

# WSIS+10

## SUMMARY REPORT

# SUMMARY REPORT FROM THE UN GA WSIS REVIEW MEETING

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The UN's ten-year review of World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) concluded successfully with the adoption of the WSIS+10 Resolution [\[1\]](#) on 16 December 2015. The review process was a 'diplomatic sprint': in just a few months (effectively since September this year), negotiators managed to draft a complex and diplomatically delicate text.

### Rough Consensus

'Development is increasingly digitally-based' is the first message of WSIS+10. Almost half of the WSIS+10 Resolution covers digital development. In addition, the Resolution has a strong link with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As the ITU's matrix [\[2\]](#) shows, all of the 17 sustainable development goals rely on digital technologies in the implementation process.

'Cyber(in)security profoundly affects modern society' is the second message of WSIS+10. An entire section of the Resolution, consisting of seven paragraphs, is devoted to this topic, including an expression of concern regarding the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes and cybercrime.

'Human rights offline apply equally online' is the third message of WSIS+10. A section containing eight paragraphs restates previous agreements that all human rights online are universal, indivisible, interdependent, and interrelated.

### Ambiguous Compromise

While WSIS+10 reached rough consensus on development, security, and human rights issues, the topic of Internet governance – like ten years ago at the WSIS Summit in Tunis – kept negotiators working until the early morning hours. The main division between the inter-governmental and the multi-stakeholder approaches to Internet governance remains alive. To address this division, WSIS+10 reaffirmed three core elements of the 'Tunis compromise':

First, it extended the IGF mandate for 10 years and reaffirmed its underlying architecture, meaning that Internet governance is addressed under the UN umbrella, but in a multistakeholder manner. Second, it retained the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders as outlined in the Tunis Agenda. Third, it maintained the element of ambiguity around an enhanced cooperation arrangement, which allows for different interpretations. A new element is the request for the strengthening of the IGF.

### Towards WSIS 2025

The main question remains: will the reinforced 'Tunis compromise' of the WSIS+10 Resolution serve future digital developments well?

On the policy level, the 'Tunis compromise' allows all actors to interpret the arrangement to suit their policy priorities. It is also broad enough to facilitate future developments. For example, the provision on the IGF provides the possibility for the Forum to make recommendations, 'where appropriate' (paragraph 72). [\[3\]](#)

When it comes to practical problems in the digital sphere, individuals and institutions will look for solutions. Unlike most other global policy processes, including climate change, digital problems have a direct and immediate impact on Internet users. For example, cyber-attacks, online hate speech, or online child pornography all affect noticeable individuals and organisations worldwide.

In the search for solutions to their digital problems, Internet users and organisations increasingly refer to courts. This year, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) ruled on Facebook and the Safe Harbour arrangement [\[4\]](#). It is currently being deliberated whether Uber provides transportation or communication services. [\[5\]](#) Together with the previous 'right to be forgotten' case [\[6\]](#), these CJEU rulings have a strong impact on global digital policy.

US courts are busy with judging on net neutrality regulation, as well as on the Microsoft case regarding the access of US authorities to data stored outside the USA. [\[7\]](#) A judge in Sao Paulo (Brazil), ordered WhatsApp to shut down for refusing to turn over data in an investigation case. The growing involvement of courts in dealing with transnational digital policy issues is also noticeable in other countries. Since judges are not very tolerant of ambiguous solutions, the court jurisprudence may tilt some delicate balances in global digital policy.

Self-help through technical solutions is another trend. For example, Internet companies and users increasingly rely on strong encryption. This has led law-enforcement and security agencies to complain that strong encryption limits their access to digital content relevant to criminal investigations and anti-terrorist activities. The impact of encryption on security has come into sharper focus after the recent terrorist attacks.

All in all, juridical, technical, and other means to address digital policy issues will be used more and more often. Could these trends undermine WSIS efforts to establish a collective set of principles for global digital development? Are court rulings (mainly in Europe) becoming a new way of regulating digital reality?

