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STATEMENT

BY

H.E. MR. NEVILLE GERTZE

AMBASSADOR & PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

BEFORE

THE 2ND COMMITTEE OF THE

73RD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ON

**"INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"**

(AGENDA ITEM 17)

**NEW YORK
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(PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

Mr. Chairperson

1. We thank the Secretary-General for the report on the follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.
2. Namibia Believes that the World Summit on the Information Society provides a great platform for the Information and Communication Technologies industry to appreciate trends and challenges facing the industry globally and at country level. The Namibian Government, and by extension many ICT industry players, view the platform as the theater to showcase the plethora of ICT advancements, solutions and services.
3. Equally, the Summit continues to serve as a lever to consolidate existing relations between the ICT stakeholders. As government, we aspire to transform Namibia into a digital smart nation that leverages technology in driving the country's socio-economic development agenda.
4. Namibia appreciates that the WSIS Forum 2018 was held under the theme "Leveraging ICTs to Build Information and Knowledge Societies for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" and in that respect, welcomes as an outcome, the linking of WSIS action lines to the Sustainable Development Goals to better track WSIS contributions to the SDGs.

Mr Chairperson,

Over the years, Namibia has made massive strides in investing in ICT infrastructure to modernize and expand its telecommunications infrastructure and service networks. The Information and Communications Technology (ITC) sector continues to add significantly to the economic development of the Namibian economy.

5. It is undeniable that the 4th industrial revolution is upon us - a revolution that will fundamentally change the way in which we live, work, and deliver services. To ensure that the developing countries do not remain on the periphery of this revolution, we must contemplate a host of policy and regulatory interventions that will place us in better stead to harness the benefits of this imminent and unavoidable development.

Namibia believes that in doing so, it is imperative to pose some critical questions,

The questions are:

- What does *Digital Transformation* mean for the Developing Countries?
- What are the benefits we intend to derive from this development?
- What are the critical pathways to this transformation?

- How will digital transformation contribute to our vision to create an “*ICT Smart World*” and in so doing place our countries on an economic growth pathway that would improve the lives of all.

While I do not have the answers to some of these questions, I am hopeful that the exchanges during this debate will provide some insight.

Mr Chairperson,

6. There is a nexus between access to information and communication technology (ICT), cybersecurity and human development. ICT provides unprecedented potential for people to acquire knowledge and skills and use those capabilities for their own interests and for society as a whole.
7. However, ICT can also generate myriad risks as it offers new means for malicious activities, while the insecurity that cybercrime generates has economic costs. Efforts to support greater access to ICT in the developing world need to integrate considerations of cybersecurity in order to be effective and sustainable, but such efforts may themselves create risks to human development as the security objectives of states and individuals do not always coincide.
8. In Namibia we are in the process of developing our Cyber Security Bill, which amongst others, will promote e-government services and electronic commerce and communications with public and private bodies, institutions and citizens.
9. We agree therefore with the Secretary-General’s report that, there is a need for multi-stakeholder cooperation that can respond rapidly to present threats and anticipate and find solutions for future threats.
10. I thank you,