Mr. President,

Thank you for giving me the floor. We welcome the report of the Secretary General on the agenda. India aligns itself with the Statement made by the distinguished representative of Egypt on behalf of the G77.

Mr. President,
Information and communication technologies have become the transformative face of globalisation, keeping a huge majority of the people, businesses and resources across the planet digitally connected.

Instant communication and increasing affordability to real-time information through smart phones have created cross sectoral impacts. These range from manufacturing to services deploying innovative mobile phone applications; print & electronic media, transport, healthcare, agriculture, disaster risk reduction, education and academia, entertainment to social media.
ICTs, therefore, form a strong basis to upscale sustainable development interventions. The 2030 Agenda also rightly recognises this great potential to accelerate inclusive economic growth and development to bridge the digital divide and to build knowledge societies.

Realising the full potential of ICT will require appropriate regulatory and policy framework and skill-development, including in governments, businesses and civil society.

**Mr. President,**
There continues to be a stark gap in the use of ICTs in developing countries vis-a-vis developed countries. Over 80% of individuals in developed countries use the Internet; while less than 35% use it in the developing world. This needs to change.

**Mr. President,**
The remarkable success of the Indian IT industry globally is well known. The Indian government has placed technology at the heart of India’s growth story, with emphasis on policies such as Digital India, Make in India, and Startup India.

The Digital India campaign aims to bridge the digital divide and empower vulnerable sections of population, besides vastly improving governance. It is estimated that the adoption of key technologies across sectors spurred by the initiatives under Digital India could help boost India's GDP by an additional US$ 550 billion to US$ 1 trillion by 2025.

The National Digital Communications Policy-2018 adopted last month aims at ensuring availability of Broadband for all; to create four million additional jobs in the Digital Communications sector; to enhance the contribution of the Digital Communications sector to 8% of India's GDP.
from 6% in 2017; to enhance India's contribution to Global Value Chains; and to ensure Digital Sovereignty.

Mr. President,
One of the landmark successes in India has been the use of ICT to push large scale financial inclusion. This combines the power of the biometric-based unique individual identification system Aadhar with banking services and mobile phone technologies. More than 1.2 billion Indian citizens have already been issued their unique identity cards. Some of the flagship schemes, like ‘cash benefit transfer’ clubbed with Aadhar, has enabled opening up of over 320 million additional bank accounts contributing to efficient and transparent delivery of services.

Another significant success in healthcare has been achieved with the use of a special application known as e-VIN, for real-time access to information about the availability of specialized vaccines around the country.

ICT is also linking markets for agriculture produce through a National Agriculture Market dashboard called e-NAM. There is a special online marketing platform for women entrepreneurs called Mahila Haat.

The use of ICTs is clearly helping to upscale our sustainable development interventions.

Mr. President,
I would like to conclude by reiterating India's continued active engagement to strengthen global partnerships in utilizing the transformative impact of ICT tools in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs that we have set for ourselves.

Thank You.

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