WSIS successfully passed the test of the first ten years. There are many reasons to believe that its success will continue. However, digital policy needs to evolve to deal with 'known knowns' (for example, the Internet governance framework), 'known unknowns' (dealing with big data and the Internet of Things) and 'unknown unknowns' which will inevitably emerge. Solutions that have worked well in the past will not necessarily be effective in the fast changing context of the future.

In the words of our WSIS+10 recipe: 'Keep stirring it carefully for the next ten years, but make sure it does not overcook in the meantime.' (see: page 7 [\[8\]](#))



This issue-based report from the plenary sessions of both days of the High-Level Meeting debate consists of echoing points that were frequently mentioned in statements and specific messages voiced by different stakeholders.

## 1 DEVELOPMENT

### DIGITAL DIVIDE

Echoing

Development and digital divide were underlying themes in the WSIS+10 Process. Almost all statements referred to the link between WSIS and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, stating that information and communications technologies (ICTs) are key to achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) . To connect the unconnected, countries seem to have developed a 'taxonomy of digital divides' , predominantly mentioning those between developed and developing countries, rural and urban areas, and between men and women .

Specific

Other elements in digital divide taxonomy: The elderly (Liechtenstein, Singapore, Portugal) | People with disabilities (France, Singapore, Egypt, Israel) | Youth (France, Tunisia) | Women (Switzerland, Internet Society, ITU, UN Women, APC, ICC) | Cultural and linguistic minorities (the European Union , Latvia, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Argentina, ICANN ) | People facing emergency situations (Lebanon) | Those with access to basic services only (the European Union) | Bridging the divide is not only a priority for economic reasons, but also 'to promote universal values and a sense of belonging' (Norway).

### ACCESS

Echoing

To bridge the digital divide, more people need access to the Internet. While technical infrastructure is considered to be a precondition, an elaborate discussion emerged concerning whether technical aspects are sufficient, and which other elements are necessary for digital inclusion (e.g. digital skills, policy framework).

Specific

Emphasised prerequisites for wider access: Effective use of spectrum (Russian Federation) | Access to mobile technology (India, Bangladesh, Spain, Slovakia, the United Arab Emirates) | Affordability of access (Switzerland, Turkey, Egypt) | Transparent policy processes and attention to content and capabilities (UNCTAD) | An enabling policy environment (Canada, Belgium, United Kingdom (UK)) | Assistance from developed countries (Sudan, Syria, Morocco) | Strengthen the Digital Solidarity Fund (India) | Business engagement (International Chamber of Commerce ) | Public-private cooperation (Australia, G77 and China, Telefónica International) | Government support for investors by breaking down barriers, such as unjustifiable taxes and fees (Telenor Group) | Multilingualism and availability of local content (Mexico, Switzerland, Australia, Chile, ICANN).

### CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Echoing

Together with the digital divide and access, capacity development completes the 'development trinity'. Discussion on capacity development took two main directions: traditional development assistance and the creation of a culture of cybersecurity. Education plays a role in both.

Specific

The work of the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (the Netherlands) | Geneva Internet Platform as practical and effective capacity development platform (Switzerland) | Utility of sharing good practices (the Netherlands, Bangladesh, the least developed countries (LDCs), Turkey, Slovakia, the ITU) | Raising awareness of the benefits brought by the information society (Bahrain) | Capacity building in relation to combating cyber terrorism (Egypt) | Developing user confidence to enhance cybersecurity (Republic of Korea) | The need to transform information societies into inclusive and peaceful knowledge societies (UNESCO).

## 2 CYBERSECURITY AND OTHER DIGITAL CHALLENGES

Echoing

Cybersecurity remains the main challenge. Threats are real and an integral part of cyber reality. There was recognition that the Internet is part of the critical infrastructure of modern society and that it needs to be protected by enhanced cooperation among states and other stakeholders. The cybersecurity themes emphasised by countries differed, however.

