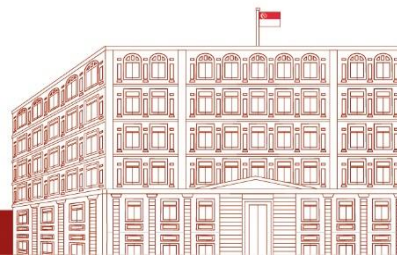


**Remarks by Minister for Communications and Information  
Mrs Josephine Teo at 76th UNGA High-Level Segment:  
Virtual Ministerial Meeting on Digital Technologies:  
From Open Software to Open Society (29 Sep 2021)**

Your Excellencies, good morning.

1. I thank the Digital Public Goods Alliance, the Tech Envoy's Office, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for bringing us together today.
2. From the very beginning, Singapore has been a strong supporter of the **Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation**. Today is another step in that journey of learning from each other, to enable our citizens to gain from the Digital revolution.
3. We all recognise that **Digital technologies have been transformational**. The Digital domain is a complex, cross-cutting, and rapidly-evolving global commons. To truly benefit from Digital, we must build resilient Digital spaces which are economically vibrant, socially stable, and digitally secure. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity and responsibility.
4. I will share briefly on Singapore's experiences and efforts. First, on creating inclusive digital infrastructure and policies, and second, on international cooperation for a global digital architecture.
5. **Accessible Digital infrastructure connects people and devices across systems** to collaborate in real-time, on real-world problems. It is the backbone which empowers Digital services.
6. Governments have a role to ensure that Digital infrastructure promotes inclusive participation. Like several countries, Singapore has launched a national digital identity. **SingPass** enables access to over 1,400 digital services. More than 70% of Singapore residents use it. Over 170 million transactions were made via SingPass last year, double that of 2019.
7. In turn, SingPass facilitates other Digital innovations, like **SGFinDex**. This is a data exchange platform, which aggregates one's financial information from banks and government agencies. It makes financial planning accessible to all, and not just those with high net worth. Just nine months after being launched, SGFinDex has attracted over 120,000 users – linking over 160,000 bank accounts and enabling 360,000 data retrievals.
8. In addition to good infrastructure, digital policies need to be inclusive.
9. In Singapore, since COVID-19 began, we have helped nearly 30,000 low-income families access **devices and broadband services**, to support their digital needs. This was especially useful in supporting students during Home-Based Learning. We also partnered industry to provide subsidised, affordable **mobile plans** for seniors.



10. Furthermore, we also took concrete steps to promote Digital literacy. Our **SG Digital Office** deployed 1,000 Digital Ambassadors. They help groups like seniors and micro-enterprises adopt digital skills, including e-payments. These empower our people to harness digital transformation, providing opportunities and uplifting them; person-by-person, child-by-child.

11. Yet, Digital infrastructure and policies cannot remain static. They require continual development, maintenance, and upgrading. All stakeholders – Governments, the private sector, and civil society – must play their part.

12. **This is why we need to develop international partnerships and interoperable systems** which will help us to connect, exchange, and interact seamlessly.

13. The Digital realm offers small countries, like Singapore, opportunities to transcend our physical constraints. We are keen to contribute to global conversations and action. In this spirit, Singapore has offered our ideas and solutions to the world, including our **TraceTogether** mobile app, for community-driven contact tracing. We have kept its protocol open-source, welcoming other countries to use it.

14. We firmly believe that open-source registries of vetted and trusted products, like that of the Digital Public Goods Alliance, are valuable resources.

15. Singapore also connects partners to imagine new Digital possibilities. We have concluded bilateral **Digital Economy Agreements**. We champion practical regional mechanisms for data, such as the **ASEAN Data Management Framework** and the **ASEAN Model Contractual Clauses for Cross-Border Data Flows**. They help regional businesses reach wider audiences and gain tangible benefits from digital trade. And we are building regional cyber capacity through our **ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence**.

16. These initiatives can be pathfinders for ambitious multilateral digital mechanisms.

17. The world is now at an inflection point for Digital. If we succeed in finding inclusive transformational pathways, we can catalyse our recovery from COVID-19; accelerate the realisation of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals; and usher in decades of prosperity for the world.

18. Therefore, Singapore welcomes the Secretary-General's call for a **Global Digital Compact**. Our collective challenge will be to take concrete action to identify a common set of "digital development goals"; and create a global architecture that is open, inclusive, inter-operable, and multi-stakeholder.

19. We remain committed to sustainable development for all nations, big or small. We must uplift each other on our digitalisation journeys – so that all can reap the promised dividends from our Digital commons; and emerge together, stronger than ever, into our Digital future.

20. Thank you.

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