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To: All WSIS Stakeholders

- Governments
- Private Sector
- Civil Society
- Academia
- International Organizations

WSIS Forum 2018, 19-23 March, Geneva, Switzerland
Invitation to Contribute to the Open Consultation Process on Shaping the Themes and Format

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP, I am pleased to invite you to contribute to the Open Consultation Process on the Thematic Aspects and Innovations on the Format of the WSIS Forum 2018.

The annual WSIS Forum is a global multi-stakeholder platform facilitating the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines for advancing sustainable development. The Forum is co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD, in close collaboration with all WSIS Action Line co-/facilitators and other UN organizations (UNDESA, FAO, UNEP, WHO, UN Women, WIPO, WFP, ILO, WMO, ITC, UPU, UNODC, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNHCR and UN Regional Commissions). It provides an opportunity for information exchange, knowledge creation and sharing of best practices, while identifying emerging trends and fostering partnerships, taking into account the evolving Information and Knowledge Societies.

In follow up to the outcomes of the UN General Assembly Overall Review of the Implementation of WSIS Outcomes (Res. A/70/125) and with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Res. A/70/1), the WSIS Forum is constantly evolving and strengthening the alignment between the WSIS Action Lines and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The WSIS Forum is the only event of its kind where the programme and agenda are completely crowdsourced. Therefore, as organizers, ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP, are pleased to announce the Open Consultation Process on thematic aspects and innovations on the format of the WSIS Forum 2018. The process aims at ensuring a participatory and inclusive spirit of the Forum, scheduled to be held from 19-23 March at ITU in Geneva. This process actively engages governments, civil society, the private sector, academia, the technical community and intergovernmental organizations in the preparatory process to ensure broad ownership and further improvements of the Forum.

The Open Consultation Process for the WSIS Forum 2018 is structured in five phases as follows:

- **Phase I: 19 September 2017:** 17:00 – 18:00: Launch of the Open Consultations (Face-to-face meeting during the WG-WSIS)
 - Launch of the WSIS Forum 2018 Website for the Official Submissions
 - Online discussions at Online Knowledge Societies Platform
 - Official submissions to the WSIS Secretariat on the Thematic Aspects and Innovations on the Format to be made via www.wsis.org/forum

- Open call for nominations for WSIS Forum 2018 Multi-stakeholder High-Level Track Facilitators
- Launch of the WSIS Photo Contest 2018
- **Phase II: 20 December 2017:** 1st Physical Meeting: Open Forum on Implementation of WSIS Action Lines and WSIS Forum (during IGF)
- **Phase III: 24 January 2018:** 16:30 – 18:00: 2nd Physical Meeting (ITU Headquarters, Geneva)
- **Phase IV: 30 January 2018** - Deadline for Submissions of Official Contributions and Binding Requests for Workshops
- **Phase V: 19 February 2018:** Final Brief on the WSIS Forum 2018 (ITU Headquarters, Geneva)

Please refer to www.wsis.org/forum for updates. The Open Consultation Process will include a collection of inputs from regional and national WSIS related events and the physical meetings of the Open Consultation Process will benefit from remote participation.

We look forward to your active participation and to seeing you at the WSIS Forum 2018.

Yours faithfully,

Houlin Zhao
ITU Secretary-General