Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear WSIS Stakeholders,

- It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you this afternoon in the Preparatory Meeting for the WSIS Forum 2011. As the host and on behalf of the co-organizers, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP, I welcome all the participants onsite as well as those participating remotely. I thank you for your contributions and enthusiasm towards the open consultation process.

- The Open Consultations on the Thematic Aspects and the New Innovative Format of WSIS Forum 2011 has been divided into 4 phases.

- This Preparatory Meeting today marks the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Phase of these Consultations. The process is very important as submissions made during these consultations at the preparatory stages will provide the framework for the agenda, speakers and format of the forum. This will of course have a direct impact on the outcome and success of the Forum 2011.
• The WSIS Forum is, as you all know, multistakeholder, and includes representatives from all over globe, and all segments of the ICT community.

• In our efforts to be as inclusive as possible we have been working hard to provide facilities for various forms of Remote Participation. We are happy to have with us some 50 remote participants.

• I would like to take this opportunity to welcome two of our WSIS Action Line facilitating organizations, UNDESA and FAO. They are both joining us remotely. I would also like to recognize the remote participation of Mr Liberato Bautista, President and Chief Executive of The Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations.

• We will continue our efforts, to ensure that every voice is represented and heard. Internally we have nominated an ITU Focal Point for WSIS Remote Participation.

• Continuing our efforts towards ensuring the use of technology for a more participatory and representative WSIS Process, we are happy to launch a new, revamped WSIS Forum 2011 website. The new website, based on the open source DotNetNuke platform will enable greater user-interactivity and allow for user-generated content.

Distinguished friends and colleagues,

• I would like to take this opportunity to update you on a few components of the WSIS Implementation process.
Let’s start with stocktaking, the WSIS Stocktaking process – the purpose of which is to provide a register of activities carried out by WSIS Stakeholders.

ITU has been maintaining the WSIS Stocktaking database as a publicly accessible system providing information on ICT-related initiatives and projects covering the 11 WSIS Action Lines of Geneva Plan of Action.

Stakeholders can benefit from “the global events calendar”, “the global repository”, “case studies” and other functionalities that enable networking and partnership creation.

To assist with the WSIS follow-up process, a regular WSIS Stocktaking report was launched. As of today, 4773 entries have been registered in the database from 1684 different stakeholders.

I would also like to say a few words about UNGIS – as most of you know the United Nations Group on the Information Society, known as UNGIS, serves as an interagency mechanism to coordinate substantive policy issues facing the United Nations system’s implementation of the WSIS outcomes.

UNGIS has a number of joint initiatives: on Child on line protection, open access to scientific information; and Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) reviews. Lead agencies have been identified for each initiative and are encouraging other UNGIS members to participate.

UNGIS chairs and co-chairs plan to organize a joint side event during LDC conference which will be held in Turkey at the end of May 2011. A paper on the progress made in the implementation of WSIS
outcomes in LDC’s will also be presented by the UNGIS members at the conference.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentleman

• Before I close, let me also take the opportunity to share with you some recent developments from the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, which was held in Guadalajara, Mexico, last month. I am pleased to inform you that member states passed a new resolution on ITU’s role in implementing the WSIS outcomes and requesting further action.

• It highlights, among other things, Paragraph 111 of the Tunis Agenda, which requested the United Nations General Assembly to make an overall review of the implementation of WSIS outcomes in 2015. Even though 5 years seem to be long time, there remains significant work to be done in order to achieve the WSIS targets. Many countries have started to feel this urgency and openly called for action.

• It is also important to note that the Plenipotentiary endorsed formally ITU taking the Lead Facilitator role for WSIS Action Line C6 (Enabling Environment).

• The Resolution also resolved that ITU-D shall give high priority to building information and communication infrastructure (WSIS Action Line C2), this being the physical backbone for all e-applications.

• In this resolution, the member states also instructed the ITU Secretary-General to initiate consultations with the United Nations Chief Executive Board (CEB) in order to elaborate the framework for overall review of implementation of WSIS outcomes in 2015, including the possibility of holding a high-level event in 2014 or 2015.

• Necessary preparations based on the multi-stakeholder approach will need to take place, and it is important that they pursue efficient and effective coordination with all stakeholders in preparing the overall review.
These new developments inject energy and enthusiasm into the WSIS Implementation process.

With this spirit I would like to again thank you for your participation and wish you a very successful Preparatory meeting, which I am sure will lead to a successful WSIS Forum in 2011.