

First IGF 2024 Open Consultations

27 February 2024

[Transcript] Statement from Preetam Maloor, International Telecommunication Union – ITU

So let me start by reiterating our support for the business process. ITU remains a strong supporter of IGF and will continue to actively participate in the 2024 edition in Riyadh.

Over two decades, the business has grown into a large multi-stakeholder global community, not only at the international level but also as a grassroots movement, and it continues to expand with every passing year.

And the review process, obviously, is an opportunity for us to take stock of how to best leverage the WSIS process going forward, and how it should adapt further to take into consideration new and emerging digital challenges and opportunities. And also, it's very important to consider how the different processes complement each other. This is crucial for the future.

So here, ITU, UNESCO, UNDP, the CSTD, and UN DESA are collaborating in a joint preparatory process for the WSIS+20 review to leverage our complementarities and avoid duplication.

And the WSIS principles and action lines continue to serve as a main reference point for global digital discussions, for example in the recent Havana Declaration adopted at the summit in September, it encouraged close correspondence between the WSIS process and other outcomes of other intergovernmental processes, including the GDC. And the summit of the future. So ITU will co-host the WSIS+20 forum high-level event, together with the Swiss Confederation. This will be coordinated by ITU, UNESCO, UNDP, and UNCTAD. And please mark your calendars for the 27th to the 31st of May in Geneva. This high-level event will provide a platform for multi-stakeholder discussions, taking stock of achievements, key trends, challenges, opportunities since the Geneva Plan of Action.

The ITU's AI for Good Summit will also take place at the same time, in the same week, 30th to the 31st of May, with an AI governance day on the 29th. And having the WSIS Forum and the AI for Good on the same week was intentional because it brings the development and the AI communities together, allowing for a holistic conversation on emerging technologies. you know, for the use of development. It also shows the relevant flexibility and adaptability of the WSIS principles to new topics, such as AI.

Thank you again for the opportunity to intervene. Good luck with the planning. Thanks.