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HIGH-LEVEL POLICY SESSION 11:  
KNOWLEDGE SOCIETIES, CAPACITY BUILDING.  
AND E-LEARNING/ICT APPLICATIONS AND SERVICES  
ROOM A

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>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: This is session 11. Panelists please take your seats with your -- next to your name plates. All right. We're behind by five minutes. But we'll try to finish on time. Just like the previous session, interpretation is available. We have two speakers who will be speaking in Spanish as well as in French. So get ready, get your headsets ready in those languages.

Good morning. Good morning, from Geneva. Good morning, or wherever you are in the world, I hope your day is working well and thank you for joining and sharing part of your day by joining session 11. My name is Liberto Bautista. Welcome to this policy session 11 of the WSIS Forum 2023. It will focus on knowledge societies, capacity building and e-learning. We have one hour of the session. Each of our panelists will respond to two questions within a four minute time limitation.

If time permits, we may entertain a few questions from the audience. It would be advisable that you put your question in writing and ushers will bring them to me. Our panelists will send their presentations to the WSIS Secretariat. So you will have access to them after this session when you visit the WSIS Forum 2023 website. Let me call on our WSIS action line facilitator, Mr. Paul Donohue. Good to see you again. He will provide context to the session.

>> Paul Donohue: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And good morning,

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good afternoon. It is pleasure for me to speak to this WSIS Forum High-Level Panel session. For those of you who are not familiar, the UPU is the UN specialized agency for postal services. And we have been the action line for facilitator for ICT applications since the inception of the Action Lines. 20 years ago here in Geneva the WSIS Declaration of Principles recognized postal services as an essential Foundation for an inclusive Information Society. However, 20 years later, still over 100,000 post offices remain unconnected to the Internet.

And so we have pledged to work with ITU and industry stakeholders to address this divide by 2030. Now postal organizations have used ICT to build back better and accelerate the achievement of the sustainable development goals in several ways. Have adopted digital technologies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their services. They introduced e-commerce platforms for electronic payment systems, digital tracking systems to provide customers all over the world with convenient and reliable services. Posts have used ICTs to promote financial inclusion and increase access to digital financial services for underserved communities. They have introduced mobile banking services online payment platforms, and other digital financial services to reach more customers, particularly in remote areas and that's obviously very important for achieving SDG 1 which aims to end poverty and SDG 8, in terms of a sustainable economic growth in the economy.

Posts have used ICT to support the delivery of health care services as well. For example, they have introduced telemedicine services which allow patients in remote areas to access medical consultations with doctors located elsewhere. And have used ICT to promote environmental sustainability by introducing electric vehicles and environmentally friendly initiatives to reduce the carbon foot print. All of those are important elements of the SDGs. At the UPU we are working with our Member States in their posts to enhance trust in this knowledge society and build capability in the local communities with other partners. We are preparing online training coursing through our e-learning environment which enable these local societies. We are making available ICT tools and mobile technology solutions to provide customers with access to postal services through the mobile channel.

And finally, we are working with other UN agencies in the action lines, we are working as one with UNCTAD and with ICT to assess the e-commerce and digital capability of countries at the regulatory and operational level to help policymakers and postal operators to achieve true digital transformation.

We believe by leveraging ICT postal organizations have been able to improve their services, reach more customers, and

contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We believe that strong local institutions, such as the national postal organization, using ICT enabled solutions are critical to building a secure and trusted knowledge society.

Thank you.

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: Thank you for providing context to the session's conversations.

For our first speaker, let me call on engineer Wilfredo Gonzalez Vidal from Cuba. Your Excellency, Cuba has developed a process of information -- informization of society in recent years and is currently moving towards a higher stage of digital transformation.

What is the strategy in Cuba to ensure that people have the skills and knowledge to participate fully in digital transformation? And what are the main challenges that you see in Cuba -- that Cuba faces I should say, to actively participate and fully benefit from the Information Society and knowledge economy?

>> WILFREDO GONZALEZ VIDAL: Hello. Good morning, everyone. I will speak in Spanish. Thank you very much for the questions. First of all, I must point out that the Cuban Government attaches great importance to the development of information and communication technologies in the country. And in the census has declared digital transformation one of the three pillars of management. On various occasions the President has called on us to solve problems by using signs and support of new information technologies.

