Distinguished Chair, Excellencies, colleagues,

Civil society welcomes this opportunity to address this timely IGF session on furthering global digital cooperation, with a focus on the IGFs role therein. This statement is delivered on behalf of several civil society organisations, many of whom have actively taken part in the Digital Cooperation process from its inception to the UN Secretary-General's launch of the Digital Cooperation Roadmap. Our coalition is committed to supporting the implementation of the Roadmap's vision in which *"all stakeholders play a role in advancing a safer, more equitable digital world, one which will lead to a brighter and more prosperous future for all."* We would therefore like to take this opportunity to address the policy questions posed in this session.

Accelerated Cooperation
The [UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation](#) rightfully envisioned to accelerate global digital cooperation, particularly amid the COVID-19 pandemic, "so that progress towards achieving the Goals by 2030 can be made collectively." We call on the United Nations to improve the clarity and transparency with regards to the next steps for implementing the Roadmap recommendations. We specifically recommend that the UN Under Secretary-General's Office conduct, or at the very least initiate, a joint-meeting with all Champions and Key Constituents that participated in the Digital Cooperation Roadmap discussions to reinvigorate discussions on critical issues, such as digital human rights, global connectivity and inclusive development, and digital trust and security, and create a space to scale up existing initiatives, and build synergies between stakeholders to address the global challenges we face.

We further commend the IGF Secretariat and MAG Chair for the outstanding work performed for this current IGF and recent initiatives from the MAG working-group on strengthening the IGF regarding information sharing and welcoming stakeholders perspectives on the Digital Cooperation Roadmap discussions pertaining to the IGF. Nonetheless, we call the IGF Secretariat and MAG Chair to establish a robust multi-stakeholder consultation on specific reforms to the IGF+. Specifically, we request the IGF Secretariat and MAG to make best efforts to ensure that future IGF modalities do not overlap with other key multistakeholder UN forums, such as the [UN Forum on Business and Human Rights](#), to ensure all stakeholders can engage and advance digital cooperation across all relevant UN fora.

Inclusion and Broader Participation
Meaningful multi-stakeholder engagement and systemic global action requires intersectional perspectives from a diverse set of stakeholders worldwide. Civil society actors played a key role in bringing more diverse voices to the Digital Cooperation Roundtable discussions. Yet other stakeholders must fully commit to this goal. All stakeholders must work together to improve regional participation, especially from the Global South, in subsequent discussions regarding the Roadmap implementation to ensure that different perspectives are taken into account.

We therefore call on all stakeholders to fulfill their commitment to open, inclusive, transparent and meaningful dialogues and to fulfill commitments to inclusive multi-stakeholder participation as captured in paragraphs 13 and 16 of the [Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations](). Multi-stakeholder forums, such as the IGF, must ensure that participation -- in person and remotely -- are equally weighed with the same status, and provide equal opportunities for all stakeholders to meaningfully participate. [Impact assessments]() on civil society participation should be made before finalizing the IGF program to ensure that civil society space is not limited by different modalities of participation and securing the host country's respect for freedom of expression and freedom of association and assembly. If carried out inclusively and securely, online participation presents an opportunity to widen the number and diversity of civil society actors engaging with the platform and removes the resource constraints linked to travel. Attention should be given as well to creating processes for addressing consensus building and conflict of interests within and between stakeholder groups.

Outcomes
We commend the discussions on improving and strengthening the IGF held in the context of Roundtable 5A/B, the Options Paper and the Multistakeholder Advisory Group Working Group on Strengthening the IGF. When it comes to enhancing IGFs mission, we agree that its key for this space to attempt in facilitating a greater range of outcomes and promote a broader range of discussions with regards to the proposed approaches before a final decision is made. We also commend and welcome the [IGF 2020 Call for Voluntary Commitments]() and encourage participation from all stakeholder groups to use this existing initiative to make a commitment to advance digital cooperation.

Any possible discussions on reforming the IGF should take into consideration existing structures through (a) improved documentation process of all activities; (b) better integrate its intersessional streams like the BPF and Dynamic Coalitions, as well as the National and Regional IGFs, in order to foster the development of more concrete outcomes; and (c) make the parliamentarian track more inclusive in order to promote greater exchanges with other stakeholders and an enhanced communication of final messages to national parliaments.

High-Level Engagement and the Tech Envoy
While high-level engagement is encouraged, such processes should not resort to a top-down approach. As noted in the [UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation]() "digital cooperation is a multi-stakeholder effort and, while Governments remain at the centre, the involvement of the private sector, technology companies, civil society and other stake-holders is essential." The Roadmap therefore recognizes the importance of stakeholders in the implementation of the recommendations of the High Level Panel. In that spirit, we urge a more inclusive consultative approach with stakeholders in the process for the selection and appointment of the future Tech

Envoy. We are concerned that despite the active engagement and genuine interest of civil society and other stakeholders in the consultations of the High Level Panel Report and in the discussions in the subsequent follow-up Roundtables, there remains limited overall engagement and consultation with stakeholders in the process for the selection of the Tech Envoy. We therefore call for synergy between the Tech Envoy, the IGF and all relevant stakeholders, and specifically consider issues pertaining to accountability of the new proposed High Level Group and need to clarify its relationship with MAG.

Communications & Financing
We recommend installing dedicated communications and financing structures with a clear role and dedication to fundraise for the new IGF model. The communications structure would be vital to better identify and publicize IGF success stories and outcomes. As for the fundraising one, it is a requirement to grant stability and predictability to the process of strengthening the IGF. A dedicated fundraising structure could contribute to ensure that financial sustainability will facilitate the political sustainability of the process.

We thank you for your time and consideration.