



STATEMENT DELIVERED ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MINISTER CLAUDIO ROSSELL, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, IN THE SECOND INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE MODALITIES FOR THE OVERALL REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY (New York, 11 March 2014)

I take the floor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At the outset we want to thank you for convening this second informal to discuss this very important issue and for asking our views on the five issues of timing, format, structure, outcome and participation.

Co-chairs,

First, on the format and structure of the review. The Group of G77 and China firmly believes that a Summit Level review is an absolute must. Given the critical importance the subject now commands on the multilateral platform, including the need for closing the digital divide and bridging the continuing gap between the North and the South in terms of Internet and mobile telecommunications penetrations, it is absolutely imperative that the review be conducted at the Summit Level in 2015.

However, we see from your informal note summing up the first meeting that several delegations feel that it is NOT the most efficient mechanism. We can only submit that it not only casts aspersions on the efficiency of our own Heads of State and Government, but also reflects the regard we have for summit level processes; by that same yardstick, Rio + 20 should never have happened, neither the Tunis meeting or the upcoming SIDS Conference. If leaders could meet and decide on issues on such processes in the past, the Group of 77 and China fails to understand why this reluctance in having them meet over such an important issue.

The second concern raised was on the costs of a Summit Level Interaction. Co-chairs, our leaders would already be there for the 70th Anniversary Summit of the United Nations in 2015, and it would be a befitting occasion to let them decide on the sheer unlimited possibilities that ICT has to offer for development and developing countries at large.

This also perhaps addresses your query on the timing. Paragraph 111 of the Tunis Agenda clearly states 2015. The Group of 77 and China believes that the 70th Anniversary Summit of the United Nations in 2015, when all our Heads of State and Government would anyhow be assembled for the High Level Session of the 70th GA, would be an opportune occasion.

A Summit level review, then, would also take care of subsuming the concerns over costs, as were raised by some our colleagues from the partner countries at the last informals, and would therefore be a befitting and cost effective timing to address that aspect. In addition, we also have the understanding that a delegation has already offered to host such a Summit; therefore the arguments over costs are more than effectively taken care of.

We would submit that the timing of the review should ideally commence from April 2014 onwards

(given the March deadline of this process) and should continue through a series of preparatory meetings (prep coms) to the end of the 69th General Assembly Session, leading upto a Summit level adoption of the outcome document in September 2015.

Third, regarding participation. The aforementioned paragraph 111 tasked the General Assembly to make an overall review of the implementation of the WSIS outcomes in 2015. The process of review has to be conducted in the confines of the UN General Assembly, in this regard, the Group of 77 and China reiterates firmly that this process should be universal and transparent with the full participation of all States as this is a world summit, and under the GA Rules of Procedure. That should address the concern on participation.

Also, the review needs to be an overall and comprehensive process, without loosing sight of the overarching objective of using ICT for Development. We are not attempting to re negotiate the Tunis Agenda, but only asking for taking stock of what has been implemented so far and what remains to be done. And what are the means to be provided for ensuring the implementation of the undeliverables.

You would appreciate that ICT has not remained static since 2005, when the Tunis Agenda was adopted. Many new areas have since emerged and we need to fix responsibility of the multi-stakeholders for not having delivered on their responsibility for securing 'ICT for Development' initiatives as mandated in the Tunis Agenda.

Also, the Tunis Agenda made a specific call in paragraphs 69 to 71, for "recognising the need for enhanced cooperation, to enable governments on an equal footing" and the review should recognise this "enhanced cooperation" call and ensure its effective implementation and inclusion in the outcome document.

Finally, co-chairs, we would also request that in future summaries of the discussions we are having, a fair assessment of the strength of the Group of 77 and China, which is a 133 member grouping, be reflected to adequately represent the concerns of the entire group of developing countries on this critical subject.

My Group remains committed to constructively engaging with you in ensuring the success of this process.

I thank you.