As you rightly stated in the question we are currently in the design of a higher stage. The coming months we will present to the Council of Ministers of the digital transformation policy of Cuba as well as its agenda. I would like to tell you that in process of digital transformation, its human capital and in the sense efforts are being able made to organize professionals in the sector. Today the training of professionals linked to new technologies is ensured from six University careers, computer engineering taught in 16 universities, electronics engineer, the bachelor's degree in computer science and careers of computer science engineering.

Bio informatics that are taught at university of computer science and train middle level. In addition the there is a group of entities specialized in development of skills in the use of information and communication technologies. It is a good examples are the computer and electronics youth clubs with more than 640 facilities throughout the country. And the youngest social organization in Cuba called computer science of Cuba Civil Society in the field of informatics whose mission is to support the process of capacity building and to boost creativity

in the use of new technologies. There are two scientific and technological parts. An important number of digital platforms linked to the training process as well as holding of national and international events. I would like to invite all those present to the American accessible, an event that will take place from 8 to 10 November in Cuba. We will be able to exchange on good practices. Future challenges are to continue developing the telecommunication infrastructure improving the cybersecurity levels as well as promoting the processes of Government and e-commerce considering its contribution to the national development. In natural alliance among all Forums of economic management of the country. Cubans main limitation, Government against my country. We have repeatedly denounced how our access to digital platforms and services is limited. Our accounts in social networks and investment of development telecommunication infrastructures are hindered. And finally the cultural challenge, the need to build an ethical society with good practice in use of social networks and Internet in general. In accordance with the purpose of social justice. Thank you very much.

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: For our second speaker let me call on His Excellency, Mr. Ousmane Gaoual Diallo of Guinea who will speak in French. What are the major challenges that Republic of Guinea faces in developing its digital economy. What measures have your transition government taken to meet such challenges? You have the floor, sir.

>> OUSMANE GAOUAL DIALLO: Thank you, Chairman. I will address my speech in French. Let me begin by thanking the ITU, UNDP and UNCTAD for the invitation to participate in this Summit. I'm pleased to take the floor in this beautiful city of Geneva in the presence of the decision maker. I would like to thank the organizers for the opportunity to suggest on behalf of my country, at this time of transition, that is characterized by profound costing of our state.

Additional government, general policy is set out in the interim reference plan, the EPRI, set out by the Prime Minister, head of government and division of the President of the transition which gives high priority to skills development at all levels.

To this end the Government of The Republic of Guinea, department in charge of ICTs that I have the honor of leading, involved on a program to develop the digital skills in the public administration of central and decentralized levels on the one hand. And to improve connectivity of schools, secondary vocational and University education centers on the other.

With regard to the development of digital skills, the Republic administration, it is through bilateral partnership

with certain countries that we initially carried out an evaluation of the following aspects. Much of the use of IT tools at all levels of the administration service, the digitization of administrative procedures to ensure greater effectiveness and efficiency in processing different files, bring closer to citizens.

Digitization of payment procedures at the level of offices to drastically reduce corruption in and misappropriation of public funds. So this has enabled the state to improve its revenue at all levels.

So for the 2023-2024 period we have training programs. And we will be implementing various structures such as continuing education for 25,000 civil servants in the use of computer tools, central and decentralized -- in the central and decentralized administration which represents 13% of the workforce. Setting up of reliable infrastructure for the interconnection of central administration services. And in 38 regions in the interior of the country. We will be establishing an operationalization of the national agency of the digitization of the state in charge of designing tools and platforms to the materialization of administrative and financial procedures. And second program concerns improvement of connectivity of school, Universities throughout the country.

The Guinean education system, it has been noted that 80% of educational centers are in rural areas not covered by infrastructure for access to ICT services and almost all centers do not have ICT content in their curricula.

There is several reasons why there is such a low connectivity rate in these areas. Low lack of infrastructure of electricity, lack of education on how to maintain the connection and this is why we have initiated programs over the same period by including the interconnection and connection of the 17 higher education centers throughout the country which will allow for the exchange of content. And enable the Universities to benefit from the knowledge available on the platform.

The support in the context of and through the ITU and UNICEF, and completion of the last kilometers of networks from the 4500 of fiber optic network that we currently have with aerial fiber optic with the national electricity enterprise. Which will give us a more Open Society which will be very important in our value chain.

I agree that these objectives international cooperation and public/private partnerships are essential in this global context in which no state can remain isolated. It is through cooperation and international solidarity that we will achieve more interconnected world and guarantee the sustainability of progress and promote social inclusion. These are our main

objectives to connect Universities and schools and on the other hand, connecting public administration to bring the state closer to taxpayers. Thank you very much.

