Fostering Digital Transformation and Global Partnerships for SDG Achievement
[Aligning WSIS process with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development]

Side Event at the High-Level Political Forum 2019 | 11 July 2019, 13:15 – 15:15
United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation | 304 East 45th Street, 11th Floor, New York

SUMMARY REPORT

UNGIS organised this side event to 1) enhance understanding of digital transformation as a sustainable development imperative; 2) rally stakeholders on the need for greater cooperation to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and, 3) to convey UNGIS readiness as an interagency mechanism for delivering coordinated support to Member States.

More than 75 participants from across the UN system and beyond joined experts, representatives of governments, and stakeholders from across sectors. Panelists involved WSIS stakeholders, who spoke on the wide range of efforts that advance the SDGs as well as raised key priorities for action. Many underlined the need to develop policies and strategies that leverage digital transformation to propel progress, update regulations to fit the new digital landscape across sectors and economies, as well as increase investments in digital development particularly in countries at lagging behind.

Panelists representing stakeholders also pointed out the importance of regional-level cooperation, citing how the implementation of WSIS outcomes in Asia-Pacific and Africa (as shared by UNESCAP and UNECA) are advancing the SDGS. Many raised case studies and examples underway across countries, which show how ICTs are integrated in development efforts; the significant need to mobilize digital solutions and engage the digital community to help finance the SDGs; the growing importance of digital finance, digital trade and e-commerce in the inclusive growth of economies; and the need to tackle issues related to youth, gender, ageing and persons with disabilities, establishing stakeholders not only as beneficiaries of efforts but as drivers and co-designers of solutions to their unique needs.

The event was hosted by Saudi Arabia and UNOSSC and organized by ITU and UNDP as co-chairs of UNGIS. It was designed to welcome and enable engagement among stakeholders, and was opened by a lunch hosted by Saudi Arabia.

Photographs of the event are available at
https://www.flickr.com/photos/itupictures/albums/72157709671333027