Specific

Emphasised cyber threats: Cyber terrorism (Syria, Egypt, Turkey, UAE) | Cyber warfare (Cuba) | Challenges faced by young states (Democratic Republic of Congo) | Proliferation of online hate speech and the need for online tolerance (Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Syria, UAE) | ICT's negative consequences for health and social life (Liechtenstein, Tanzania) | Violence against women and the gay community (M17M) | The protection of children online (UK, Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)) | Cracks in the edifice of cybersecurity show that the adage 'if it's not broken, don't fix it' is no longer valid (Malta) | Consider the development of a code of cyber-ethics (Indonesia) | A comprehensive and balanced UN convention on cybersecurity is needed (China, India) | Cooperation among governments is not enough for secure and safe Internet (Internet Society).

3 INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Echoing

Support for inclusiveness and participation of all stakeholders in Internet governance dominated in most statements. Differences mainly related to varying emphases and interpretations of stakeholders' respective roles and responsibilities.

Specific

- *On roles and responsibilities:* The multistakeholder approach has made the Internet what it is today, and it continues to be critical for the way forward (Canada) | Stakeholders can only achieve their goals if they do not operate in isolation (Belgium) | A multistakeholder approach is essential for innovation (Israel) | Multistakeholder policy processes should be geared towards an applicable, legal framework (Peru) | Sovereign rights of states should be respected in the multistakeholder space (Egypt, Saudi Arabia) | Governments should play a vital role, considering their responsibility to provide security and disseminate ICTs (Sudan) | All stakeholders should play an equally important role (Norway, UK) | Governments' involvement needs to be nuanced as they cannot control the Internet (Australia) | Stakeholders to work together on an equal footing, despite different roles and responsibilities (M17M) | Digital fragmentation is the main threat we face (Poland) | A joint management of critical Internet resources is needed (China).
- *On the Internet governance framework:* Give up on 'Internet exceptionalism', the Internet can be governed like other policy issues (ICT4Change) | Link global Internet policy to local dynamics and needs (Center for Democracy and Technology) | The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is the most important instrument to ensure Internet for the twenty-first century (Austria) | IGF outcomes need to become more tangible (Brazil, Turkey) | The IGF has insufficient capacity to respond to Internet-related challenges; an internationally regulated system is needed (Russian Federation) | NETmundial is an important example of the multistakeholder approach (Brazil, Germany, France, ICANN).
- *On the WSIS process:* The outcome document falls short of recognising the transborder nature of the Internet (ISOC) | Clear targets and tools for measurements of the impacts of digital policies are needed (UNCTAD) | Importance of ICTs for the successful implementation of other agreements that were forged this year, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Convention on Climate Change (ITU) | Use of the matrix of WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs as an easy reference for shaping the future of both the SDGs and the WSIS process (ITU).

4 HUMAN RIGHTS

Echoing

Rights offline apply online. Many statements included references to protecting freedom of expression and privacy rights. Discussion emerged on whether human rights and security are complementary or mutually exclusive.

Specific

High importance of freedom of expression (USA, Telenor, Estonia, UK, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Belgium, New Zealand, Slovenia, Costa Rica) | Cybersecurity is underpinned by human rights (Sweden, Association for Progressive Communications (APC)) | Human rights need to be protected when addressing cybersecurity (Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM), Turkey, Spain, Finland, Argentina) | There is tension between freedom of expression and preventing hate speech (Lebanon) | The protection of journalists and media workers is indispensable (Access Now, Austria) | The outcome document misses specific mention of economic, social, and cultural rights (APC).

**Other issues raised** in the statements at the WSIS+10 included: net neutrality (Slovenia, Chile, CELAC, Turkey), open data (Mexico, Kazakhstan), cloud computing (Slovakia), responsibility of intermediaries (Turkey), common heritage of mankind (Malta), global public good (Finland), e-government (Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Albania, Rwanda), smart cities (Singapore, Argentina, Rwanda), and e-agriculture (Israel).