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: Thank you. We will go to the next, Mauritius when we get you online. We will get His Excellency Deepak Balgobin to join us. I will call on now His Excellency, Dr. Stelios Himonas of Cyprus. Your Excellency, how is Cyprus approaching the leaving no one behind principle? And how are you addressing the need to increase ICT, the pool of specialists of ICT in your country?

>> STELIOS HIMONAS: Thank you. Good morning, everyone. First of all, we thank the ITU for inviting me to participate in this very relevant channel session. And thank you, Chairman, for the two questions. Digital education and skills is a key priority for Cyprus in the context of our national e-skills action line. We have it in line with the relevant EU decade objectives. Through our resilient and recovery plan, we will invest around 24 million Euros and for Cyprus given the small size of Cyprus, this is quite a sizeable amount of money in the development of digital skills by 2026 aiming to build a truly inclusive society, able to actively participate in digital communities, drive digital innovation, and fully reap the benefits of the digital transformation.

This plan targets all population groups and all levels of digital skills offering basic to advanced training opportunities for the country's public and private sector workforce. And also the general public as well as targeted programs for vulnerable groups, such as the unemployed, the digitally literate, people in remote areas and the elderly.

In order to design more efficient and wider scale activities for these special groups the ministry is working in consultation with social partners such as NGOs, and local administrations to identify and respond to realtime needs and circumstances while also introducing the digital Ambassador function where digitally fit citizens support others who are not able in performing their digital transactions.

Aiming for a wholistic approach, the government is also investing in schools, training, and other institutions digital infrastructure while funding gigabit connectivity, coverage across the whole of Cyprus. Emphasis is placed on the growing demand for ICT specialists in the labor market as well as reforming and modernizing education.

And this is I should say a very pressing need for Cyprus given the fact that about half of the ICT specialists currently working in Cyprus are foreign nationals. Short-term solutions include tailor made upscaling opportunities that have been designed. While long term change is pursued through a wholistic

digital transformation. Measures in place include among others digitally equipping persons revamping educational curricula, to merge market needs. Promoting the use of digital tools in every day teaching and learning in introducing STEM afternoon schools. Through extended awareness raising campaigns with a special focus on girls and women and through supporting our youth participation in tech related challenges and competitions, we aim to advance the STEM career path and broaden our country's future ICT talent pool. To ensure that everyone has access to equal opportunities, that the Government provides additional support to disadvantaged students in the form of grants for the purchase of digital equipment or funding for their participation in local and international STEM initiatives.

Thank you very much.

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: Thank you Excellency for your presentation. For our next speaker let me call on His Excellency, Mohammad Khansari of Iran. Mr. Vice-Minister, please inform us about the recent steps you have taken regarding developing e-services in your country. And also please give us an overview of local platforms and the opportunities and challenges in this area in your country. Mr. Minister, you have the floor.

>> MOHAMMAD KHANSARI: Thank you, Chairman. Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my pleasure to address WSIS Forum 2023 here in Geneva. Our national policy is to provide facility services and infrastructure to address the needs of Iranian users in a balanced and fair manner. In spite of unilateral measures, separating the digital divide, we boosted the implementation of Iran national information network. Remote areas are connected. Concurrently, we have developed eGovernment, e-services and domestic platforms. The national venue of smart Government services is a single (inaudible) that allow users to log in with a unique I.D. of any several Government based web portals. Currently 95% of Government and public institutions have been included, more than 11 million users have been registered to make more than 50 million monthly transactions on 3,000 deployed e-services.

The system can send governmental notifications to users through national e-bucks. We have some transnational platforms to Iranian people, young Iranians have developed several platforms. We have more than 32 million unique users with more than 23 million active users. In domestic social network, we have more than 38 million monthly active users. A virtual education social platform hosts daily more than 10 million students. Their parents, teachers and teachers in elementary and high schools. A video conferencing platform has more than 30 million users and 400 million are users of content. Massive

online open courses, MOOCs has 2.4 million users. Most universities have implemented hybrid and blended education. They have provided the capacity of developing local contents, extensively which is aligned with WSIS Action Lines. Last but not least, an important challenge to local platforms predominate applications become their country's export restriction restrict or against others. And can remove other local competing platforms, apps, both from application stores and user mobile phones. I would like to appreciate all the efforts done by everyone make this Forum in to a reality. Thank you.

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister for your intervention.

