Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates

Ladies and Gentleman,

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be here with you at the opening ceremony of the WSIS Forum 2011. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the ITU, UNDP, UNESCO and UNCTAD for jointly organizing this innovative and promising Forum and also the ILO for being the kind host of this event.

Over the years, WSIS Forums have emerged as a dynamic and interactive event focused on learning, sharing, networking and fostering partnerships about projects, innovations and field experiences, all of which are prerequisites of implementing the WSIS objectives.

In the modern information society, telecommunications and ICT play a major role in every sector of the economy and contribute to areas as so diverse as health, education and public safety to reach out and benefit all citizens of society. Therefore the need for people centered information society where everyone has the fundamental right to access, and exploit information and knowledge is of immediate essence.

We have all come together from diverse regions of the world here with a common purpose of working together to build an all inclusive information society. Your valuable deliberations, I am sure, will encourage the acquisition of new ideas and plans for realizing the commitments laid down in each of the two phases of WSIS — Geneva in 2003 and Tunis in 2005.

My appreciation and sincere gratitude to the ITU and the co organizing United Nations agencies of this WSIS Forum who are working with an utmost dedication and devotion as the facilitators on their respective WSIS action lines by fostering partnerships and identifying promising approaches.

Ladies and Gentleman

Since its inception the United Arab Emirates has adopted a clear vision that aims at engaging in the international community, actively participating in global initiatives that are set to improve the human conditions and provide people with better quality of life. The UAE leadership finds that the World Summit on the Information Society is one of these constructive initiatives that should be dealt with utmost attention and highest consideration.
We, in the United Arab Emirates have established a WSIS National Committee which has members from the National Stakeholder Organizations which adds the valuable experience from the industry and user community. This Committee is earnestly working to implement the WSIS objectives and realize the vision of building an equitable, people centered and development oriented Information Society where the people can achieve the economic, social and cultural aspirations.

The UAE WSIS National Report which will be distributed to you during the Forum is a high level briefing on the UAE initiatives on the activities mapped to the WSIS action lines and is presented to demonstrate the significant progress made by the UAE in terms of achieving the WSIS Action Lines. There is an initiative in the UAE for each of the WSIS Action line and this is a testimony of commitment and obligation we have towards the WSIS objectives.

We are going to have Briefing Session and Country Workshop Later on today where we are going to elaborate further on the UAE WSIS Experience, and share with you our successful initiatives and stories.

Your Excellencies, distinguish guests

We cannot skip such important Global event without emphasizing on the valuable role that ICTs are playing towards greener planet. Similar to ITU & Others, the UAE is also in line with GREEN ICT Policies and Initiatives which encourages to Reduce Paper Print, and make great benefit of the Electronic Means.

Distinguished Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Tomorrow is a very important day to all of us; together we are going to celebrate the World Telecommunications and Information Society Day. We are all going to congratulate ourselves for all the great success stories we are living because of ICTs.

Twenty years ago very of few of us, if any, were able to imagine what sort of growth and development ICTs have brought to our world today and in this very short time.

Nevertheless, this substantial growth in the ICT sector and its ever changing landscape unveils both challenges and opportunities for us. The confrontation of these challenges and reaping the opportunities require a shared wisdom and cooperative efforts. Let’s take this Forum as an opportunity to strengthen cooperation and information exchange, and work constructively for creating a bright and sustainable future enabling the ICTs to benefit the entire world.
To conclude I have strong faith that forums like these, through dialogue and the exchange of ideas, will pave the way toward achieving endless opportunities for innovation and cooperation. We are very grateful to the ITU for giving us an opportunity to extend UAE’s partnership and support to the WSIS Forum 2011 as a STRATEGIC PARTNER and we are equally honored to share our successful experience with you.

Please visit our stand in the WSIS Exhibition, and join us in our UAE Country Workshop, as well as our Reception later on today.

I wish you a very successful forum and look forward to the productive results of this Forum.

Mohamed Nasser Al Ghanim