**United Nations Digital Coherence**

On the occasion of the High-Level Meeting, Chief Executives of the UN system – gathered in the United Nations Group on the Information Society (UNGIS) – highlighted the importance of a coherent action of the United Nations system in the ICT field. An overall framework for future activities could be provided by the alignment between WSIS implementation and the implementation of the SDGs. UNGIS activities are coordinated by UNCTAD.



### **GEM-TECH Awards**

The Gender Equality and Mainstreaming in Technology (GEM-TECH) Awards recognise that technology is a uniquely powerful means of transforming lives of women and helping address the global gender gap<sup>1</sup>. On 14 December, the 2015 Award winners were presented in three main categories: Apply Technology for Women's Empowerment; Promote Women in the Technology Sector; and Develop Gender Responsive ICT Governance, Policy, and Access. [Full report](#)



### **Dot Africa gTLD: The Hope for Realising Africa's Digital Presence**

The session focused on discussions about the DotAfrica project. This initiative was called for by member states of the African Union with the aim of setting-up the .africa top level domain (TLD) name in the context of the ICANN new gTLD programme. With .africa now being subject to an independent review panel (IRP) process, the African governments expressed concerns about the length of the IRP process and noted that the speedy rollout of the .africa TLD is vital to Africa's development needs. [Full report](#)



### **Strengthening the Impact of WSIS Action Lines for Sustainable Development: Showcasing Best Practices, Transferring Know-how, and Fostering Partnerships**

Participants in this session underlined that, while progress has been made over the past ten years in bringing ICTs to more people in the world, work needs to continue, in a multistakeholder environment and on a sustained basis, to ensure that everyone can take full advantage of the opportunities offered by ICTs. Creating strong links between the WSIS action lines and the SDGs<sup>2</sup> was suggested as being key in years to come. [Full report](#)



### **IGF: Internet Governance Empowering Sustainable Development**

Several key themes and concepts related to the IGF<sup>3</sup> were discussed during this session: the capacity development function of the IGF; the evolution of the Forum from an experiment in global policy towards a more stable process; the innovations that characterised the IGF 2015 meeting, especially in terms of inter-sessional work and more tangible outputs; the evolution of national and regional IGF initiatives; and the future of the IGF within the mandate defined in the Tunis Agenda. [Full report](#)



### **Digital Economy and Sustainable Development**

Discussions during this session focused on sustainability and its key role for the future of digital development. It was noted that while the entry point to new technologies is becoming lower, sustainable success is more difficult to achieve. It was also indicated that ICTs can be used to improve governance and inclusive policy-making. [Full report](#)



### **Women's Empowerment in the Digital Age: Implementing WSIS Outcomes and Agenda 2030**

Panellists at this event discussed: the need for society to challenge existing stereotypes; the different types of threats faced by women online; current trends showing decreasing use of technology and the Internet by women; the role of the communication infrastructure in bridging the gender gap; and the need for skills development. One of the event's important conclusions was that now is the right time to react and start implementing specific strategies to empower women in the digital age. In the closing part of the event, UN Women introduced an Action Plan to close the digital gender gap. [Full report](#)



### **Building on WSIS+10: Putting Knowledge Societies at the Heart of the 2030 Agenda**

This event discussed top priorities with regard to the Internet and inclusive knowledge societies, and ways to develop Internet universality. Panellists referred to the WSIS+10 Outcome Document, which recognises the move from an information society to a knowledge society. [Full report](#)



### **Global Forum on Cyber Expertise**

The Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCE)<sup>4</sup> event introduced the main activities of the GFCE in the fields of cybersecurity, cybercrime, e-governance, and data protection. Panellists discussed how the GFCE could help achieve WSIS goals, providing proposals such as the introduction of cyber blue helmets as a UN contribution to peacebuilding in the cyber-field.



