**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. SACHA LLORENTTY SOLIZ, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON AGENDA ITEM 16: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT, AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE 69TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 13 October 2014)**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) at the regional and international levels", document A/69/65-E/2014/12, that includes information provided by 26 United Nations and other international organizations and stakeholders concerning trends, achievements and obstacles in the implementation of WSIS outcomes during 2013.

The Group of 77 and China would like to emphasize on the importance of Information and Communication Technologies for achieving the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The role of ICTs in this regard has been underlined in the outcome documents of all major UN conferences, including the outcome document of the High Level Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals and the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+ 20.

In today's world, information and communication technologies are vital to developing countries full participation in the global economy. They hold tremendous potential for eradication of poverty and promotion of socio-economic development. ICTs have a prominent role in promoting inclusive growth and development. There is a need to upgrade the quality and quantity of existing telecommunication infrastructure in developing countries. It is the view of the Group that for developing countries to be able to benefit from information and communication technologies a greater emphasis should be placed on reducing the cost of such technologies, including the cost of broadband connections, and on capacity-building for greater use and application in the developing world.

Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) are critical enablers of economic development and investment, with consequential benefits for employment and social welfare. However, despite the positive trends in connectivity and affordability, including increased Internet access, rapid diffusion of mobile communication and development of new services and applications since the holding of the WSIS more than a decade ago, the Group is concerned about the continuing gap in digital divide and broadband access between developed and developing countries. We are also concerned that the persistent financial and economic crisis has negatively affected developing countries capacities to mobilize resources for ICT investment and diffusion.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China places great importance on the full and effective implementation of the outcomes of both the Geneva and Tunis phases of the Summit, including provisions related to

Internet Governance. In an increasingly interdependent world, it is important to allow all governments to have an equal role and responsibility for International Internet governance in ensuring stability, security and continuity of the Internet in accordance with paragraph 68 of the Tunis Agenda.

During NETMundial Global Multistakeholder Meeting on the Future of Internet Governance held in S�o Paulo, Brazil, on 23 and 24 April 2014, the international community reiterated the urgency to speed up the process of globalization of ICANN, in order to establish it as "a truly international and global organization with an independent status and clear accountability mechanisms". NETMundial has also supported the transition of the stewardship of IANA functions. These are outcomes that must be immediately implemented and followed-up, with a view to strengthening the Internet governance in a transparent and accountable manner.

We highlight the World Summit on the Information Society held on 12 June 2013, (WSIS+10) High-level Event endorsed an outcome document that recognizes information and communications technology (ICTs) as enablers for achieving the three pillars of sustainable development and describes ICTs as "a critical component of innovative development solutions in the post-2015 development agenda".

The ten-year review of WSIS outcomes, to be completed by the General Assembly in 2015, along the review of the MDGs, is a timely exercise in the context of elaborating the Post-2015 Development Agenda. We believe a digital economy is a source of innovation and productivity improvements for all countries. It is therefore critically important to address the existing digital divide between developed and developing countries, as well as within societies, particularly in the availability, affordability, quality of access, and broadband connectivity.

Recognizing the importance of utilizing ICT in advancing sustainable development and achieving a pro-development global agenda beyond 2015, the Group calls for an appropriate preparatory process to be launched for the WSIS+10 review, drawing on experience from the two phases of WSIS. The ten-year anniversary of WSIS should be the beginning of a new chapter for ICT development in developing countries that builds on the lessons learned over the past decade, and as it is recognized in paragraph 111 of the Tunis agenda on information society, we call for an expeditious preparatory process and successful conclusion by December, 2015 of the ten-year overall high level review conference of the implementation of WSIS outcomes. We reiterate our call for the UN funds, programs and specialized agencies to provide adequate and comprehensive resources to support the WSIS+10 review.

The Group reiterates its expectation to receive the inputs from the working group on "enhanced cooperation" in the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) without delay by June 2015. as a critical contribution to the 10-year review of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society in 2015. Its recommendations, which are to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council by June next year, should also address the need to promote and protect all fundamental Human Rights, including the right to privacy.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China in the Sixty-eighth Session of the General Assembly submitted the Resolution A/RES/68/302 entitled "Modalities for the overall review by the General Assembly of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society" that was adopted on 31 July 2014, with this, the Group has achieved to secure the primacy and centrality of the General Assembly as key elements in the conduct of this overall review, without any deviation from

the established rules of General Assembly.

In the resolution the Group reaffirmed that the United Nations General Assembly is a multilateral body and not a multistakeholder body, and any attempts at changing the character and nature of the General Assembly have been successfully resisted in the text of the Resolution. In addition, we are heartened to note that the primary concern for developing countries that is bridging the digital divide has been recognized as one of the key elements of the scope of the Resolution.

The Group of 77 and China believes that the overall review by the General Assembly will not only take stock of the progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society since 2005 but also address potential information and communications technology gaps areas for continued focus, as well as addressing challenges and harnessing information and communications technologies for development.

Another important point that merits consideration is that for the overall review to take place, it is not predicated on the input of the CSTD alone, but based on all other relevant inputs, which first and foremost including submissions from member and observer states of the UN General Assembly.

Finally, we reiterate our commitment to intensifying international efforts directed at safeguarding cyberspace and promoting its exclusive use for the achievement of peaceful purposes and as a vehicle to contribute to both economic and social development, and highlight that international cooperation, in full respect of human rights, including the right to privacy, is the only viable option for fostering the positive effects of information and communications technologies, preventing their potential negative effects, promoting their peaceful and legitimate use and guaranteeing that both scientific and technological progress is directed at preserving peace and promoting the welfare and development of our societies.

Thank you.