

**DIRECTOR GENERAL'S REMARKS AT THE OPENING OF THE ITU
SYMPOSIUM ON ICTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE
HELD IN ACCRA, FROM 7-8 JULY 2011 AT THE LA PALM BEACH HOTEL,
ACCRA, GHANA**

Your Excellency the Vice President of the Republic,

Hon. Ministers.

The ITU Director of Standardisation

Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Resource Persons,

Distinguished Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the staff, management and Board of the National Communications Authority, and on my own behalf, I warmly welcome you all to Ghana and to the Sixth ITU Symposium on ICTs, the Environment and Climate Change.

The purpose for assembling here over the next two days is to discuss issues relating our industry, the ICT industry, and how we impact positively or negatively on the environment and its attendant effect on the climate.

It is also known that the availability of 3G mobile phones which provide internet and other functionalities operate at higher frequencies and therefore require more power to keep them going.

Added to the above are issues of e-waste and the safe disposal of discarded electronic equipment. In the 15 - 20 years or so that you and I have been using mobile phones I suspect we will each have gone through 10 or more phones. During that same period we probably would have gone through a few desktops and laptops, changed TVs, stereos. The question is - what methods have we applied in disposing of these discarded equipment bearing in mind that they are not bio-degradable. A good number of countries, and even more in our region, do not have the requisite means for disposing of e-waste. The effect therefore is environmental degradation.

In spite of these harrowing accounts, ICTs have been proven to play a key role in assisting society in mitigating and adapting to climate change, and even though the ICT industry is responsible for about 3% of the global Green House Gases emissions, ICT solutions also possess the capacity to assist the world reduce the remaining 97% of emissions.

In more recent times, the impact of ICTs on the environment has become one of the Millennium Development Goals. This is because ICT is seen as an aid or a tool to ensuring environmental sustainability. In this regard, ICTs make a valuable contribution to

flows. Much as some progress has been made in this regard, we as practitioners of ICTs must strive to do more and must make electronic document flow our mantra.

The ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Guadalajara in October 2010 adopted a new resolution on the role of Telecommunications/Information and Communication Technologies on Climate Change and the Protection of the Environment. It identified the need to assist developing countries on how we can take advantage of the potential of ICTs to tackle climate change. It also identified the need to encourage the design, implementation and use of energy and resource efficient ICT equipment and solutions, in order to promote a clean and safe environment.

This meeting in Accra affords us the opportunity to build on the PP-10 resolution and forge a common thinking on what contributions will be made to the next round of negotiations on the Climate Change Conference to be held in South Africa. It is therefore important that we bring our collective expertise on board so as to arrive at decisions that would give our Region the maximum benefits from a sustainable environment.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I entreat everyone gathered here to effectively participate in this symposium to ensure a successful outcome. I expect this meeting to achieve the objectives it has set itself and assist our Region succeed in adopting common

Before His Excellency shares his thoughts with us, I wish to set the ball rolling by inviting Mr. Malcolm Johnson, the two-time elected ITU Director of Standardisation to give us his welcome address.

Mr. Malcolm Johnson, please take the floor.