8th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Meeting (Geneva, 2010)

<u>Speeches</u>

Contribution to WTIM-10 opening

SOURCE: ITU/BDT

TITLE: DRAFT Opening remarks by the BDT Director

8th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Meeting
Geneva, 24-26 November 2010

DRAFT Opening remarks by the BDT Director

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

- It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 8th ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators meeting.

- I am extremely pleased that the Secretary of State, H.E. Ms Chaffai, has accepted to chair our meeting this year. Tunisia has been a key player when it comes to developing the information society. Not only was it host to the second phase of the WSIS, but since then it has organized the annual ICT4 All Forum, in partnership with ITU, to assess progress on ICT for development in the African region and beyond.

- I am also very pleased to see that we have more than 260 registered participants from over 90 member states, as well as international organizations, academic and private entities. We are very lucky to have a number of distinguished speakers from the academic and business community with us, in addition to our experts from the government sector, who will share their knowledge and insights and stimulate the debate.

- This year's WTIM coincides with an important date. The year 2010 marks the midpoint between 2005, the conclusion of the WSIS in Tunis and 2015, the target date for reaching the WSIS goals, set in line with the target date for achieving the MDGs. Therefore, this year much attention has been paid to assessing progress on reaching these internationally agreed development goals. Reliable data and indicators are critical in this process, not only to take stock but also to help policy makers and investors take the right decisions so that the goals can be achieved.

- 2010 was also the year in which the UN General Assembly designated 20 October (20-10-2010) as World Statistics Day. The worldwide celebration of World Statistics Day was a big success and acknowledged the importance of national and international official statistics and the shared values of service, integrity and professionalism. ITU actively participated in the celebration of World Statistics Day jointly with other Geneva-based international organizations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- Based on ITU estimates, the number of Internet users worldwide doubled during the past five years and will surpass the two billion mark in 2010. The good news is that Internet user numbers are growing at a higher rate in developing countries compared to developed countries. Indeed, 162 million of the 226 million new Internet users in 2010 will be from developing countries.

- But a lot more people need to be brought online: while 71% of the population in developed countries will be online by the end of this year, only 21% of the population in developing countries will be using the Internet, and only few of them through a broadband connection. Therefore, urgent action is necessary to bridge the digital divide, especially the persisting broadband divide. The mobile boom has been successful in bringing communication to millions of previously unconnected people and we now need to upgrade the services to provide wireless access to Internet at broadband speeds.

- Indeed, broadband was one of the issues at the heart of the discussions of the Global Symposium for Regulators, which took place in Dakar, Senegal two weeks ago, bringing together regulators and policy makers from more than 80 countries. One of the key policy messages coming out of the GSR was to encourage regulatory frameworks that foster innovation, investment and affordable access to broadband.

- This year's WTIM will pay a lot of attention to the subject of broadband measurement. During the coming days, you will be addressing the definitions of broadband, new broadband-related indicators, and how to measure the economic and social impact of broadband.

- I am very pleased to see our cooperation with other international organizations in the preparation of this conference, such as the OECD, the EU, UNCTAD, and the UN Regional Commissions, under the framework of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development. The Partnership, which was created six years ago, has been highly successful in raising awareness of the importance of ICT measurement, enhancing the availability of ICT data, and developing international standards that serve as a guidance for countries and ensure comparability of indicators across countries. Tomorrow, a critical step forward will be made when core indicators for measuring e-government will be presented, and indicators for measuring the WSIS targets. I encourage all of you to share your experience and knowledge in this final consultation process.

- A topic that has raised a lot of concern among parents, educators, and policy makers, is the safety of our children in the online world. This is why ITU has embraced this topic and launched the Child Online Protection initiative in 2008. The COP initiative aims to promote global awareness on the importance of child safety in the online world and develop practical tools to assist governments, industry and educators in their efforts to ensure a safe and secure online experience for children everywhere.

- Monitoring the risks and threats associated with children's use of the Internet is essential to these efforts. I am therefore very pleased that on the occasion of this year's WTIM, we are launching a new report called "Child online protection: statistical framework and indicators". For the first time, an attempt has been made to provide a comprehensive guide on the measurement of child online protection. It has been developed with the objective of enabling Member States to assess the status of child online safety in their country, and identify aspects of child online protection that may require further effort.

- Finally, one of the emerging issues that has received considerable attention recently is the question of how ICTs impact on climate change. Clearly, this requires a quantitative assessment and methodology for measurement and it is likely that many of you will be asked to address this in the near future. Therefore we decided to share with you the latest progress made on measuring ICTs and climate change. We have organized this discussion in close cooperation with our colleagues in the Standardization Sector, and we are taking advantage of the presence of experts who are attending the ITU-T Study Group 5 WP-3 meeting on ICTs and climate change this week in Geneva.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- You have a rich and diverse agenda in front of you. Let me close by thanking all of our members for your support for our work on ICT statistics, in particular through providing data and indicators. Your prompt and continuous collaboration is essential to enhancing the effective production, dissemination, and analysis of ICT statistics.

