



**WORLD FEDERATION OF ENGINEERING ORGANIZATIONS  
FÉDÉRATION MONDIALE DES ORGANISATIONS D'INGÉNIEURS**

**UN STI Forum May 5-6, 2022**

**Thematic session 4: Global digital public goods, digitalization, artificial intelligence, and connecting the world by 2030**

**Written Statement**

**Reine Mbang Essobmadje**

Chair, Honourable Delegates. I am Reine Essobmadje. I will present a statement on behalf of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations representing professional engineering institutions of the world in some 100 nations, with more than 30 million engineers, the only global platform that enables sharing of engineering practices and solutions. As a Telecommunications engineer, I am among the small percentage of women in my country Cameroon that are engineers.

The world is changing, and we are living in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment. As the challenges increase, our society is becoming more and more digital. But this transformation is not only technological. It has human and social challenges that are not yet fully addressed. Among those are:

- A lack of affordable, accessible, and reliable internet of everyone. Yet internet is more expensive in least developed countries
- A lack a safe online environment for all
- Severe damages to privacy and data protection for all
- Irreversible damages to the environment and our world
- A transposition of existing biases in the digital world through algorithms and AI

As we laid the foundation of SGDs to design the society we want, we shall make sure that we move together and build our society not according to tech values or innovation but according to fairness, equalness, inclusivity, sustainability and humanity as portrayed in the sustainable development Goals. Engineers have a crucial role in developing technologies and ensuring sustainable implementation.

Therefore, I would like to emphasize the need to include organisations such as WFEO in the global coalition for digital as a public good. This partnership will ensure an effective implementation of a digital society, making sure we leave no one behind either women, children, aging people nor digital illiterate people. We must ensure fair access to broadband in each country as a public good for development as this paved the way to a connected world by 2030.

Our economies haven been shaken recently, but Covid-19 could be nothing compared to the digital gap that it has reveal. Instead, we can leverage this pandemic and come together to enrol our citizens, our businesses, our governments in the digital economy.

**INTERNATIONAL ENGINEERING LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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Yet, we can leverage the Covid-19 worldwide experience to design a smooth global digital policy based on our population needs.

For this digital immersion to be a successful experience for all, we need to acknowledge the critical role of engineers in the design of digital policies and the implementation of digital technologies.

The most important thing is not how it all started but the way we end it and how inclusive it will be.

*Eng. Reine Mbang Essobmadje  
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