



**Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)**

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Geneva, 20 April 2017

National Regulatory Authorities of ITU
Member States

Subject: Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR-17) Consultation

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to launch the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) 2017 Best Practice Guidelines consultation on innovative regulatory measures to achieve affordable access in the digital world. Contributions will be coordinated by the Chairman of the Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority (URCA) of the Bahamas. I wish to express my gratitude to URCA for agreeing to undertake this important task.

The theme for GSR-17 will be: "Living in a World of Digital Opportunities". Today, despite the rapid deployment and expansion of ICT networks worldwide, mobile cellular coverage of 95% of the world's population, decline in prices, in particular mobile broadband prices to represent an average of 5.5% of gross national income per capita in 2015, affordability of accessing the digital world remains an issue for many. Governments and regulators, collaborating with stakeholders within the telecommunication/ICT and across the sectors, have a key role to play in setting innovative policies and regulatory measures to create an enabling environment for innovation and investment. Together we can make access to ICTs and digital societies affordable and sustainable so that all can benefit from the opportunities of this digital world.

You are therefore invited, as part of the GSR consultation process, to identify innovative and collaborative policy, regulatory and business measures needed to lift the barriers and achieve affordable access to the digital world in the following areas:

- **Infrastructure and connectivity:** innovative measures at the international, national and local levels
- **Consumer access:** to ICT services (subscription, plans, platforms and apps) and devices (smartphones, tablets, computed-based, etc.)
- **Market and business opportunities:** market access, sustainable models, cross-sectoral approaches and economic incentives
- **Funding and financing:** private funding, partnerships, public financing and regulatory incentives to support affordability and sustainability in uneconomic markets

As time will be limited for this very important discussion at GSR, I would request that National Regulatory Authorities begin the process of preparing and submitting contributions well in advance of the GSR.

In order to be able to coordinate submissions and make drafts of the consolidated collaborative measures and the best practice guidelines available on the events websites (www.itu.int/gsr17) in advance of the meetings, we would ask you to submit your contribution in electronic format to gsr@itu.int (maximum two pages), no later than 9 May 2017.

Individual contributions will also be posted. The best practice regulatory guidelines are to be presented on the last day of GSR.

I look forward to receiving your comments and I take this opportunity to encourage you to register as participant. May I also remind you to make your hotel reservations and check the visa procedure in advance of GSR. Visa instructions, online registration and further information on accommodation are available on the GSR17 website at: www.itu.int/gsr17.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Brahima Sanou
Director