### **Enabling a Trusted Connected World**

The session touched on a wide range of topics: acceleration of connectivity and growth; modalities for reaching the last mile; capacity building efforts<sup>5</sup>; approaches toward guaranteeing the realisation of human rights; relations between stakeholders in achieving WSIS goals; and possible next challenges, priorities, and directions in ensuring global connectivity. [Full report](#)



### **Collaboration for Access and Connectivity in Developing Countries: The Best Routes of the Past and the Best Practices for the Future**

The relation between ICTs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was emphasised during this session, with participants noting that ICTs will play an even bigger role in the future economic, social and other worldwide developments. The main issue for the years to come is to make the Internet more relevant to the people who are not yet connected. Each country needs to develop its strategy on how to approach the problem, and develop public policies in a multistakeholder approach. [Full report](#)



### **Presentation of GIP Digital Watch: A Practical Tool for Navigating the Complex Field of Digital Policy**

A discussion was held during this session on the role of GIP Digital Watch (DW)<sup>6</sup> as a contributor to capacity development and an informed global digital policy-making. DW serves as a tool to provide a concise overview of all Internet governance and digital policy issues, actors and ongoing debates. It was said that 'DW should be placed somewhere between Wikipedia and Enciclopedia Britannica', as it uses crowd-sourcing and the wisdom of many, while relying on experts in areas who can provide authoritative input. [Full report](#)







## OVERVIEW OF INSTRUMENTS REFERRED TO IN THE WSIS+10 RESOLUTION

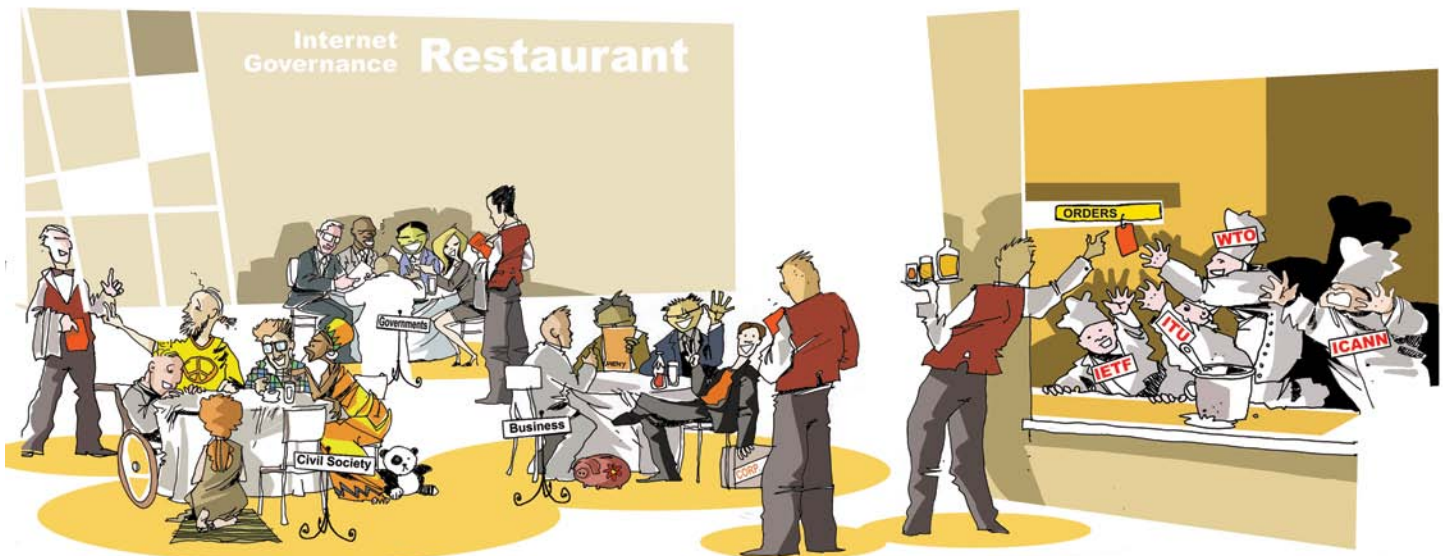
WSIS+10 Resolution [1](#) makes reference to a number of previously adopted instruments, such as resolutions, declarations and reports; these are mentioned in the list below.

