

Ministerial Outcome Declaration:

WSIS+20 Outcomes and Future Directions Towards the "Intelligence Society"

We, Ministers and high-level representatives participating in the Ministerial Panel “WSIS+20 Outcomes and Future Directions towards the ‘Intelligence Society’”, convened in Tunis on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the [World Summit on the Information Society \(WSIS\)](#), gather to reflect on two decades of progress, to assess emerging challenges, and to chart the way forward for an inclusive, safe, and sustainable digital future.

We recall with deep appreciation that it was Tunisia that first proposed the organization of the World Summit on the Information Society at the 1998 ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Minneapolis ([Resolution 73](#)), which ITU brought to the United Nations and placed WSIS on the agenda of the United Nations

We recall that United Nations General Assembly Resolution [A/RES/56/183](#) endorsed the two-phase approach of the Summit held in Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005), and entrusted the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) with lead responsibility and secretariat functions for the organization of the Summit in cooperation with all relevant UN agencies, international organizations, and stakeholders.

We reaffirm our strong commitment to the [Geneva Declaration of Principles, and Plan of Action](#), and the [Tunis Commitment and Tunis Agenda for the Information Society](#), which remain foundational frameworks for the digital development landscape. These documents champion universal access, capacity building, human rights, enabling environments, bridging the digital divide, and, crucially, enshrined the multistakeholder approach that has become a global model for digital governance.

Since their adoption in 2003 and 2005, the WSIS outcomes have guided global digital policies and national ICT strategies. Over the past two decades, the WSIS process has generated one of the most enduring and effective ecosystems for ICT for development, grounded in collaboration, inclusiveness, and shared responsibility. We highlight the following achievements:

- The [WSIS Action Lines](#), facilitated by UN agencies, have proven to be among the most adaptable digital development frameworks in the United Nations system.
- The [WSIS Forum](#), hosted by ITU and co-organized with UNESCO, UNPD and UNCTAD, has evolved into the leading global platform for multistakeholder dialogue on ICT for development, enabling cooperation, partnership-building, and the sharing of global best practices, reporting on the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines, and reviewing the WSIS Action Line Roadmaps. The WSIS Forum 2025, rebranded as WSIS+20 High-Level Event, engaged over 11,000 participants from 169 countries. The WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025
 - WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 Outcome Document: <http://itu.int/go/WSISForumOutcomes2025>
 - WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 Chair's Summary: <http://itu.int/go/WSISForumOutcomes2025>
 - WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 High Level Outcomes and Executive Brief: <http://itu.int/go/WSISForumOutcomes2025>
 - Presentations by UN WSIS Action Lines facilitators on WSIS+20 Review Action Lines Milestones, Challenges and Emerging Trends beyond 2025: <https://itu.int/go/wsis20review>
 - 20-Year Reports on the Implementation of WSIS Outcomes – country and stakeholder reports: <https://www.itu.int/net/wsis/review/reports/twenty-year.html>
- The [WSIS Stocktaking database](#), launched during the Tunis phase and maintained by the International Telecommunication Union, has become the world's largest repository of ICT-related development initiatives, cataloguing nearly 20,000 projects that document impact at the grassroots level and support evidence-based policymaking.
- The [WSIS Prizes](#), managed by ITU since 2012, have emerged as a prestigious global recognition program, celebrating excellence and impact in digital innovation aligned with WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs.
- The [United Nations Group on the Information Society \(UNGIS\)](#) has strengthened system-wide coherence by aligning the work of UN entities on ICT for development, supporting coordinated action and shared understanding across agencies, with rotational chair and co-chairs between ITU, UNESCO, UNDP, UNCTAD and UN Regional Commissions, with ITU serving as its permanent secretariat.

These mechanisms have transformed WSIS from a Summit into a sustained global process — turning ambition into action, and connecting technology, people, and development across every region and sector.

Despite these achievements, we note with concern that the digital divide remains profound. Today, 2.6 billion people — nearly one-third of the world’s population — remain offline. Many more lack the skills, infrastructure, affordability, or enabling environments required to fully participate in the digital economy. This is not only a technological gap but a development gap, and addressing it is essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, reducing inequalities, and ensuring that no one is left behind.