We will now be joined remotely by his excellently is, Dmitrii Oguriaev of the Russian Federation. Mr. Vice-Minister, what are the key goals of the digital transformation in the Russian Federation? Please tell us more about the implementation of these goals and their impact on the social economic development of your country. You have the floor, sir. Or you have the screen.

>> DMITRII OGURIAEV: By presidential decree of 2020, the key goals of the transformation until 2030 complete bridge of the digital divide. Online availability of all public services. Development of independent IT solutions, digital maturity of industries, Russia's digital and transformation permits all sectors. Top number of citizens have Internet access. 100% of social societies is connected to Internet. Hospitals, public authorities and local self-Government. 86% of households have broadened Internet access. Access to the Internet is available in all remote parts of our big country.

More than 60% of small settlements, villages, population numbering from 100 to 500 are connected to the Internet.

We are No. 6 in the world via broadband and mobile Internet affordability in 2022.

Second, convenient online services for citizens in -- is a state priority. About 70% of the citizens have active accounts on the unified portal of public services. Personal data of citizens accounts severely protected and stored in state data centers. The range of online services provided by the government has increased almost 7 times since year 2018.

Third, IT solutions are the Foundation of digital development. Companies in all sectors of the economy have set, of course, towards the use of largely independent digital solutions and development of their own competitive products with expert capacity. The state provides support to both large as well as small and medium-sized enterprises.

Easy loans and subsidies, tax benefits, huge tax benefits. Moratorium on inspections, stimulation of demand and even

preferential mortgage for employees of IT companies. Relevant outcomes as compared to 2021, 300% increase for domestic software. 1.5 times income gross for IT companies. 1.3 times salary gross for IT specialists.

Fourth, Russia is a talented IT specialists. Over three years the number of applicants enrolled in higher education institutions to be trained in the field of information technology has more than doubled from 50 to 170,000.

In the year 2022, 114 higher education institutions in the Russian Federation will open digital departments. Offering additional qualification in the field of information technology. More than 120,000 students enrolled in digital departments in year 2022. More than 36,000 people completed the course under the digital professions, project which aims to train various citizens in new -- digital professions. The state provides 100 discount free of charge for benefit entitled citizens. In 2022, the implementation of court of the future project began. To train school children in grades 8 to 11 modern programming languages. The training is online and offline. About 3,000 offline citizen sites have been opened in the Russian Federation. Training is conducted by the largest AT companies and leader higher education institutions in the country. In 2023, more than 100,000 higher school students will complete the training under the project.

Russia considers different transformation to the Foundation of the global competitiveness and national security. Improved living standards higher productivity, low production cost and new qualified jobs expected outcomes of digitalization. To this end, a comprehensive technological development system is being built within the country. Based on several key tracks, information infrastructure, and security, development of digital technologies and public services. Human resources and micro electronics. Our experience can be useful to any other countries and we are ready to share our advanced technologies with all interested parties.

Thank you for your attention.

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: Thank you, Excellency, for your presentation. Let me call on Mr. Omer Abdullah Karagozoglu of Türkiye to present. What key challenges -- it's been hidden. What key challenges do you see in building a knowledge society? And how is Türkiye addressing these challenges in the use of digital technologies brings a new aspect to the learning processes.

As a regulatory authority, please share your experiences and studies on capacity building and e-learning studies in Türkiye. You have the floor, sir.

>> OMER ABDULLAH KARAGOZOGLU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Excellencies, and Distinguished Colleagues, knowledge society presents many opportunities. However several challenges must be addressed to ensure that all citizens can participate and benefit. One key challenge is the digital divide. The unequal distribution of the digital infrastructure and access to technology Türkiye keeps investing in digital infrastructure development to address this technology. For example, in mid 2022, we launched a third phase of the universal service project, with this part of the project, 605 settlements that have not previously received mobile broadband service will be covered with 4.5G service. This is in addition to the work that has already been done. Which provide GSM and 4.5G mobile broadband and voice services to over 2700 rural settlements in Türkiye. The need for effective e-learning systems. Such as the education platform which provides free online services. And remote work program that provides financial support to help them for an easy transition.

Today, while many online resources are available, not all of them are high quality or accessible so all learners. To address this challenge, we are highly investing in e-learning platforms in STEM, mat mathematics. In Türkiye, we have a very dynamic and young population. The regulatory authority we have been conducting various studies for skills development and capacity building for everyone. In 2017, the academy was established as a training center of BTK. It starts as a digital portal in the field of ICTs for capacity building and skills improvement from inclusive Information Society.

BTK academy provides free of charge user friendly and accessible online ICT trainings from professionals for all segments of the society.