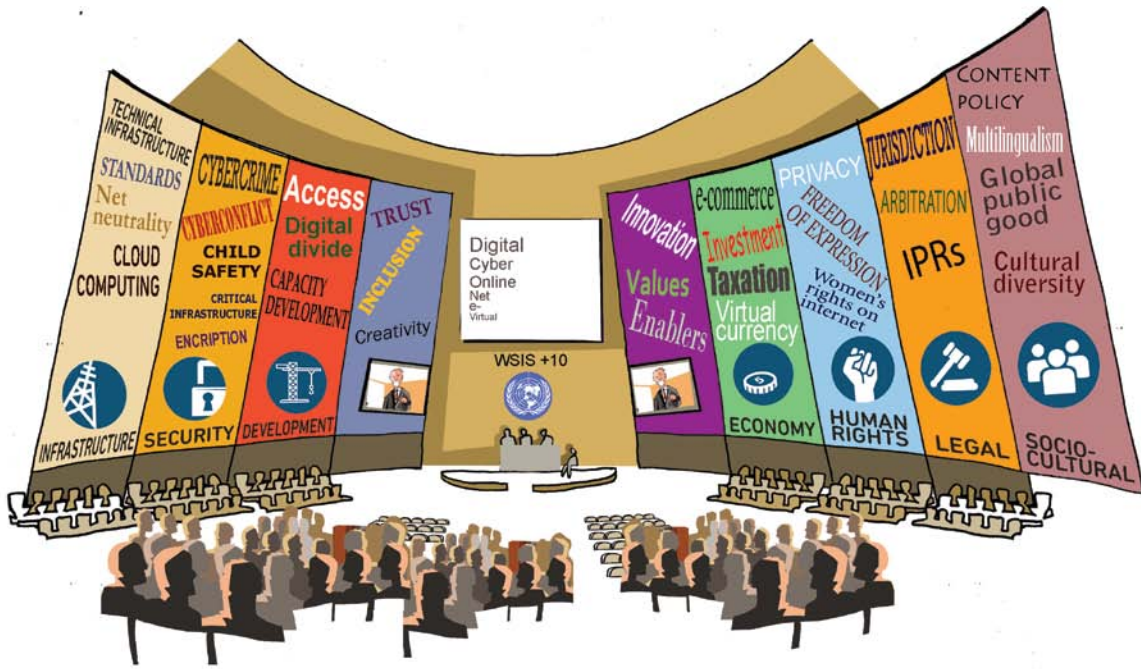
- 1 Charter of the United Nations: [dw.giplatform.org/un-charter](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/un-charter) [↗](#)
- 2 Universal Declaration of Human Rights: [dw.giplatform.org/un-human-rights](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/un-human-rights) [↗](#)
- 3 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: [dw.giplatform.org/iccpr](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/iccpr) [↗](#)
- 4 UN GA resolution 68/198: Information and communications technologies for development: [dw.giplatform.org/unga-res-68-198](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/unga-res-68-198) [↗](#)
- 5 UN GA resolution 68/302: Modalities for the overall review by the General Assembly of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society: [dw.giplatform.org/unga-res-68-302](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/unga-res-68-302) [↗](#)
- 6 UN GA resolution 69/166: The right to privacy in the digital age: [dw.giplatform.org/unga-res-69-166](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/unga-res-69-166) [↗](#)
- 7 UN GA resolution 69/313: Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda): [dw.giplatform.org/unga-res-69-313](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/unga-res-69-313) [↗](#)
- 8 UN GA resolution 70/1: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: [dw.giplatform.org/unga-res-70-1](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/unga-res-70-1) [↗](#)
- 9 HRC resolution 26/13: The promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet: [dw.giplatform.org/hrc-res-26-13](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/hrc-res-26-13) [↗](#)
- 10 2013 and 2015 reports of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security: [dw.giplatform.org/gge](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/gge) [↗](#)
- 11 Geneva Declaration of Principles: [dw.giplatform.org/geneva-declaration](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/geneva-declaration) [↗](#)
- 12 Geneva Plan of Action: [dw.giplatform.org/geneva-plan](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/geneva-plan) [↗](#)
- 13 Tunis Commitment: [dw.giplatform.org/tunis-commitment](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/tunis-commitment) [↗](#)
- 14 Tunis Agenda for the Information Society: [dw.giplatform.org/tunis-agenda](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/tunis-agenda) [↗](#)
- 15 CSTD: Implementing WSIS Outcomes, a TenYear Review (May 2015): [dw.giplatform.org/cstd-10-year-review](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/cstd-10-year-review) [↗](#)
- 16 UNESCO: Information and Knowledge for All: An Expanded Vision and a Renewed Commitment: [dw.giplatform.org/unesco-expanded-vision](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/unesco-expanded-vision) [↗](#)
- 17 ITU: WSIS+10 Statement on the Implementation of WSIS Outcomes and the WSIS+10 Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015: [dw.giplatform.org/itu-wsis10-statement](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/itu-wsis10-statement) [↗](#)
- 18 ITU: Connect 2020 Agenda for global telecommunication/information and communication technology development: [dw.giplatform.org/itu-connect-2020](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/itu-connect-2020) [↗](#)
- 19 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action: [dw.giplatform.org/vienna](https://www.dw.giplatform.org/vienna) [↗](#)

