

Intervention for the June 21, 2024 United Nations Stakeholder Consult

CCIA Remarks on the Global Digital Compact First Revision

Thank you co-facilitators, excellencies, and distinguished colleagues,

I am Gabriel Delsol from the Computer & Communications Industry Association, or CCIA, an international nonprofit membership organization representing companies in the computer, internet, information technology, and telecommunications industries.

We understand that a new draft for the GDC is imminent, but it has unfortunately not been made available for all stakeholders. We urge further opportunities for outside stakeholders to participate in and inform the drafting process. Such opportunities align with the open, transparent, and inclusive consultation process expressed in General Assembly decision 77/568 and communications by the co-conveners. CCIA welcomes further consultative sessions in response to future revisions, as well as the ability to view new revisions prior to consultation sessions to ensure sufficient time to provide meaningful feedback.

Assuming there is some continuity with the second revision, the first revision of the GDC upholds important principles that CCIA supports, including commitments to closing all digital divides, protecting freedom of expression, cooperating on AI governance, supporting the Internet Governance Forum, and leveraging emerging technologies to achieve the SDGs. In addition, we appreciate the increased emphasis placed on human rights.

We do, however, respectfully encourage further improvement on the following topics:

On Cluster 3, Objective 1, on digital public infrastructure, we urge a clearer definition of DPI to ensure tailored, legitimate use without impeding on more innovative alternatives. Moreover, we welcome more specific references within para 17(c) on commitments to strong DPI safeguards that limit clearly defined risks, especially untraceable targeted discrimination by states and the threat of overbearing state surveillance.

On Cluster 3, Objective 3, on cross-border data flows, we urge a renewed emphasis on data free flows with trust present in the zero draft, as well as harmonized data economies, as these are essential to innovation and development. Moreover, within para 40, the concept of “interoperable data exchanges” remains overly vague, inviting potentially burdensome regulations, and requires further definition.

On Objective 5 on AI governance, we regret the changes made in the first revision to para 53(b) removing previous references to involvement by civil society and the private sector. Participation by diverse stakeholders beyond just member states is critical for ensuring innovative and safe technology offerings.

Thank you.