

Joint Declaration by G7 ICT Ministers

(Action Plan on implementing the Charter)

G7 ICT Ministers' Meeting in Takamatsu, Kagawa - 29-30 April 2016

[Preamble]

1. We, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Ministers of the G7, met at Takamatsu, Kagawa, Japan on 29 and 30 April 2016, to address current and future global ICT opportunities and challenges for sustainable and inclusive development.
2. We recall the Okinawa Charter on Global Information Society (July 2000), the G8 Declaration in Deauville (May 2011) and the Open Data Charter (June 2013) which have contributed to global progress in expanding the digitally connected world.
3. We welcome:
 - The Outcome Document of the High Level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), including the extension of the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) as a multi-stakeholder platform for discussion of Internet governance issues;
 - The Internet Governance Principles of the NETmundial Multistakeholder Statement;
 - "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (hereinafter "the 2030 Agenda") for attaining the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; and
 - The Paris Agreement, adopted at COP21, which refers to the importance of innovation.
4. We also welcome Initiatives to promote the digitally connected world, including:
 - "A Digital Single Market Strategy" for Europe initiated by the European Union;
 - "The Global Connect Initiative" launched by the United States;
 - "Partnership for Quality Infrastructure" addressed by Japan;
 - "The Development and Digital Technology" action plan launched by France;
 - "The Digital Agenda" launched by Germany;
 - "The Broadband Strategy and the Strategy for Digital Growth" launched by Italy in the framework of the European Digital Agenda;
 - "The Surrey University 5G Innovation Centre" established by the United Kingdom; and
 - Canada's "Innovation Agenda" and the commitment to expand broadband access.

5. We also welcome the outcome from the G7 ICT Multi-Stakeholders' Conference in Takamatsu, Kagawa on 29 April 2016, for discussing current and future global ICT opportunities and challenges with all stakeholders.
6. We look forward to the outcomes of the OECD Ministerial Meeting on the Digital Economy: Innovation, Growth and Social Prosperity to be held in Cancun, Mexico, on 21 to 23 June 2016.
7. We commit to take the following actions based on the Charter for the Digitally Connected World to maximize its potential:

[Actions]

i. Promoting access to ICT

8. In order to promote access to ICT, we encourage the following actions.
 - a) Bridging digital divides
9. We continue to encourage the development of infrastructure for the digitally connected world and policies that support the global expansion of ICT infrastructure, products, and services including broadband Internet access to all people. Toward that end, we seek to catalyze multi-stakeholder efforts to bring 1.5 billion new Internet users online by 2020.
10. We also continue to share good practices with other countries and regions. We encourage increased support from technical experts, international organizations, and all stakeholders including multilateral development banks for development initiatives. We also encourage the integration of Internet access goals into national development plans.
11. With regard to improving connectivity infrastructure, we encourage private sector investment in a competitive environment and using technologically neutral frameworks. Public-private partnerships can help to amplify the power of both public and private sectors to promote the development and deployment of sustainable, high-quality infrastructures.
12. We recognize the importance of development, interconnection and utilization of national research and education networks as providing an open infrastructure for education, research and development purposes that also serve to enhance connectivity around the world.

b) Improving the quality and affordability of ICT infrastructure, products and services globally through investment and fair and transparent policy and legal frameworks that encourage competition

13. We plan to share best practices for promoting affordable access including through fair, predictable and transparent policy and legal environments that facilitate competition, stimulate investment and generation of local content as well as introduction of lower cost technologies.

c) Promoting accessibility and digital literacy for everyone

14. We continue to promote efforts that address the challenges of digital exclusion through education and training on essential digital skills and initiatives to facilitate the use of ICTs, including the Internet, to all people. Particular attention should be paid to women and girls, the elderly, youth, persons with disabilities, minorities, rural populations, poor communities, the illiterate and other vulnerable populations.

d) Respecting cultural and linguistic diversity

15. We encourage continued research, development, and deployment of multilingual translation technology and support the further development of local content and services in a variety of languages. We also support the development of new technologies including those for audio visual content that foster cultural and linguistic diversity. Also, we note that digital technologies have relevance to the implementation of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions adopted in 2005.

ii . Promoting and protecting the free flow of information

16. In order to promote and protect the free flow of information, we encourage the following actions.

a) Promoting internet openness and cross-border information flows

17. We continue to support ICT policies that preserve the global nature of the Internet, promote the flow of information across borders and allow Internet users to access online information, knowledge and services of their choice. We oppose data localization requirements that are unjustifiable taking into account legitimate public policy objectives.