## RECIPE FOR A WSIS STATEMENT

Each negotiation process has its own unique flavours. The negotiations during the WSIS+10 review process inspired us to create the following quick and easy recipe for writing a successful digital statement, guaranteed to satisfy all appetites and keep your audience coming back for more. The elements are based on our data mining analysis and the reflections of our reporters.

- Garnish the dish with a handful of gratitude; it will make the plate look more appetising.
- Use innovative cooking methods that highlight the progress that has been made during the last ten years since your previous kitchen efforts.
- Use local, home-grown ingredients as examples to promote your national cyber cuisine.
- To be a credible cook, it is essential to link the WSIS meal to the sustainable development dessert, as the flavours combine seamlessly.
- Be aware that dishes will significantly lack in flavour if they do not include one or more of the following spices: women, youth, the elderly, or – if you really feel adventurous – linguistic minorities.
- Although using basic infrastructure ingredients is a pre-condition to make your dish accessible to guests, try experimenting with socio-economic policy sauces to make the dish truly enjoyable.
- Depending on your taste, liberally sprinkle with the term ‘multistakeholder’ – it’s a popular ingredient. If you are suffering from an overdose of multistakeholderism, you can substitute it with inclusiveness.
- Select from the almost limitless larder of risks to balance the sweet digital opportunities with savoury cyber-threats.
- Decide on the flavour combination of human rights and cybersecurity: are they complementary or mutually exclusive?
- Gain credibility by adding a teaspoon of techie slang – particularly if you’ve never cooked before.
- Keep stirring it carefully for the next ten years, but make sure it does not overcook in the meantime.
- Don’t hesitate to share your recipe for success with aspiring cooks.





WSIS+10 Selfie: Visual summary of the negotiations



Nightly negotiations of the WSIS+10 Outcome Document

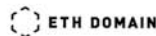
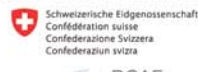
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