*[DG Speech on ICTE Project on the occasion of the 2010 Council session]*

Distinguished members of the Council of the Union,
Distinguished Secretary-General, Dr Hamadoun Touré,
Distinguished Deputy Secretary-General,
Distinguished Directors of the Bureaux,

It is my pleasure to stand before you today and address these words to you. As everybody knows, the Government of the State of the United Arab Emirates has always enjoyed a close and firm bond with the International Telecommunication Union and we remain truly committed to strengthening this fruitful cooperation and ongoing support.

The information and communication technology museum (ICT Exploratorium) which it has been decided to establish is a unique and outstanding undertaking, initiated by His Excellency the Secretary-General at the 2008 session of the ITU Council. His apposite vision gives clear and direct shape to the construction of the Exploratorium, a global centre which, through its exhibits and displays, will shed light on and raise awareness of the entire honourable history of the ICT sector, past, present and future.

We in the State of the United Arab Emirates are extremely happy with this initiative, which is unique in the ICT field. The museum will be housed at ITU headquarters. We take pride in the fact that our government, represented by the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, is one of the chief founding partners of this project. It, in turn, will undoubtedly enhance and deepen the relationship between our country and the Union, headed wisely and capably by His Excellency the Secretary-General, Dr Hamadoun Touré.

Esteemed councillors,

Your constructive discussions and contributions at ITU Council sessions in the years since the last Plenipotentiary Conference (Antalya, 2006), developments in relation to various issues in the Union's strategic and financial plan, the adoption of the ITU budget for 2010-2011, the activities relating to the proceedings of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the role of ITU in matters relating to climate change and other important issues are all persuasive testimony to your determination and endeavour to develop the work of the Council and produce suitable recommendations serving the interests of Member States within the Council.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I should like to highlight issues which the forthcoming Plenipotentiary Conference in Mexico and future ITU Council sessions will face. These include: issues relating to achieving stability in the ITU Constitution, efforts to implement the ITU vision to connect the world, closing the standardization gap, strengthening the Union's regional presence, settling issues relating to the management and functioning of the Union and strengthening WSIS activities. Since our election at the Antalya summit in 2006, we in the UAE have been committed to making an effective contribution to the work of the three ITU Sectors and to the work of the Council in particular. We are currently analysing these issues carefully and are extremely keen to work with ITU and with Council member colleagues in respect thereof and also to contribute Arab working papers to the forthcoming conference.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate my appreciation to our Council member colleagues and extend sincere thanks and appreciation to His Excellency the Secretary-General and all ITU staff for their dedication and hard work that goes into the sessions and work of the ITU Council. Furthermore, I should like to extend sincere thanks and gratitude to the ITU Project Management Team.

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