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"I" ITEM NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)
No. prev. doc.:	8615/15 TELECOM 108 CONUN 87
Subject:	World Summit on the Information Society Draft lines to take to guide the EU and its Member States in the preparatory process of the World Summit on the Information Society + 10 ("WSIS+10") Review Process - Approval

The Delegations will find in the Annex draft lines to take to guide the EU and its Member States in the preparatory process of the World Summit on the Information Society +10 ("WSIS+10") Review Process.

The draft lines to take have been examined by the Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society ("WP TELE") on 21 April, 28 April, and 21 May, and by the United Nations Working Party ("CONUN") on 22 April.

These lines to take are legally non-binding and are supposed to provide guidance to the EU and its Member States in the period leading up to the United Nations General Assembly High Level meeting in December 2015, whose official preparatory process begins in June 2015.

Delegations indicated during the WP TELE meeting of 21 May that they could support the text. Following this meeting, a technical amendment is made to point 15 to indicate a subject of reference in the second part of the sentence, and changes indicated in the previous version have been removed.

Coreper is invited to approve the above mentioned lines to take as set out in the Annex to this note.

Bridging the digital divide:

1. The EU and its Member States are committed to promoting policy environment conducive to the success of the development framework including through sound policies in technology, innovation, competition, regulation, skills and the related areas. Therefore, the EU and its Member States are fully committed to ensuring Policy Coherence for Development (“PCD”) as a key contribution to the collective effort towards broader policy coherence for sustainable development worldwide.
2. Considering that the year 2015 is the European Year for Development, the EU and its Member States thus remain committed to ensuring that technology and information society remain on the development agenda and continue to promote these objectives in the relevant global and regional fora, including through the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
3. Access to information is a crucial part of the goal to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, freedom of expression, access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions (Sustainable Development Goal 16). The current target 16.10 to “ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements” is vital for achieving freedom of expression and giving voice to the previously voiceless.
4. The Internet has a vital role to play in helping to achieve the full realization of internationally agreed Sustainable Development Goals. It is a vital tool for giving people living in poverty the means to participate in development processes. Support from national governments is vital for creating access to these technologies which contribute to sustainable and inclusive growth.
5. There is a risk that the rapid expansion in the use of technologies and services (such as cloud, e-education, e-health, e-government services) requiring high speed broadband connections, terrestrial or wireless, may leave many consumers and citizens, particularly in developing countries, without adequate access. In this context, combatting a second wave of an emerging digital divide requires the roll out of high speed broadband connections using a mix of technologies.

6. The EU and its Member States are committed to foster free, open and prosperous societies through ICT capacity building measures in third countries that enhances the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of expression, access to information, privacy and personal data protection, and that enable citizens to fully enjoy the social, cultural and economic benefits of ICTs, including by promoting more secure digital infrastructures.

Support to a multi-stakeholder approach to the WSIS+10 Review Process:

7. The EU and its Member States are fully committed to the success of the WSIS+10 Review Process, building on the work of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (“CSTD”), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (“UNESCO”), the International Telecommunication Union (“ITU”), the Internet Governance Forum (“IGF”) and the Statement of “the Netmundial” Multistakeholder meeting held in Sao Paulo.
8. The current WSIS+10 Review Process is an important element in the overall debate on the development and use of the ICT tools to that end. The main focus should be how the use of ICT tools can serve as a catalyst and sometimes engine in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
9. There is a need for genuine multi-stakeholder participation in the WSIS+10 Review Process and in developing its final outcome. Stakeholders’ views should be given due consideration during the entire process, as should stakeholders have an effective platform to discuss and comment on the draft text of the outcome document.
10. The EU and its Member States call on the President of the United Nations General Assembly and on the co-facilitators to assure meaningful participation of all stakeholders in all steps of the WSIS+10 Review Process including in the preparation for the United Nations General Assembly High Level meeting in December 2015 and its outcome document. Involvement of all stakeholders in the policy design phase would foster use of innovative forms of financing and multiplication of resources and results.

Support to a multi-stakeholder approach to Internet Governance:

- 11.** The governance of the Internet is expected to include all stakeholders in order to duly take into account the interests of all of them, including governments, international organizations, the private sector, the technical community, academia and the civil society.
- 12.** Therefore, the EU and its Member States will support and promote a multi-stakeholder governance model that is based on clear principles and in this respect, endorse the Statement of the Netmundial Multistakeholder meeting, apply them and promote them in all relevant fora, including the IGF.
- 13.** All stakeholders should continue to fully participate in discussions on further improvements in inclusiveness and accountability of the current model of Internet Governance.

Internet Governance Forum (IGF):

14. The EU and its Member States fully recognise the importance of the IGF, established by the “Tunis Agenda” (2005), as a multi-stakeholder platform.
15. Moreover, the EU and its Member States call on the United Nations General Assembly to renew the mandate of the IGF, and call on all stakeholders to strengthen its resource base.
16. The EU and its Member States consider that the IGF constitutes a unique opportunity to provide a single forum for all relevant stakeholders to openly discuss issues related to Internet Governance.
17. Therefore, the EU and its Member States support the work underway to implement the recommendations of CSTD Working Group on IGF improvements, including the sustainability of its funding and ensuring that its outcomes are more visible and can be taken forward by the other relevant fora dealing with Internet Governance issues.
18. The EU and its Member States will not support any proposal that might lead to the termination of IGF activity or to a non-multi-stakeholder format of the forum.

Involvement of the EU and its Member States in the WSIS+10 Review Process:

19. The EU and its Member States will work closely together in relevant fora and organisations dealing with WSIS+10 Review Process related questions, including bridging digital divide, sustainable development and Internet Governance issues, and reflect positions through coherent and consistent messages while preserving their individual rights and respective prerogatives.
20. The EU and its Member States will actively engage in the negotiations and in reaching out to other countries and stakeholders, to ascertain a good understanding of our common goals.