

IEEE Internet Initiative

**OPENING POLICY STATEMENT
DELIVERED AT THE WSIS FORUM 2016**

By Oleg Logvinov

Chairperson,
IEEE Internet Initiative

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Secretary General, Honorable Ministers, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am honored to be here today, and I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of IEEE as a Contributing Sponsor of the [2016 World Summit on Information Society Forum \(WSIS\)](#).

IEEE supports the WSIS process as a means to facilitate open and transparent dialog on many key issues, especially on how to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The WSIS Forum provides an invaluable opportunity for all stakeholders to work together to develop tangible and actionable programs. IEEE is pleased to be part of this.

As the world's largest professional association, IEEE represents over 420,000 members worldwide—across over 190 countries. As an international body it has a vital role in impactful technology development and standardization, and our members continue to shape Information Communication Technologies for current and future generations. Grounded in the principles of openness, transparency and inclusiveness, we work in collaboration with all stakeholders around the globe to advance technology for the benefit of humanity.

Connecting the world's citizens and achieving the SDGs is a lofty goal. In our view, it is more than a goal. It is a responsibility.

In this room and beyond, there are diverse groups of individuals with an array of exceptional skills and expertise. By pulling these resources together and working in an open and transparent approach that allows all to participate on equal footing, we can make great progress and succeed in achieving all, yes all, the SDGs.

As technologists, we believe that ICTs will play a large and central role in achieving the SDGs. We are committed to supporting ICT development and adoption, as well as global connectivity, as these are foundational to accelerating social and economic

growth and sustainable development—both in developed and developing regions of the world.

IEEE is working at the intersection of technology and policy bringing to the forefront technical expertise from across technical domains. We are working to address the challenges and opportunities that multi-regional and cross-disciplinary experiences bring to policy. IEEE considers it important to work with all stakeholders on approaches that the technical community views as globally relevant, while understanding local variations and needs.

For example, just a few weeks ago in conjunction with the World Bank we hosted an event titled Global Connect Stakeholders: Advancing Solutions. This event brought together a cross-functional group of individuals from around the globe to identify tangible and concrete solutions to bring connectivity to under-served regions as well as to those not yet connected. These solutions addressed many topics beyond merely connecting individuals to the Information Society. It addressed the need to educate individuals on the benefits of being connected, as well as the critical elements of investment, strengthening technology connectivity capacity and regulatory and policy factors for advancing connectivity.

Now is a time for creativity, innovation and open collaboration to open new paths. As we move forward with dedicated efforts to advance the development goals, we are encouraged by the work of WSIS and congratulate WSIS on its success, and look forward to working alongside all stakeholders to support the WSIS Action Lines and advance the SDGs. Even though achieving the SDGs will not be an easy task, it is a challenge that everyone in this room is willing to accept and it is one we will achieve together to advance the betterment of all people around the globe using our collective skills, expertise and experience.

Thank you.

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