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ICT companies stand up for key role in Cancun

The Guadalajara Declaration, with a focus on transformative low-carbon ICT climate solutions, is launched at COP16 in Cancun

A group of key ministers and business executives, under the leadership of the Mexican government, met today at the Cancun Messe to present and discuss the “Guadalajara ICT Declaration for Transformative Low Carbon Solutions,” in conjunction with the 16th Conference of the Parties, where the global climate negotiations are ongoing. The Declaration is supported by more than 40 companies and organizations, representing more than 1 trillion USD in turnover in 2009, from more than 20 countries.” The declaration will be supported by the establishment of a public-private work stream with focus on transformative low-carbon ICT solutions, which will be carried forward to COP17.

Historically climate negotiations have focused on high carbon emitting sectors, and industry was seen as the problem. The declaration stemmed from the need of many companies with solutions to climate change to have their voices heard, and the industry has come together to develop it after COP15. “The declaration has generated high interest around the world, and more and more companies are signing on to the declaration every day,” says Luis Neves, Chairman of the Global e-sustainability Initiative (GeSI), who together with its member companies has led the work around the declaration. The declaration builds on early work of the sector showing ICT’s potential to reduce CO2 emissions by 15% by 2020, in the Smart2020 report.

-“We see it as important to recognize that the products and services of solution sectors, such as ICT, can help make transformational change to reduce CO2 emissions and mitigate climate change,” said Mexican Ambassador Luis Alfonso de Alba, Special Representative for Climate Change. “These companies will play an important role by helping to drive innovation and create jobs in the low-carbon economy. Supporting the launch a public-private work stream with focus on transformative low-carbon solutions comes as a natural continuation of the public-private dialogues Mexico has supported during the preparations for COP16,” Ambassador de Alba added. “Mexico has been working with the ICT sector during 2010, and is very pleased with this important outcome.”

-“Ericsson strongly supports the launch of the public-private work steam with focus on transformative low-carbon solutions and congratulates the Mexican government for their leadership in taking this historic step,” said Hans Vestberg, President and CEO, Ericsson. “In order to leverage the broadband infrastructure which is deployed around the world, we need to have a supporting policy framework. This will help to accelerate the uptake of transformative low-carbon solutions in areas such as transportation, utilities, communication, health and the creation of smarter, more sustainable societies

in general. ICT solutions are unique because they can be used by all countries," Vestberg added. "This is good for environment as well as for the economy."

- "Encouraging companies that provide low-carbon solutions that also help poverty reduction and that can support technological leapfrogging is very important and we look forward to engage in this public-private work stream and we will use the results as input in the work towards COP17," said Edna Molewa, Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs of South Africa.

- Georg Kell, Executive Director, UN Global Compact, commented: "Technology and especially ICT has an enormous potential to drive green growth and sustainability. Already there are many smart solutions that show that more can be done with less. Now we need to support incentives so that smart solutions can diffuse rapidly."

- "ICT currently plays an important role in the Southeast Asia's rapid economic growth. However, given our region's vulnerability to the effects of climate change and Indonesia's national emissions reduction target, there is a pressing need for our industry to also develop solutions which enable mitigation and adaptation while facilitating development. Bakrie Telecom looks forward to studying the role ICT can play in meeting this need and welcomes the public-private work stream on transformative low-carbon solutions," said Anindya Bakrie, CEO Bakrie Telecom.

"If we want to work towards an effective global agreement for climate protection, we need to consider alliances between business and public actors. ICT can foster the sustainable development of our society and economy by increasing the resource efficiency in almost all industries. It can enable new business models thus creating new business opportunities. Therefore alliances with all partners - be it companies or public institutions - are today a matter of urgency," said René Obermann, CEO of Deutsche Telekom.

An initial meeting to develop a more detailed work plan and agree on roles and responsibilities will be held in South Africa early 2011.

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Note to editors:

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can be instrumental in transitioning to a low-carbon economy. There is a need for making transformational rather than incremental progress on climate targets, and this can be done by focusing on solution sectors like ICT which can help other sectors reduce emissions in both developed and developing countries. ICT solutions for mitigation and adaptation of climate change are key areas of opportunity for the climate negotiation.

The public private work stream will in its first phase consist four areas:

1. How public-private dialogue about transformative low-carbon ICT solutions can be further encouraged under the UNFCCC and relevant processes.
2. Where in current negotiations that transformative low-carbon solutions could be supported.
3. How a standard for calculating and reporting the emissions reductions in society that solutions companies contribute to through their products and services
4. Best practices for accelerated uptake of transformative ICT solutions in National Mitigation/Adaptation Plans.

The public-private work stream will be inclusive and use social media and web 2.0 solutions to ensure broad participation and high quality input. A global ICT workshop, supported by regional workshops, will also be arranged to highlight government policy best practices in enabling the solutions role of ICT.

The results from the first phase will be ready and presented two months before COP17. By that time the agenda for the second phase will also be ready.

At www.gesi.org the following supporting material can be found:

Guadalajara ICT Declaration
ICT Solutions for a Smart, Low-Carbon Future
Smart2020 Report