- I wish you interesting and fruitful debates over the next three days and I look forward to the outcomes of this important meeting.

Contribution to WTIM-10 opening

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English

SOURCE:	Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Thailand
TITLE:	Keynote Speech by Mrs. Jirawan Boonperm, Permanent Secretary

Keynote Speech

by

Mrs. Jirawan Boonperm

Permanent Secretary

Minister of Information and Communication Technology

Thailand

at

8th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Meeting

Geneva, Switzerland

24 November 2010

Madam Chair

Mr. Sami Al Basheer Al Morshid, Director of BDT,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to deliver the keynote address on behalf of Mrs. Jirawan Boonperm, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology of Thailand, who could not attend this significant meeting due to an urgent official engagement.

Information and communication technologies have become a key driver of economic and social development. Nowadays, Internet has become a general-purpose technology that reaches out to the people all over the world and thus, narrows the digital divide. Access to Broadband Internet is comparable to such basic infrastructures as road or electricity. In many developed countries, policy makers, regulators as well as industrial sector put an emphasis on broadband coverage and the number of broadband subscribers as indicators of the country's global competitiveness while others lay their focus on national rankings in terms of broadband infrastructure and take-up.

For ICT policy makers, the fundamental prerequisites to impose a policy are to include developing statistical indicators, data collection, analysis and interpretation. Accurate statistical data will then serve to monitor the implementation of policy to ensure its compliance with predetermined goals and objectives. Assessment needs is also necessary to be carried out to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency and also to identify difficulties and factors that impede successful policy implementation. On account of this, the availability of ICT-related statistics at the international level will allow policymakers to align domestic policy with the international standards and trends.

When it comes to ICT statistics, defining indicators and collecting data usually revolve around measuring accessibility to infrastructures and services. Meanwhile, it is essential to take into consideration interactions that tend to take place between different components that come into play naming policy, infrastructure, technology, content and applications, innovation, people and government as well as the need to balance demand and supply. Since ICT is a cross-cutting sector that involves authorities from different fields encompassing education, health, commerce, transportation and security to name just some of them, therefore, a national committee should be set up to formulate an integrated policy and carry out periodic evaluation.

In light of our experience in developing indicators and collecting data, we reckoned that difficulties arose when it came to defining indicators as some of them are open to several interpretations and therefore a central authority needed to be appointed with the mandate to collect and unify statistical definitions. Moreover, each public agency in Thailand used to have its own database and data collecting mechanism, which caused incoherence or disunity of input for the elaboration of cross-sectoral policy and work programmes of public organizations. Hence, the National Statistical Office has been assigned by the Royal Thai Government in order to serve as a central agency responsible for data collection and providing comprehensive statistical information for the making of public policy in accordance with the ultimate national goals set out by the government including the goal of increasing Thailand's global competitiveness.

Distinguished delegates,

I would like to give you an overview of Thailand's standing in terms of ICT policy and plan. Our country is currently applying the second Thailand Information and Communication Technology Master Plan which is already in use from 2009 to 2013. Under this Second ICT Master Plan, its vision on ICT development is to move forward the country into **Smart Thailand**. It places a priority on the role of ICT in social and economic development by emphasizing the improvement of quality of life and society through developing a knowledge-based society. One of the goals laid out in this plan is bridging the existing digital divide by deployment of high speed ICT network nationwide with high quality services under reasonable price. This will be the key basic infrastructure for social and economic development of the country where Thai people would be able to get a better access to education and healthcare. Participation in the government administration of the country and political affairs would also be facilitated. Hence, the overall quality of life uplifted. In addition, the implementation of the Master Plan also serves the World Summit on the Information Society or WSIS goals and targets as contained in the Action Lines of the information society for all peoples, particularly the goal to promote Universal Access to Broadband by 2015. While implementing this Second ICT Master Plan, Thailand is already in the process of formulating "**ICT 2020 Policy Framework**", envisioning Thailand's ICT direction for the next 10 years.

Recognizing the ultimate necessity of ICT infrastructures and broadband network, the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology including relevant telecom and ICT authorities are undertaking the drafting of Thailand's National Broadband Policy with the objective to promote the use

and maximize the benefits of broadband to enhance the capacities of businesses and industries, improve access to government services and promote universal access to broadband at a fair and affordable price for its citizen. The aims of the National Broadband Policy include:

- Broadband network coverage of at least 80 percent of the population by 2015 and 95 percent by 2020
- Accessibility for Thai people to universal broadband services of e-health, e-education and e-government at provincial and municipal levels by 2015
- Provision of emergency warning systems and information on disaster prevention and management through broadband

Distinguished delegates,

In this fast pace and ever changing era led by information and communication technology, it is undoubtedly that ICT has become vital to our societies. Statistical work on ICT, therefore, will allow countries to build up a comprehensive, effective and useful data collection and dissemination system. Such statistics on ICT data and ICT indicators also provide input for both economic and social areas.

May all your deliberations meet with success over these three days.

Thank you for your kind attention.