Including women, youth, children, immigrants and other vulnerable groups to increase the human resources capacity of Türkiye. It was designed to contribute for removal of barriers to accessing information in the field of ICTs.

In which the education methods evolves. Today BTK academy reached about 1.5 million register users, 110,000 plus minutes of online training material for 220 topics. Participants can enroll in these categories according to their interests.

The number of weekly visits is around 700,000. About 8,000 new users join every week. In addition to the online trainings, BTK academy providing various in-class trainings. Along with the online and in-class trainings we organize workshops, Hack-A-Thons and conferences and seminars to raise awareness of all segments of society. In this context, our administration will continue and accelerate its studies for country deem to empowerment of our people with ICT skills, development and capacity building to ensure building a knowledge society,

inclusive and equitable education towards achieving the SDGs. Thank you very much.

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: Thank you for your presentation. Let me call on Mr. Zou Ciyong. Sir, how can digital transformation be beneficial to the development of small and medium enterprises in Developing Countries? How can they take advantage of Artificial Intelligence in the industry? You have the floor.

>> ZOU CIYONG: Thank you for the two questions. Regarding your first question and I think this is a note has been discussed on the importance of digital transformation as a force for economic growth. And this transition to green economy.

Despite these benefits digital divide between SME Developing Countries, and the larger corporate development, widen development gaps for SMEs competitiveness and forming a vicious cycle. In order to adapt the digital transformation to the advantage of SMEs, first I think people need to break out of change on mindset. There is a common misconception that digital transformation is expensive and complex and only available or possible for large enterprises and companies. However, there are mainly no cost solutions available. They can't assist SMEs to pertain better information on their data which in turn will enable them to make better and quicker decisions based on realtime information. This will help SME to produce more efficiently and identify bottlenecks more efficiently and enhance quality. In addition we need to introduce more flexible public/private partnership models. Incident of mere technical transfer from large to small businesses which could be costly. Government and the international organizations can play its role in building bridges and set up platforms in which mature models created by tech savvy corporates can be utilized. In such format, the government can also monitor and --

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: Would you kindly use the microphone?

>> ZOU CIYONG: Regulate this kind of platform that -- to ensure that this could really -- SME could benefit from this kind of mechanism. And also upscaling digital governance. Could be -- could be achieved by small steps, not necessarily that all we need to achieve on big scale. Step by step I think with the partnership they are between public and private and we can do something meaningful. Regarding your second question about the Developing Countries, policy design for the benefit of say industry from this Artificial Intelligence, I think we need to start with strategy for Artificial Intelligence. As already mentioned by some participants about the targets strategic indicators, we need to understand where we are in a given country about the Artificial Intelligence application industry or for industry. The secondly, I think we need to also ask government to create a regulatory environment that's friendly

for innovation. And that deployment of this Artificial Intelligence industry.

Thirdly, I think this is also important for Government to introduce some incentives to introduce or attract investment in ICT infrastructure. Because without this basic infrastructure cannot talk about Artificial Intelligence in the industry. Fourthly this is also important for government to play a critical role in part -- price -- for INT in Artificial Intelligence. In particular I think the capacity of local companies in the field of Artificial Intelligence research and development for industry.

I think this fourth one is -- since a lot of points already mentioned, that in particular the panelist from Cyprus, we need a short-term solution for scale and long term to transform education system. Lastly, international cooperation is needed. Because of this industry, this sector is developed so fast. We need this to be part of this global consultations on standards between protection of data and privacy. And also this kind of security of data. Access of data.

That with this, I think Developing Countries will be able to take advantage of the benefits of Artificial Intelligence for industry. Thank you, Chair.

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: Thank you for your presentation. Let me now call Ms. Amanda Brock of open UK. Ms. Amanda Brock where does open technology fit in to this entire landscape in all the discussions that we have just had so far? What work is required to improve skills in open technology and how to allow individuals across the globe to have the skills to access remote working jobs in open technology? You have the floor, Madam.

>> AMANDA BROCK: Thank you. Lovely to see you all on a beautiful day in Geneva. It is very kind to have ITU me along today. So if I turn to the first question, where does open technology fit in to landscape, by open technology, I mean open source software, open hardware and open data. And it not only aligns with very, very closely with the SDGs, and the ability for open source software to be recycled and redistributed, very importantly on a royalty free basis across countries but also with open data, it offers the opportunity for us to open up knowledge systems to be shared that would be otherwise closed down and accessible. And that can benefit across society. We also see contribution through collaboration and individuals able to learn skills by participating in open projects, becoming part of communities, ecosystems that are global where they can learn from each other across countries and across jurisdictions. This enables to build more diversity. The more diversity we can build the better the technology represents the people that it services. If I was to give you a simple example I might talk

about the payment platform. It was spun out of the Gates Foundation years ago and implemented in countries. And we see participation locally allowing individuals to become engaged in that project and to become part owners, contributors to project.