b) Promoting privacy and data protection

18. We endeavor to develop policy frameworks that further promote effective privacy and data protection across jurisdictions to meet high standards of privacy and data protection. We also welcome proactive approaches such as “Privacy by Design”

which take privacy and protecting personal data into account throughout the engineering process.

c) Promoting cybersecurity

19. We reaffirm our support for policies that improve cybersecurity as essential for the development of a trustworthy digitally connected world. As part of our efforts to address cybersecurity risks, threats and vulnerabilities, including those to ICT and ICT-enabled critical infrastructures, we endeavor to strengthen international collaboration, capacity building and public-private partnerships. We also support risk management based approaches to cybersecurity including research on methods to analyze threats and continue to work with all stakeholders on such efforts also through constructive discussions in international fora.

20. To promote cybersecurity awareness, all stakeholders in the digitally connected world must take active responsibility. To this end, we recognize the importance of developing human capital to reduce threats to cybersecurity. That could be done through training, education and increased awareness to enable citizens, enterprises including critical infrastructure operators and governments to meet their objectives in an efficient manner.

iii. Fostering innovation

21. In order to foster innovation, we encourage the following actions.

a) Enabling open markets

22. We continue to encourage policies that foster open markets as a means to support innovation. We affirm the importance of pro-competition policy approaches that ensure fair and non-discriminatory treatment of companies and that avoid the use of competition remedies to pursue industrial policy goals. We affirm that generally applicable measures regulating technology products in the commercial sector benefit from meaningful consultation with foreign governments, the private sector, and all impacted stakeholders to encourage innovative, flexible, and cost-effective solutions.

b) Promoting interoperability through standards

23. We promote the development of ICT standards including reference architecture models that will continue to be industry-led primarily, voluntary and consensus driven, based on principles of transparency, openness, impartiality, market needs and coherence including those developed within traditional standard development organizations.

c) Promoting open data policies

24. In 2013 the G8 summit in Lough Erne endorsed a transformative Open Data Charter to make budget data and other government information public in an easily accessible way. Recognizing that making information resources accessible, discoverable, and usable by the public can improve the lives of citizens and help fuel entrepreneurship, innovation, and scientific discovery, we commit to continue to promote frameworks to facilitate interoperability and openness.

d) Developing human capital

25. We encourage actions to develop ICT human capital to meet existing and future needs and to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) increase productivity and reach new markets by using ICT.

e) Protecting intellectual property

26. We affirm the importance of developing and protecting intellectual property, including trade secrets. We recognize that strong intellectual property regimes foster open markets, competition, innovation and growth. We oppose generally applicable policies that require access to or transfer of source code of mass market software as a condition of market access while recognizing the legitimate interest of governments in assessing the security of these products.

f) Facilitating R&D and adoption of emerging technologies

27. We recognize the importance of facilitating emerging technologies in achieving a digitally connected world. We reaffirm our commitment to encouraging ICT R&D relating to emerging technologies such as the Internet of Things, big data analytics, 5G mobile telecommunications, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and robotics. We plan to ensure that our policy frameworks take into account the broader societal and economic implications of such technologies as they are developed while remaining technology neutral.

iv. Using ICT to address global challenges and opportunities

28. We commit to sharing experience relating to initiatives that leverage ICTs to contribute to the 2030 Agenda, notably in areas such 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.

29. We also recognize that the WSIS outcomes, and Action Lines, continue to provide the appropriate international framework for multi-stakeholder collaboration in the

use of ICTs to achieve the 2030 Agenda and other internationally agreed development goals.

30. We commit to working with all stakeholders at the national, regional, and international levels to use new and innovative approaches to achieving these development goals and improving the quality of life for all people around the world.

v . Strengthening Comprehensive International Cooperation and Collaboration

31. In order to effectively implement the aforementioned actions, we resolve to enhance international cooperation and collaboration among all stakeholders. We plan to encourage other countries and regions to undertake efforts to support the digitally connected world and promote an environment that encourages innovation.

32. We seek to promote amongst the G7 members and more widely in appropriate international organizations and fora the opportunities for collaboration and best practice sharing including the examples detailed in the attached Annex. Furthermore, we welcome initiatives to assess the social and economic impact of ICTs in the digitally connected world.

[Follow-up and Review]

33. In order to ensure the implementation of this Declaration based on the Charter for the Digitally Connected World, we commit to follow-up at the Presidency's discretion at future G7 ICT Ministers' Meetings, and review this Declaration, if necessary.

34. We welcome the intention of the forthcoming Italian Presidency of the G7 to convene an ICT Ministers' Meeting in 2017.