

## Charter for the Digitally Connected World

1. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has become a driver for a range of social and economic activities and an engine for economic growth and human prosperity.
2. We expect worldwide proliferation of ICT infrastructure and services to enable seamless global connectivity among people and things anytime and anywhere that enhances our quality of life. A key factor that has enabled the rapid evolution and spread of Internet technologies, infrastructure, applications and services, is an environment that allows for creativity and innovation. The access that innovators now have to each other is further catalyzing and accelerating whole new fields of human endeavor, creativity, and collaboration. Preserving that essential dynamism is vital as network connectivity increasingly extends to everyday objects in ways that will further transform how people live and work.
3. In view of the opportunities created by the historic shift to the digitally connected world, we share the following common goals for realizing sustainable and inclusive development and reaffirm our intention to cooperate on addressing the global challenges that we now face.

### **Goals for the Digitally Connected World**

4. We believe that global digital connectivity should in particular contribute to improving the quality of life for all people everywhere, to generating economic growth through innovation and to achieving sustainable and inclusive development, in the following ways

#### **Improved quality of life**

5. By creating opportunities for a higher quality of life and greater prosperity for people around the world, including by committing to the rule of law, promoting democracy, strengthening transparent and accountable governance, promoting the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, notably the right not to be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy, equal rights for women and girls, freedom of expression and of peaceful assembly, and enhancing cultural diversity. We recognize the challenges posed by potential use of ICTs for criminal and terrorist purposes and we are committed to address those challenges through collaboration with all stakeholders.

## **Economic growth through innovation**

6. By adopting digital technologies and enabling new business models, by providing access to international markets, and by enabling people anywhere in the world to connect, collaborate, and trade, through improvement of production processes, the creation of ICT-enabled products, and data-driven innovation taking into account privacy and data protection that creates employment and wealth.

## **Sustainable and inclusive development**

7. By contributing to the strategies to address the global challenges we face, including ending poverty, strengthening food security, improving health care and education, promoting sustainable transportation and logistics, achieving gender equality, providing energy security, enhancing accessibility for those who are poor and vulnerable, mitigating climate change, and reducing disaster risk, as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals of “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015, and to achieving Green IT principles and the goals of the Paris Agreement, adopted at the United Nations Climate Change Conference COP21 in December 2015.

## **Fundamental Principles**

8. We reaffirm and share the following fundamental principles which we believe underpin the digitally connected world:

### **i. Promoting and Protecting Human Rights**

9. By setting down the basis of this Charter for the Digitally Connected World, we recognize that the same human rights and fundamental freedoms that people have offline apply and must also be protected online. Progress towards the digitally connected world should be measured both as a function of economic development and with reference to human rights and fundamental freedoms, as set forth by the Outcome Document of the review by the United Nations General Assembly of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+10).

### **ii. Promoting and protecting the free flow of information**

10. The Internet’s open, interoperable and distributed nature is a powerful enabler of innovation and economic growth. The free flow of information can catalyze

innovation and creativity, support research and knowledge sharing, enhance trade and e-commerce, enable the development of new businesses and services, and increase people's welfare through policies, grounded in respect for human rights and the rule of law, and reinforce the Internet's openness, in particular its distributed and interconnected nature, while respecting applicable frameworks for privacy and data protection, and strengthening digital security.

### **iii. Supporting a multi-stakeholder approach**

11. We reaffirm our commitment to a multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance, which includes full and active participation by governments, private sector, civil society, the technical community, and international organizations, among others. We will continue to prioritize multi-stakeholder inclusion in our domestic policy making processes where appropriate and support multi-stakeholder processes and initiatives internationally which are inclusive, transparent and accountable to all stakeholders in achieving the digitally connected world.

### **iv. Strengthening digital connectivity and inclusiveness for all**

12. The benefits of the digitally connected world depend on increased connectivity of people and objects. Digital connectivity flourishes in supportive, enabling policy and regulatory environments that provide transparent and predictable legal and policy frameworks. This incentivizes investments in local infrastructure and applications which enhance connectivity and promote the use of ICTs in the development of local content, and cultural and linguistic diversity.

## **G7 ICT Strategy**

13. Based on the foregoing principles, we support the following strategies to realize the potential of the digitally connected world.

### **i. Promoting access to ICT**

14. We should promote affordable and high quality access to global communications networks, digital skills development and digital adoption for all people by working to:
  - (a) bridge digital divides;
  - (b) improve the quality and affordability of ICT infrastructure, products and services globally, through investment and fair and transparent policy and legal frameworks that encourage competition;

- (c) promote accessibility and digital literacy for everyone; and
- (d) respect cultural and linguistic diversity.

**ii. Strengthening international collaboration for promoting the free flow of information, privacy protection and cybersecurity**

15. To enable an open, interoperable, reliable and secure cyberspace, we should strengthen international collaboration when furthering efforts to:
- (a) promote cross-border information flows;
  - (b) promote privacy and data protection; and
  - (c) promote cybersecurity.
16. In order to achieve this collaboration we continue to support and contribute to efforts by stakeholders in relevant bodies that promote principles and that exchange and develop best practices.

**iii. Fostering innovation**

17. ICTs have permeated countless aspects of the global economy, impacting sectors as varied as trade, banking, health, education, and transportation. In particular, ICTs drive sustainable and inclusive growth of the economy that facilitates the development of rural areas, reduces unemployment and inequalities, and lifts people out of poverty. It is therefore important to develop strategies that maximize the opportunities and benefits created by innovation. We will achieve this by furthering our efforts to:
- (a) open markets;
  - (b) promote interoperability through standards;
  - (c) promote open data policies;
  - (d) develop human capital;
  - (e) protect intellectual property; and
  - (f) facilitate R&D and adoption of emerging technologies.

**iv. Using ICT to address global challenges and opportunities**

18. We believe that the greater use of ICTs worldwide can contribute to addressing global economic and social challenges and to securing opportunities in such areas as poverty and hunger, health care, child online protection, the ageing society, education, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, accessibility, energy and climate change, resilience and disaster risk reduction, and sustainable transportation and logistics. We will share good practices and strengthen

collaboration with each other and with others around the world.

**v. Strengthening comprehensive international cooperation and collaboration**

19. We should collaborate with all stakeholders, including both developed and developing countries in particular small island developing states; international organizations; the private sector; academia; civil society, as well as among G7 member states, toward maximizing the potential of the digitally connected world.