Mr. Chairman,

The United States continues to work, both inside and outside the UN system, to follow through on its commitments from the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). We appreciate the work of all stakeholders that makes available the benefits of science, engineering, and new technologies, especially information and communications technologies (ICTs), to bridge the digital divide and to ensure that the dynamism of ICTs continues to be a force for economic growth and development. We have listened with particular interest to the statements of developing countries on the role of ICTs in this regard.

To build global knowledge societies, we must work to promote the free exchange of information and ideas among people. At the same time, we must resist efforts to erect new barriers and restrict the dynamic potential of the free flow of information. A network is only as strong as its users and their ability to connect with one another.

Governments have an important voice in these discussions – but so do civil society groups, academia, the private sector, and the Internet technical community. Those voices multiply the Internet’s great potential, and if we are to achieve the goals we set out at WSIS, we must ensure that they continue to be heard. To this end, let me reiterate the United States’ unwavering commitment to an Internet governance model that is people-centered, multi-stakeholder, and transparent.

The 8th annual Internet Governance Forum is taking place in Bali, Indonesia this week. The United States believes the IGF is an optimal setting for Internet governance discussions due to its inclusiveness - allowing governments, industry, civil society, and the technical community to address Internet issues in a broad, creative, and collaborative manner. We commend this body for renewing the mandate of the IGF and express our support for its continued success.

Last year, the ICT for Development Resolution called for a working group on enhanced cooperation. We express our support for the important work this group is undertaking and look forward to receiving its recommendations next year.
Continuing to measure and assess progress toward meeting WSIS goals remains an important and ongoing process led by many key UN organizations and all the stakeholders that make the global ICT infrastructure a reality. Progress made on WSIS Action Lines is one of the many major inputs to the discussions of the post-2015 development agenda.

In July, ECOSOC approved a new Resolution (E/RES/2013/9) that directed the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) to perform three related tasks:

1. Collect inputs from all facilitators and stakeholders and provide its annual progress report to ECOSOC and UNGA;
2. Organize a substantive discussion during its 17th Session in May 2014 on the progress made in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes;
3. Submit after its 18th Session in May 2015 a more comprehensive ten-year review of progress made in the implementation of WSIS outcomes through ECOSOC to the General Assembly as it makes an overall review of the implementation of WSIS outcomes in 2015.

The United States has provided funding to CSTD to support the WSIS review process. As current CSTD chair, the US will host the Intersessional meeting of CSTD in Washington on December 2-4, 2013, to prepare for the 17th Session in May 2014. The United States supports the important work of the UN and its specialized agencies and programs, including UNESCO, ITU and UNCTAD, in facilitating implementation and follow-up on the WSIS Action Lines in a manner consistent with their mandates and competencies. The active participation of a myriad of multi-stakeholder entities and collaborative efforts are vital for making progress in implementing WSIS Action Lines. We encourage all member nations and stakeholders to continue to contribute substantively to this important process, and we look forward to the 2015 CSTD report to the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

The United States will continue its work with our partners - governments, private industry, universities, and civil society - to ensure that the global Internet remains open, interoperable, secure, and free from arbitrary government interference.

In light of recent press reports regarding alleged U.S. intelligence activities, we want to assure you that U.S. takes the concerns of the international community seriously, that we are reviewing our practices, as President Obama said last month
at the UN, and that our longstanding policies on privacy, human rights, and Internet governance have not changed. We come to this Committee and to the Internet Governance Forum, as we do every year, to stand by our commitment to an open, interoperable, and secure cyberspace.

The international community and all our peoples are best served if governments, through the WSIS+10 review process, continue to focus their attention on the essential challenges that launched the WSIS in the first place: closing the digital divide and helping the many who are still waiting to reap the development benefits of ICTs and the Internet.