So what work is required to improve the skills and open technology and to align individuals across the globe to have the skills to access remote work jobs in open technology. And there are many of those remote working jobs across open technology. We tend to hire by skill set and contribution not by location. And as we see adoption of the open technologies at scale across the west, particularly open source software, we see an issue with knowledge and skills.

Now in 2023 we sit in a digitalized world and it means we have a software defined world, whether we are talking about Telco or whether we are talking about digital and technology more generally. And in that digital world it is software defined, anything that's digitalized is based on software. And today that means that open source software is a inevitability. It is no longer a choice. And what we see is that the challenge that we face today we haven't matched the scale of adoption with the scale of learning and scale of skills development. For the west that's a challenge. We are challenged by the fact that we need to bring these skills in to our education systems, a number of people have talked about their high school education. The university education. We need not just those but also practical apprentice like training in the right skills. So not just building out programs for ICT, but thinking about what we're teaching people. And we need to see increased usage and increased learning of skills in software technologies like Kubernetes which underpins the cloud. A greater focus on those open skills and collaboration.

And one of the things that we see as we see this opportunity for emerging markets is the essence of open technology. If we think about open source software it is defined by the fact that anywhere in the world, anybody can use open source for any purpose. And I think that's something that I would ask everyone who has contributed today to think about the usage and education in technology. Thank you.

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: Thank you for your presentation. We're still trying to get Mauritius connected. You are, sir. Thank you very much indeed. Your Excellency, Mr. Deepak Balgobin. Mr. Minister, how has Mauritius leveraged ICTs to build the knowledge society? And what step has the country taken to ensure that all citizens have access to the necessary skills, resources and opportunities to participate fully in the Digital Economy? You may also talk about capacity building and e-learning in achieving these goals. What are some of Mauritius

most promising ICT applications and services and how have they contributed to enhancing social inclusion and promoting entrepreneurship and including public service delivery. You have the floor or the screen.

>> DEEPAK BALGOBIN: Thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to share Mauritius experience in leveraging ICT to build a society and promote digital inclusion. Mauritius has recognized the critical role of the ICTs in transforming our economy, and society. And we have taken several steps to ensure that all citizens have access to the digital skills, resources, and opportunities to participate fully in the Digital Economy.

And one of the key initiatives that Mauritius has undertaken is the development of a comprehensive ICT infrastructure, that includes high speed broadband networks, data centers, and digital platforms for eGovernment, e-commerce and e-education. We have also implemented policies to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the technology sector. A quick example, such as partnership for startup and financial support on research and development. In addition, Ladies and Gentlemen, to build infrastructure in creating an enabling environment, Mauritius has also focused on capacity building and e-learning as a critical component. We have implemented several programs to enhance digital literacy and workforce readiness.

This these programs also provide training and support to vulnerable and marginalized groups in formats of e-commerce. Several thousands of people have benefitted therefrom. And to ensure that all citizens have access to necessary skills and resources and opportunities to participate fully in Digital Economy, we have provided free public WiFi in public places. Establishing coding clubs in schools and launching a national e-learning platforms. We have provided training and upscaling programs to ensure that everyone can thrive in our Digital Age, our mandate is that no one should be left behind when it comes to the digital revolution. We have partnered about learning Universities and training providers to develop e-learning programs that learners do acquire new skills and knowledge any time, anywhere. Thank you.

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: Thank you Mr. Minister for your presentation. This session has now ended. We have run out of time. And I'm sorry about that. If you have questions to ask the particular speaker, please hand the written question to me at the end of the session. Or hand it over to any of the WSIS team members in the room and we will send your question to the particular speaker.

It has been a pleasure and an honor to moderate this session. Please join me in thanking all of our distinguished panelists with a round of applause. Filipinos, it is a round of

applause.

(Applause.)

>> LIBERATO BAUTISTA: And thank you to the participants in the room as well as those who have joined us remotely. I have learned much from this session. And hope you did, too. Have a great afternoon here in Geneva or wherever you are. Thank you for sharing your day with us. Bye-bye.

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