We observe that today’s rapidly evolving technological landscape—driven by the emergence of Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, data-driven systems, and frontier digital technologies—is reshaping societies, economies, and governance. We recognize that the world is entering a new phase, transitioning from Information Societies to Intelligent or Smart Societies, presenting both unprecedented opportunities and complex risks.

We acknowledge that this moment mirrors the early 2000s, when WSIS was conceived to guide the transformation toward digital inclusion and cooperation. We therefore emphasize that renewed global and regional guidance, grounded in WSIS principles, is essential for navigating emerging challenges, fostering trustworthy and human-centred AI, and enabling sustainable digital development.

We take note of [ECOSOC Resolution E/RES/2025/18](#), which calls for the integration of the Global Digital Compact (GDC) within the existing WSIS architecture, and emphasize the need for coherence, complementarity, and strengthening of WSIS as a long-standing and effective framework for digital development.

We recall the Report by the ITU Secretary-General – “[WSIS+20 Report: Building a digital future for all](#)” which documents ITU’s contribution to the implementation of and follow-up to the WSIS outcomes and its role in advancing the SDGs. We welcome the Secretary-General’s assessment of ITU’s leadership and the roadmap provided in support of the WSIS+20 review and future action.

Recognizing that regional strategies can accelerate progress and respond to local needs, we welcome the initiatives emerging from the Arab region, with the leadership of Tunisia and with support from ITU and AICTO, aligned with WSIS principles and future-oriented digital development.

In this spirit, participants express their support for the following initiatives:

1. Establishment of an annual regional initiative titled “From Information Society to Intelligent/Smart Society.” This initiative will serve as a regional platform to:
 - review WSIS outcomes in the context of AI and emerging technologies;
 - strengthen cooperation and exchange between countries of the region;
 - advance youth empowerment, gender inclusion, skills development, and innovation;
 - support alignment with global AI initiatives, including ITU’s AI for Good platform;
 - contribute to regional digital integration.

Participants acknowledge that AICTO may take the lead in coordinating this initiative.

2. Creation of a regional repository of emerging technology initiatives, projects, and good practices in the Arab region, using the WSIS Stocktaking database structure, to:
 - document and showcase regional AI innovation;
 - support knowledge exchange across countries;
 - increase visibility of regional progress and priorities;
 - inform policymaking, capacity building, and responsible AI development.

Participants welcome Tunisia’s intention to establish this platform and note that AICTO could serve as its host and manager.

We reaffirm that the WSIS multistakeholder model—bringing together governments, UN agencies, private sector, civil society, academia, technical communities, and youth—remains as effective and relevant today as it was when pioneered in 2003. We recognize that the challenges and opportunities of AI and emerging technologies can only be addressed through inclusive, transparent, and collaborative governance frameworks.

Looking Ahead to the Next Phase of WSIS and the Intelligence Society

Building on 20 years of achievements and lessons learned, we commit to working together to ensure that WSIS continues to serve as a cornerstone for global digital development. We affirm our determination to shape the transition toward Intelligent Societies in a way that is:

- people-centred, ensuring technology serves human dignity;
- development-driven, advancing sustainable growth and inclusion;
- multistakeholder, drawing on the contributions of all actors;

- innovative and future-focused, embracing emerging opportunities while mitigating risks;
- coherent with global frameworks, including the Global Digital Compact
- responsible and human-centric in the deployment of Artificial Intelligence, ensuring ethical, transparent, and inclusive uses that safeguard rights and empower individuals.

We call upon all stakeholders to deepen cooperation, accelerate digital inclusion, and ensure that the benefits of Artificial Intelligence and digital transformation are shared equitably across all countries and communities.

In marking the 20th anniversary of WSIS in Tunis—the birthplace of the WSIS vision Tunis Agenda—we look forward to a renewed era of global collaboration. Together, we will continue to build Information Societies, accelerate the transition to Intelligent Societies, and harness digital innovation for sustainable development, prosperity, and peace for all.