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|  | | **Document** **RPM-ARB 21/DT/2-E** | |
|  | | **8 April 2021** | |
|  | | **English only** | |
| Chairman, RPM-ARB | | | |
| Report by the RPM-ARB Chairman | | | |

# Introduction

The Regional Preparatory Meeting for Arab region (RPM-ARB) was organized online by the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), from 7-8 April 2021.

The objective of RPM-ARB was to identify priorities at the regional level, for the development of telecommunications and information and communication technologies (ICTs), taking into account contributions submitted by Member States and ITU-D Sector Members from the region. The meeting concluded with a set of proposals on priority issues that will serve as basis for the formulation of contributions to the World Telecommunication Development Conference, to be held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), from 8 to 19 November 2021 (WTDC-21). WTDC-21 will consider the ITU-D activities to be carried out over the next four-year period (2022-2025).

This report gives an account of the work and results of the RPM-ARB.

# Participation

The meeting was attended by **113** participants including **71** delegates representing **17** Member States from Arab region, **14** participants from **6** Sector Members, **15** participants representing **10** Observer Member States and **6** guests. There were**, 52** female and **61** male participants.

The list of participants can be found here.

# Opening ceremony

The opening ceremony included several high-level interventions. All interventions are posted on the [RPM-ARB website](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/RPM-ARB.aspx). The speakers of the opening ceremony included the following:

**Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin**, Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau, ITU [[Speech](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-INF-0001/en)]

**Dr. Ahmedin Mohammed,** State Minister at Ministry of Innovation And Technology- Ethiopia [[Speech](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-INF-0002/en)]

**Eng. Alansari Almashagbah** Senior Adviser, Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC), Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Vice-Chairman of TDAG, and Vice Chair of the LAS’s Working Group for WTDC-21 Preparations**.** Eng. Al Ansaris’ speech was delivered on behalf of the chair of the LAS Working Group for WTDC-21 Preparations.

**Dr Khaled Wali,** Minister plenipotentiary, Director of ICTs Dept. League of Arab States (LAS) [Speech]

# Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen

Following the recommendations from the Heads of delegation meeting, Mr Mansour S. Alqurashi Chair of League of Arab States (LAS)’s Working Group for WTDC-21 Preparations, Councilor & Focal Point for Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and General Manager for International Affairs, Communications, and Information Technology Commission (CITC), Saudi Arabia, was unanimously elected as the Chairman of RPM-ARB for WTDC-21.

The meeting also endorsed the recommendation from the Heads of delegation meeting for the Vice-Chairmanship of RPM-ARB of Vice chairs Eng. Alansari Almashagbah from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan , Eng. Salim Hamood Salim Al-Mawali Manager, International Representations Dept. of Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA), the Sultanate of Oman and Vice Chair of the LAS’s Working Group for WTDC-21 Preparations, Eng. Samira Belal Manager of Technical office of CEO of the Kuwait’s Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority and Vice Chair of LAS’s Working Group for WTDC-21 Preparations, Mrs. Shahira slim Senior Manager, ITU Affairs, International Relations, National Telecom Regulatory Authority (NTRA), Egypt and Vice Chair of LAS’s Working Group for WTDC-21 Preparations.

# Adoption of the agenda and time management plan

The meeting approved the agenda as presented in [Document 1](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0001/en).

The secretariat noted that RPM-ARB had received (12) contributions: (02) from ITU Member States and ITU-D Sector Members, (7) from the secretariat and (03) from TDAG working groups.

RPM agreed to accept all late contributions to be considered, with the understanding that this approach is applied on an exceptional basis.

Having examined all the inputs related to ITU-D action areas, the meeting adopted the proposed draft time management plan ([Document DT/1](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-210407-TD-0001/en)). All the meeting documents are available on the [RPM document management website](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-210407/sum/en).

