Statement by Mr. Fakhri Aliyev,
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to the United Nations

Second Committee
Agenda item 16: Information and communication technologies for development

Mr. Chairman,

Since Azerbaijan is taking floor for the first time in the Second Committee I would like to begin with congratulating you and the members of the Bureau on assuming the leadership of the Second Committee and assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation.

At the outset, my delegation would like to thank Secretary-General for his comprehensive report A/68/65-E/2013/11 entitled “Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes at the regional and international levels”.

Mr. Chairman,

In 2012-2013 ICT sector continued its growth. Current trends shows that mobile phone subscriptions, use of Internet, broadband networks are rapidly increasing and Governments, private sector and businesses use ICT’s more and more to deliver public services and meet consumer needs.

In this respect, we are pleased to observe the reported positive trends in the ICT sector. However, another notable trend such as digital divide between developed and developing countries in terms of access to ICTs and broadband penetration level also continues to grow. It is therefore Azerbaijan attaches a great importance to the work of the ITU and UNESCO Broadband Commission for Digital Development and welcomes 10 year review of WSIS outcomes (WSIS+10) to be completed by GA in 2015 alongside with review of the MDGs.
Mr. Chairman,

With the growth of the use of Internet traffic and ICT related services, development of high-quality telecommunications infrastructure is one of the main priorities. The infrastructure is central to achieving the goal of digital inclusion, enabling universal, sustainable, ubiquitous and affordable access to ICTs, as well as development of the information societies, creation of the information and knowledge based competitive economies and overall contribution to GDP of national economies.

Azerbaijan continues its efforts to improve regional connectivity solutions and in this regard, I would like to recall the Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway project, the importance of which was unanimously recognized in the resolutions 64/186, 67/194 and most recent 67/298 where member states emphasized the importance of improving connectivity and telecommunications transit routes in the Trans-Eurasian region, and in this regard takes note of the proposal on the establishment of the Eurasian Connectivity Alliance aimed at highlighting synergies among Governments, the private sector, civil society, academia and international development institutions towards improving the development of regional telecommunications transit routes. As a country that coordinates the implementation process of this project at the regional level, in 2012-2013 alone we organized several briefings for the UN Member States on the status of project implementation and look forward to continued cooperation with all interested parties.

Mr. Chairman,

In the context of the national implementation of WSIS agenda we have launched state programs on building the broadband infrastructure on the base of "Fiber-to-Home", e-government with cyber-security, digital radio and TV broadcasting, space technologies development and so on. It is no coincidence that 2013 has been declared year of ICT in Azerbaijan according to the injunction signed by H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

I would like to inform you that Azerbaijan’s first telecommunication satellite “Azerspace-1” was launched into orbit on February 7, 2013. This satellite will provide high quality broadcasting services for government and corporate clients in Europe, Africa, Central Asia, Caucasus and the Middle East and it’s anticipated to service 15 years. In order to manage and operate telecommunications and low-orbit satellites, the main and backup ground control centers were built in Baku and Nakhchivan.

According to the Global Information Report 2013, Azerbaijan has made progress compared with previous years and ranked 56 among 144 countries and according to ICT development index Azerbaijan ranked top high grade among first 10 countries.
As for the results in different segments of IT market: Azerbaijan demonstrates one of the biggest indicators for the number of mobile phone users; Internet prices decreased and internet users increased to 70 per 100 inhabitants in 2012.

National Certification Services Center was established for application of electronic signature as part of Electronic Government and e-signature services. Main object of the service is creation of an organizational, technical and technological environment to organize the activities of the Type-Approval Services Centers in the country and managing the use of e-signature by the population and business entities within the country.

For the next ten years, the Government is planning to spend for ICT projects $3.5 bl., and so much is expected from private sector. For expanding the role of private sector we are further improving economic environment through enabling fiscal and monetary tools.

Mr. Chairman,

At the regional level, we continue to promote experience and knowledge sharing among the governments, industry leaders, academia and civil society. Last year Azerbaijan hosted 7th meeting of Internet Governance Forum, with a theme of “Internet governance for sustainable human, social and economic development”. More than 1600 people from 128 different countries participated at this event.

On 2-5 December 2013 we will host the 19th consecutive Azerbaijan International Exhibition and Conference of telecommunication and information technologies, BakuTel 2013 at Baku Expo Center. The exhibition is the biggest event in the sphere of telecommunications including information technologies in the Caspian and Caucasus regions. We are pleased to announce that during BakuTel 2013, on 2-3 December, 2013, Government of Azerbaijan with a support of ITU will organize international conference entitled “Global Cyber Security Cooperation: Challenges and Visions”.

We do hope the deliberations will help to advance our understanding and vision on such critical issue as ICT and maximizing the economic impact of Internet.

I thank you.