

Joint Ministerial Declaration on the agreement to launch the Digital Cooperation Organization (“DCO”)

- 1 1. We, the Ministers responsible of Communications and Information Technology (or persons of
2 equivalent status) of the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the State of
3 Kuwait, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, met virtually on
4 November 26, 2020, convened by Saudi Arabia, to agree on launching the Digital Cooperation
5 Organization (“DCO”).

- 6 2. We will advance our national digital transformations and the inclusive development of the digital
7 economy as vital engines of innovation and economic growth for our people. We understand the
8 opportunities associated with digital technologies and solutions to shape the future of our societies
9 in domains including health, education, agriculture, science, commerce, and the interactions
10 between governments and citizens. We also acknowledge that their deployment can give rise to
11 new social and economic challenges, such as bridging the digital divide, enhancing privacy and
12 trust, Justice, equality, enabling market access and fairness, and fostering the inclusiveness and
13 human centricity of emerging technologies. Moreover, we agree that digital technologies and
14 solutions can strengthen our collective response to and preparedness for global crises, such as the
15 COVID-19 pandemic.

- 16 3. We recognize that, given the borderless nature and global reach of digital technologies, our
17 countries can only fully realize their economic and social potential for the benefit of our people
18 through new forms of mutually beneficial multilateral collaboration in the digital domain.

- 19 4. We therefore intend to achieve prosperity, social stability, and growth of the digital economy by
20 unifying efforts to advance digital transformation and promote common interests. We affirm a
21 shared determination to collaboratively enhance our digital capabilities and strengthen our
22 collective global efforts by establishing the Digital Cooperation Organization (“DCO”) as a
23 means of aligning policies and regulations, engaging in joint, mutually beneficial projects
24 capacity building, and sharing knowledge in the digital domain. We will do so following a multi-
25 stakeholder approach, by aligning with other international organizations, and engaging with
26 private sector entities, research and academic institutions, civil society groups, and other
27 stakeholders.

- 28 5. The power of our collective economic scale and capabilities will allow the DCO to accelerate our
29 digital growth and strengthen our global efforts, generating a range of socio-economic benefits
30 including: enhanced international trade; and cross-border data flows, increased contribution of
31 the digital economy to our gross domestic products; a favorable cross-border business
32 environment, especially for startups and micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs);
33 a level playing field for all businesses by aligning approaches to taxation of the digital economy;
34 expanded collaborative research and development, innovation, and investment in digital
35 opportunities; the development and adoption of increasingly human-centric technologies;
36 improved citizen wellbeing, including through enhanced education, health services, economic
37 prosperity; government services, and infrastructure by leveraging digital technologies and shared
38 best practices.
- 39 6. We agree to host the first DCO Executive Council Ministerial Meeting in due course after the
40 Charter has taken effect, while allowing for reasonable preparatory time. At the meeting, we aim
41 to discuss and agree on the DCO’s governance, operating model, and strategic roadmap. Together,
42 we will set the foundation for a new, innovative form of multilateral collaboration in the digital
43 domain that will accelerate the realization of the transformative benefits of digital technologies
44 for our people. From this strong foundation, we intend to expand the membership of the DCO to
45 include a diverse range of countries from every region of the world that share our vision of a
46 digital future worthy of the generations to come.

