Information and communications technologies are a key factor for global development, as well as for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. At the same time the role of ICTs is much broader, because it is precisely these technologies that enable us to learn about the whole diversity of ways towards progressive human development.

Soon, we will have to review the 10-year progress attained in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. The achievements are quite obvious – more than one third of the world’s population has access to the Internet, mobile telephony is being diffused at an extremely rapid pace, new ICT services and systems are being increasingly applied worldwide.

Belarus has been successfully implementing a number of national programs aimed at building or upgrading the infrastructure for information and communications technologies. We have an effectively functioning High Technologies Park. On the whole, Belarus became a major provider of ICT services at the regional level.

A recent report by the International Telecommunication Union, “Measuring the Information Society – 2013” mentions Belarus - the only CIS member state – among the most dynamic countries in the context of ICT Development Index. Over the past two years, our country has risen by five points according to this indicator and ranks 41st in the world, among the most digitally developed countries of the planet.

At the same time, there still remain for all of us some serious challenges. The most acute one is that the international community has failed so far to make the global information society truly inclusive. Indeed, there still remains a ”digital divide” in the context of ICTs between advanced and developing countries.

Likewise, much needs to be done in order to confront some other challenges. In particular, we deem it vital to pursue an active stand in preventing the negative impact often produced by social networks and the Internet, above all, on children and youth. What is also necessary, in our view, is to work more persistently in the fight against cybercrime.

We positively view the activities of UN system’s organizations to implement the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, the information about which has been provided in detail in the Secretary-General’s report. Essentially, the UN system has already started the 10-year review of the Summit’s outcomes.
We take note of the important role played by the UN system in building **ICT capacities locally**. We believe that this area should be fully incorporated by UN country teams into **national UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF)** devised for recipient countries.

We call upon both the international financial institutions and the private sector to scale up financing for the goals of creating ICT capacities for **least developed and middle-income countries**.

We highly value **partnerships** that UN country teams create at the local level tailored to contribute to building national ICT capacities.

The 10-year review of the WSIS outcomes will coincide in time with the adoption of the **post-2015 UN development agenda**. We are convinced that the **issue of ICTs should become part and parcel of the new agenda**, insofar as future success in economic, social, and environmental development is inconceivable without the effective utilization of information and communications technologies.