

**Delegation from Turkey**  
***Position Paper for the General Assembly***

The topics before the General Assembly (GA) are Information and Communications technologies (ICTs) for Sustainable Economic and Financial Development and Disaster Risk Reduction. Turkey recognizes the need for strong international cooperation regarding these topics and wishes for constructive and fruitful debates at the upcoming conference.

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

Around 63% of our world's population is using the internet with an increase of roughly 800 million users since 2019. More and more Least Developed Country (LDCs) have consistent access to the internet. The access divide is close to being bridged as almost 95% of the world's population could access the internet. However, only a few of those people do it. Many factors contribute to the reason why there are still 2.9 billion people offline, with the main factor being affordability.

ICTs play a vital role in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially for sustainable financial development as mentioned in SDG 9. ICTs could accelerate economic processes and enhance trading relations all over the world. Global connectivity and international cooperation are key to include every nation into the digital world. From an economic perspective, the digital inclusion is a sustainable way towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The General Assembly has made a lot of progress by adopting the Resolution 76/189 on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The Delegation of Turkey notes that the digital divide is much more significant now due to the Covid19-pandemic. Not only has the use of ICTs become even more important, but the pandemic has also caused a major set-back for many member states and especially for the global sustainable economic and financial development.

Turkey only partly agrees with the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Report 2021 as digital transformation processes should also be pursued in a secure and regulated manner. The World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2021 has shown very valuable information to promote sustainable and financial development. However, including NGOs in this process is not the right approach and would lead to slower, more inefficient processes. Promoting sustainable and financial development with ICTs should solely be the government's task as NGOs tend to pursue other interests, especially in Turkey. The focus should lie on improving the affordability of ICTs. Turkey wishes all member states to share their approach and hopes for international cooperation when it comes to the funding of projects related to this topic.

**II. Disaster Risk Reduction**

The pandemic has a devastating impact on our global economy. The global economy is expected to lose nearly \$8.5 trillion over the next years due to this disaster. More importantly, the loss of lives is even more painful for the international community. Covid19 is responsible for more than 5.85 million deaths and countless children, senior citizens, and other people, suffering from long-covid. Another disaster that humanity has suffered from, is suffering and will suffer, is climate change. It is estimated that in the next 20 years, 167 million homes will be destroyed due to the consequences of climate change.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction aims to achieve the disaster-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Seeing the amount of member states that make an effort to meet the targets of the Sendai Framework is encouraging. Progress has been made by mapping out strategies on how to prevent catastrophes like those we have to endure from happening. The goal is to substantially reduce the mortality from global disasters and reduce the number of those affected. The strategies developed by the member states should also aim to reduce economic losses, especially when it comes to critical infrastructure that people need in their daily lives. Turkey welcomes all member states that have similar approaches and strategies and hopes for an enriching exchange of information.

The state of Turkey suggests considering three kinds of strategies. As funds are more limited than ever, it is important to carefully prioritize regions that need more investments to reduce the risks of disaster. Even though this topic needs to be discussed on an international level, different regions hold different risks which is why the evaluation of those risks must be conducted on a provincial level. Most importantly, every strategy must contain the goal to prevent the loss of life and property. Protecting Human Life and Assets must be our main priority. Furthermore, proper Disaster Risk Management Systems have to be established in cooperation with the governmental authorities for Disaster Risk Reduction. Turkey recognizes the opportunity to exchange information on Disaster Risk Reduction strategies on an international level.