



**Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)**

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Geneva, 22 July 2019

Permanent Missions to the United Nations
Office at Geneva
ITU Sector Members from the satellite industry
Selected ITU Sector Members manufacturing
emergency telecommunications equipment

Subject: ITU emergency telecommunications roster

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have the pleasure to invite you to a special session to present ITU's emergency telecommunications activities, including new initiatives to respond to the increasing demand for support when disasters strike. This session will take place on 16 September 2019, from 10:00 to 16:00, at ITU Headquarters, in Geneva, Switzerland.

The session will showcase ITU's work on emergency telecommunications and launch the ITU emergency telecommunications roster. Representatives from the private sector will share their work on disaster management and talk about the opportunities offered by today's technologies in saving lives. The interactive session will also offer participants an opportunity to share experiences, challenges and needs in the field of disaster management.

ITU plays an important role in using ICTs for disaster risk reduction and management and when disasters strike, ITU deploys emergency telecommunications equipment to affected countries within the first 24 to 48 hours. This equipment helps restore vital communication links and is critical for coordination of disaster response activities within the government and humanitarian agencies involved in rescue and relief operations. ITU has a number of important partners from the satellite community that support its work and provide satellite equipment, as well as bandwidth/air time for emergency telecommunications deployment. Based on its experience in emergency deployments, ITU is currently exploring the use of easily deployable data communication equipment, such as Very Small Aperture terminals (VSATs), and new technologies, in particular unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs/drones) to provide disaster response services to affected communities.

The new ITU emergency telecommunications roster has been established to help reduce the impact of natural hazards and respond to the increasing needs in disaster response. The latest data show that from 2016 to 2017 more than 301 million people were affected by disasters. More than 3 million people were homeless and the total damage surpassed 481 million USD. The impact is even worse for those living in remote and isolated areas with no access to basic information and communication facilities.

The ITU roster will comprise of ITU staff trained to deploy emergency telecommunications equipment and work on the ground and it will support the work of the Emergency Telecommunication Cluster (ETC), a global network of organizations that work together to provide shared communication services in humanitarian

emergencies. The ITU roster staff will be trained and manage all the equipment deployed to the ground and set-up all the connection links needed for its correct functioning.

The ITU roster needs everyone's support, commitment and involvement. Support from Member States and Sector Members is key, whether in the form of financial contributions to cover deployment costs, donation of equipment, training or bandwidth.

By supporting the work of the ITU emergency telecommunications roster, partners will play a key role in sustaining and strengthening emergency response. It will also offer partners an opportunity to highlight their efforts in delivering humanitarian aid.

To confirm your interest in participating in the session, or in supporting the ITU emergency telecommunications roster, please email bdtlse@itu.int by 2 September 2019.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Director