

Delegation from The Arab Republic of Egypt
Position Paper for the United Nations General Assembly

The issues before the United Nations General Assembly are Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) for Sustainable Economic and Financial Development and Disaster Risk Reduction. The Arab Republic of Egypt is committed to international cooperation in order to make our planet more sustainable and a safe home for future generations.

I. Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) for Sustainable Economic and Financial Development

In January 2022, around 5 billion people worldwide used the internet, more than 7.25 billion people own a smart or a feature phone. This makes clear that Internet and Communication Technologies (ICT) are getting more important for social inclusion and economic development. Being aware of the advantages of ICTs especially by the experiences made during the Covid-19-Pandemic, the Arab Republic of Egypt stresses the necessity of access to the digital world for everyone. Therefore, the government of Egypt has evolved the ICT 2030 strategy: The Vision of a Digital Egypt. It mainly consists of two initiatives. The first initiative *Decent Life* was created by President as-Sisi in 2018 and aims to improve the efficiency of ICT infrastructure in cities and villages. Having spent 2 billion US-dollars for the infrastructure upgrade, the average Internet Speed in the country has risen from 6.5 Mbps in 2019 to 39.6 Mbps in 2021. The second initiative *ICT Egypt* has invested more than 3.5 billion US-dollars into the sector during the last few years, involving a series of agencies and institutes that have started and intensified their efforts to realize digital transformation. Egypt is promoting and developing six technology parks that will consist of hardware design labs, training institutions, data science and cybersecurity. Moreover, the new Capital City, that is anticipated to be completed this year, is completely supplied with fibre-optic cable connections and is a role model of the Digital City of the future. While the bridge of digital development between Developed and Developing countries continues to grow, Egypt has entered into the Digital Age and proven to be the Land of Opportunities.

The Arab Republic of Egypt stresses the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (AAAA) of 2015 as the groundwork of future policy and action. The AAAA promotes the vision of investment in economic resources for capacity building and economic growth that facilitate sustainable development and growth. It further advocates for public-private partnerships in the ICT sector. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of the *World Summit on Information Society* (WSIS) as a central institution of international cooperation on ICT and advocates for the *WSIS Action Lines* that are supported by the *General Assembly Resolution 70/125* of 2015 and call for a quick implementation. Egypt reiterates the importance of the *United Nation's 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development* and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by all UN Member States in 2015. It highlights SDG 9 *Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure*, explicitly hinting at Target 9.1 *Develop sustainable, resilient and inclusive infrastructures* and Target 9.a.1 *Facilitate sustainable infrastructure development for developing countries*. Egypt underlines the role of the ICT Development Fund (ICT-DF) that is a partnership of several public and private institutions. The ICT-DF plays a crucial role in financing the reformation of the ICT infrastructure of Developing Nations.

Egypt stresses the need for international cooperation with respect to the economic and scientific development of countries, especially on the African continent. It therefore promotes public-private partnerships as a ground-breaking tool and possibility in accordance with the AAAA that need further support by developed countries. Although Egypt and other countries have seen great success in the ICT sector during the last few years, we still need support from the international community that include cooperation in the areas of education of skilled personnel and technology transfer. Therefore, it calls for an increased financial support of the ICT-DF that has supported the immense progress of Developing Countries in the recent past and should continue to do so in the future.

II. Disaster Risk Reduction

The Arab Republic of Egypt expresses its deep concern at the rising number and scale of disasters and their devastating impact during the last few years that killed more than 100,000 people worldwide and drove millions into poverty and homelessness. Egypt has especially suffered from extreme weather conditions that have caused flooding in the Northern parts of the country. A threat of equal magnitude are the manufactured dangers resulting from the construction and future operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam that could cause serious droughts along the Nile Basin. Trying to solve these complex issues requires deep and honest cooperation among the international community that involve all parts of society, especially the youth that will be most affected in the future. Egypt calls for a multilateral approach that takes the existential needs of 150 million people in the Nile Basin region into account and stresses the need for regional cooperation. In 2015, Egypt created a National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) that has provided a roadmap to implement the *Sendai Framework* in cooperation with the *Egyptian vision 2030*. Its goals are the anticipation of new and reduction of existing disaster risks in order to protect human lives, communities, and eco systems that are affected by the disastrous consequences. Furthermore, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in Cairo has launched the ARISE Egypt National Network, which is a Private Sector Alliance for Disaster Resilient Societies. The launch, only being the second in the whole region, underlines the leading role of Egypt in the African and Arab region in the fight against climate change and reflects the commitment to Disaster Risk Reduction not only in the public, but also including and supporting the private sector. Egypt is working together with its international partners on all levels to find sustainable, effective and long-lasting solutions.

The Arab Republic of Egypt reiterates the importance of the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* as a central document for international action, succeeding *General Assembly Resolution 61/298* of 2006. Egypt reaffirms the progress made by the international community stated in *General Assembly Resolution 70/1* of 2020 and encourages Member States to take further necessary steps. It explicitly stresses the need for the prevention of new and the reduction of existing disaster risks through the implementation of integrated and inclusive economic, structural, legal, social, environmental and political measures, thereby increasing preparedness for response and recovery as well as strengthen resilience. It further welcomes the *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* and the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* as a vital part of international cooperation on climate change. Egypt wants to point out the importance of the strategic plan *Egypt's vision 2030* worked out by the Egyptian NPDRR showing our country's commitment and engagement towards the implantation of the Sendai Framework. The *United Nation's 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development* and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by all UN Member States in 2015 are directly linked to the Egyptian strategy. Egypt highlights the importance of SDG 6 *Clean Water and Sanitation for all*, especially of Target 6.4 *Ensure Freshwater supplies*, Target 6.5 *Implement Water Resources Management* as well as Target 6.6 *Protect and Restore Water-Related Ecosystems*.

Egypt requests the international community to reaffirm their commitment to water as a human right and include a mediating body to the United Nations to multilaterally solve manufactured disaster risks. The Ethiopian dam is threatening more than a 100 million people to fall below the water poverty line, therefore Egypt is stressing the need for a fair and just use of joint water resources in international rivers. Furthermore, it proposes a General Assembly Resolution to establish a commission on an early warning system for water disasters (CSWD) for the Arab and African region. This would be the most effective way to prevent possible future disasters, thereby acting in accordance with the Sendai Framework. The commission of EWSWD consists of experts of all affected countries. In a first step, they would compose a Vulnerability Assessment that would standardize measurement factors in participating countries. Second, they would assess the technical possibilities for a quick implementation. This could include the new *World Flood Mapping Tool* that was developed by Researchers in cooperation with the UN University Institute for Water, Environment and Health. It allows government users to identify and improve gaps in a nation's flood defenses and responses. Egypt calls for the General Assembly to support the EWSWD financially through developmental aid of the World Bank.