is a global multistakeholder platform with a remit to both assess and foster the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines for advancing sustainable development. The theme of this forum this week,

digital cooperation and partnerships for inclusive sustainable development is certainly very timely.

Now, for many of us our focus would also be on the WSIS + 20 process and the debate of the UN General Assembly in 2025. With this in mind, we must not take our eyes off the need to further progress the WSIS Action Line, but we need to step back and look at the broader aim. We need to look at the 2.7-billion people globally who are still unconnected, and we need to look at the Sustainable Development Goal target of connecting these unconnected by 2030.

So the UK believes that we must look at the WSIS Action Lines in this context. Our target is not just 2025, although the so-called drive to 2025 will be an important milestone on the way. Our bigger target is achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of 2030.

Now, achieving implementation of the WSIS Action Lines by 2025 will be very challenging. Delivering the Sustainable Development Goals including connecting 2.7 billion by 2030 also looks very ambitious. But let us not despair, these goals are not beyond reach. With ambition, collaboration, and collective action, we can make real progress.

This will require focus and energy, however. The UK would like to see connecting the unconnected be a key focus of the WSIS + 20 process and of the Global Digital Compact. We also wish to see the work of the Broadband Commission highlight and endorsed. UN Member States should not allow ourselves to be distracted. Our test should always be, will the action we are discussing at any given context, promote global digital connectivity?

As well as UN countries working closely together, we will also need to see a fully joined up UN system, and that means a joined up ITU, UNESCO, UNDP, and UNCTAD and joined up Geneva and New York. We need to see leadership by one UN on this global issue.

Furthermore, this is not a task for governments and the UN System alone. It is vital that industry, Civil Society, think tanks and local communities are actively invited to join us to deliver on our shared vision. Without a genuinely multistakeholder approach, this will make the task of digital development much, much harder.

If we can achieve this focus, then the UK believes that the WSIS Action Lines and the sustainable development Goals of connecting the unconnected remain within reach. Thank you for your attention.

>> COSMAS LUCKYSON ZAVAZAVA: Thank you very much, Mr. Gaskell. Thank you. In 2011 in Istambul the LDC conference, world leaders declared by 2021 there will be

universal access to the Internet. We missed that target. Now,
my question goes to Mr. Dawit Bekele, do you think SDG 9 that
increases and strives to provide universal and affordable access
to interInternet in least-developed countries is achievable by
2030 with the current trend. The second question is, if not,
what needs to be done so that we reach in target?

    DAWIT BEKELE: Thank you, Dr. Zavazava. Good morning
distinguished panelists and participants. Let me start by
saying it's a great pleasure to be here at the WSIS Forum. To
answer to your first question, to date as you know, we have 66%
of the world population, about 5.3 billion people connected to
the Internet, mostly using the commercial model. And 10 years
ago this was 41%, 20 years ago it was less than 15%. This is
great progress, but it doesn't mean that the remaining 2.7
billion people will be connected in the next 10 years, let alone
in the next years by 2030. In fact, studies show that the
current rate trend of universal connectivity won't be reached by
2050 and until then billions of people, mostly in the Global
South will be offline, missing social, economic, and political
benefits brought about by the Internet that you and I benefit
everyday. I hope you agree with me that this divide is
unacceptable in this era.

    It is inevitably, fortunately it is not, it's just that we
need to change our mindset. We need to say that it's not right
for anyone to be left behind from the information society four
decades from now. The connectivity, the solutions that have
enabled us this phenomenal growth in the last decade won't take
us to the finish line. We need other complementary access
solutions that work for the last billion mostly from the Global
South in remote areas and with lower incomes.

    We at the Internet Society have been supporting
complementary access solutions through community networks around
the world, and we have seen it bringing online communities that
wouldn't be connected otherwise. These communities are coming
together to build and maintain their own Internet connections,
affordable and fitted for their own needs. You also see new
solutions coming, such as low-orbit satellites that we are
following closely.

    But none of these solutions work without cooperation and
partnership. That's why we made partners 2 Connect pledge to
support 100 communities around the world to connect them using
innovative solutions by 2025. We also plan to train 10,000
people to build and maintain Internet infrastructure since as
much as connecting people is important, it is also critical that
they have the skills to maintain and grow them so that these
networks are sustainable.

    We therefore seek partners from the private and the public

sector, but as with communities themselves to join us and make these pledges reality. Thank you for your attention.

>> COSMAS LUCKYSON ZAVAZAVA: Thank you very much. Thank you.

I want to move on to Mr. Veni. Why is ICANN involved in the Forum, the WSIS and WSIS + 20. And can you elaborate more on the multistakeholder model of Internet governance?

>> VENI MARKOVSKI: Thank you, everyone. Thank you for bearing with the long opening ceremony. It's a great pleasure to be here in Geneva and the WSIS Forum even yesterday was so many interesting discussions. To answer to your question ICANN is involved with WSIS since the beginning, even if the preparatory planning meetings. We have been part of the discussions around what Internet governance is, and needless to say it's one of the working group on Internet governance is one of the documents that initially talks about ICANN and mentions that the Internet governance is not only about ICANN, but 20 years ago most of the people think that Internet governance for ICANN.

What we see today in the WSIS Forum and WSIS + 20 discussions is people are now aware of exactly what ICANN does, managing the Internet and data, and that we do this work in usual form we don't take political statements, we don't deal with content, we just make sure wherever people go around the planet, the Internet is functioning, and when they want to get online they get to the website they want to get to and the email will be working.

We hope that we will continue to be engaged. Obviously, next year there is going to be another WSIS Forum and then in 2025 is the WSIS + 20 review taking place at the United Nations. Happy to announce as of this morning there is a paper published by ICANN Government Engagement, so if you go to the ICANN website and find the Government Engagement page, you can download a paper we did on WSIS + 20 review, and I think it will be interesting to also hear back from you, so feel free to reach out to me and talk to me about what you think of it.

We also believe, to answer the second questions, on the importance of the multistakeholder of Internet governance. We expect a hot topic in 2025 during it's WSIS + 20 and it was hot topic already. Governments, businesses, academia, Civil Society, individual users of the Internet can get together and can work to create better environment for developing the Domain Name System. There have been a lot of conversations about universal acceptance, where people can use their native language and native scripts to access the Internet, not necessarily knowing only English. This is already in the file, and there will be more developments in the coming years, so we are happy

that we are part of this conversation here and happy to support the WSIS Forum, and needless to say the IGF and hope it will be continued beyond 2025. I thank you, Chair, for these questions.

>> COSMAS LUCKYSON ZAVAZAVA: Thank you. Thank you very much. So, I would like to at this stage to thank all the panelists for a great discussion, and I want to thank all the participants for taking the time. They say even good things come to an end. I think this is the end of our session. Thank you very much.

MODERATOR: Thank you so much and all panel participants. That was enriching dialogue highlighting the importance of partnerships, so thanks again for this great discussion. And now I would like to introduce the next high-level strategic dialogue. Yes, you're free to leave.

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