Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)

Ref.:   BDT/PKM/LSE/DM/258   Geneva, 12 July 2017

ITU Member States

Subject: Pre-World Telecommunication Development Conference-17 Ministerial Roundtable on
ICT④SDGs in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, 8 October 2017, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have the pleasure of inviting you to a pre-WTDC-17 Ministerial Roundtable on ICT④SDGs in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), to be held on 8 October 2017, from 14.00 to 16.00, at the Hilton Buenos Aires Hotel, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-17) will take place, from 9 to 20 October 2017.

The purpose of the meeting is to give an opportunity to Ministers from LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS to discuss challenges and share strategic information on how to use ICTs in accelerating the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The discussions will also evolve around SDG 9, on industry, innovation and infrastructure, which issues a call to "significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020" (SDG Target 9c).

ITU considers the connectivity of LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS a priority as called for in the World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT-12) Resolution 1 on "Special measures for landlocked developing countries and small island developing states for access to international optical fibre networks," ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-10) Resolution 30 on "Special measures for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing states, and countries with economies in transition", and WTDC-14 Resolution 16 on "Special actions and measures for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing states, and countries with economies in transition".

The event will be marked by the launch of a special ITU report on ICTs for SDGs in the LDCs, which has been prepared by ITU, jointly with the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS).

A draft agenda of the event is attached and updated information will be available on our website, at http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/LDCs/Pages/Events/ICT4SGsintheLDCsSIDSandLLDCs.aspx.

It is my hope that the outcome of this pre-WTDC-17 event will go a long way towards addressing the call contained in the SDGs, to leave no one behind, by addressing the vulnerabilities, challenges and opportunities of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

I look forward to your participation at this important event.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Brahima Sanou
Director

Annex: Draft Agenda of the pre-WTDC-17 Ministerial Roundtable on ICT④SDGs in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, 8 October 2017, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Annex

Pre-WTDC-17 Ministerial Roundtable on ICT④SDGs in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDS)
8 October 2017, 14:00-16:00, Buenos Aires, Argentina

DRAFT AGENDA

The 2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development has pledged that "no one will be left behind", to ensure that all people equally benefit from the rights and opportunities that the SDGs voice. In terms of ICTs, this means that efforts need to focus on achieving a truly inclusive information society. The last decade has seen great progress in terms of connecting previously unconnected areas and ICTs have brought new opportunities to most people in the world. However, still today, 3.9 billion people, constituting more than half the world's total population, are offline. The majority of these people live in the world's most vulnerable countries. In many developing countries - in particular the least developed countries (LDCs), the landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS) - development challenges also hamper the spread of ICTs. These challenges include limited and costly access to national and international connectivity in small and isolated communities, difficulties in the rollout of terrestrial communication infrastructure across large land areas, and lack of or limited direct access to the sea.

This Ministerial Roundtable will highlight how ICTs are accelerating the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and discuss national initiatives on how to address and overcome barriers to ICT affordability, connectivity, access, and use. It will identify ICT strategies and policies, innovative technologies, and investment opportunities to drive ICT developments. It will also highlight the role of the private sector.

The event will include the launch of a special ITU report on *ICTs for SDGs in the LDCs*, which has been prepared by ITU, jointly with the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS).

Moderator: Dr. Cosmas Zavazava, Chief, Projects and Knowledge Management Department, Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), ITU

14:00 – 14:20   Opening ceremony
- Mr Brahima Sanou, Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), ITU
- UN-OHRLLS (TBC)

14:20 – 14:30   Group picture

14:30 – 14:50   Launch of the ITU special report on *ICTs for SDGs in the LDCs*
- Ms Vanessa Gray, Head LDCs, SIDS & Emergency Telecommunications Division, Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), ITU

14:50 – 16:00   Ministerial Roundtable: ICT④SDGs in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS
The Ministerial Roundtable will be a panel discussion by Ministers and Deputy Ministers from LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS. It will be followed by a Q&A session.

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