Comments submitted by the RIPE NCC

ON THE SECOND DRAFT OF THE REPORT OF THE ITU SECRETARY-GENERAL
FOR THE SIXTH WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION/INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY FORUM 2021

As a member of the Informal Experts Group and Sector Member, the RIPE NCC appreciates the opportunity to comment on the second draft of the report by the Secretary-General for the sixth World Telecommunication/Information and Communication Technology Policy Forum (WTPF-21).

First, we believe it is important to use the terminology "new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs", rather than "new and emerging digital technologies and trends", as the former accurately reflects the ITU's mandate, which has a specific focus that does not extend into broader digital technologies and trends beyond telecommunications/ICTs.

Second, we believe that the main focus of WTPF-21 should be on how new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs can best support the Sustainable Development Goals as laid out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In particular, the report and draft opinions should focus on creating an enabling policy environment that supports these new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs and allows them to thrive in a competitive and innovative market environment.

WTPF-21 provides a valuable opportunity to share best practices and learn from successful policy strategies, for instance in promoting and removing barriers to support the adoption of IPv6, which is itself a key enabler of competition and innovation across a broad range of applications that contribute to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.

Third, we also welcome the suggestions made by other delegates that WTPF-21 should explore how policies can support effective partnerships between the public and private sectors to support these goals.

Fourth, with respect to the Council's decision to include a broader range of emerging technologies, such as AI and Big Data, we would like to stress that the success of those technologies relies fundamentally on an underlying infrastructure that can deliver high-quality and high-bandwidth connectivity.

We therefore recommend that the draft opinions developed ahead of WTPF-21 consider how to best support the development and maintenance of the underlying infrastructure to provide ubiquitous and affordable connectivity.

We look forward to further developing the report's text and draft opinions based on the important principles outlined above.