# Digital trends in Arab region

[**Document 2**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0002/en) : The document titled “**Digital trends in Arab region “** was presented by Mr. Adel Darwish, Regional Director of the ITU Arab Regional Office

This document provides an overview of trends and developments in ICT infrastructure, access and use in the Arab region, which includes 22 Member States and is home to a population of 423 million people. The document highlights changes in ICT adoption since the last World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2017 (WTDC-17) and during the COVID-19 pandemic, tracks the evolution of regulation, and reviews progress and challenges in the area of the ITU regional initiatives for Arab countries. Its objective is to serve the ITU membership as a reference for reviewing progress and identifying ICT development priorities in Arab region.

[**Document 12**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-RPMARB-C-0012) : the document is titled “**GAP Analysis on the Status of Thematic Priorities of the Development Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union in the Arab Region** “ was presented by Mr. Adel Darwish, Regional Director of the ITU Arab Regional Office.

This document provides an overview of the current gaps and required actions to be addressed within the memberstates in relation to the 10 Thematic Priorities that the Development Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union is currently working on. The report is based on a desk study research using publicly available data online though websites of Policy Makers and Regulators in the Arab memberstates as well as data available from reports produced in the past by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). The ITU understands that there is room for improvement in this report and kindly request memberstates to engage with the regional office in a way forward to enhance the remedies related to the various Thematic Priorities of the ITU Development Bureau.

Durnig the discussion, as this is the first time that ITU has conducted such an analysis, the chairman and the vice chairman, Mr. Al Ansari, thanked the ITU Arab Regional Office for the excellent work in developing the GAP analysis report and invited the ITU to share this information with other ITU field offices. Moreover, memberstates are invited to provide feedback on the report to ensure that the analysis depicts an accurate status of the gaps pertaining to the thematic priorities in all the countries of the Arab region.

RPM-ARB welcomed the documents and noted the contribution.

# Reporting on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Action Plan (including the Regional Initiatives), and contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

[**Document 3**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0003/en): The document titled “**Result-Based Management (RBM) implementation in BDT**” was introduced on behalf of the Director of BDT by Mr Stephen Bereaux, Deputy to the BDT Director. In 2019, BDT embarked on a comprehensive overhaul of its use of results-based management (RBM) to equip the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) for the challenges of a rapidly changing development landscape and make it Fit4Purpose. This reform introduces RBM for the implementation of all work programmes, as a managerial decision and monitoring tool, and to provide the evidence to demonstrate BDT's impact. RBM also serves as the platform to engage with internal and external partners, and to replicate and scale up successful projects and work programme initiatives.

[**Document 4**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0004/en): entitled “**Reporting on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Action Plan (including the Regional Initiatives), and contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”** was presented by Mr Stephen Bereaux, Deputy to the BDT Director. Annex 2 entitled **“Detailed information on work towards the achievement of the Regional Initiatives for Arab countries”**was presented by Mr. Adel Darwich, the Regional director for the ITU Arab Regional Office.

WTDC-17 convened in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and adopted the [Buenos Aires Action Plan](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC17/Documents/WTDC17_final_report_en.pdf) (BaAP). The plan, which includes the ITU-D programmes, a set of regional initiatives, and new and revised resolutions, recommendations and study group Questions, defines the mandate, objectives and priorities of the ITU Development Sector (ITU-D) for the period 2018-2021. It also aligns the Development Sector work with the strategic objectives of ITU to allow countries to harness the full benefits of ICTs.

Document 4 reports on the implementation of the BaAP, and its contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also highlights the change that the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), the executing arm of ITU-D, has undergone to ensure that it is able to keep pace with the fast-changing environment in which it serves.

[**Annex two**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0004/en)outlines all activities undertaken by ITU between 2018 and 2020, as a direct response to the expected results of the ITU regional initiatives for the Arab region, which consists of 22 countries. Activities presented in this document depict outcomes and generated impact per regional initiative as well as per activity. They are grouped in chronological order per topic. All activities carried out under the ITU regional initiatives for Arab region are directly linked to and coordinated within the corresponding BDT thematic priorities, strengthening ITU’s delivery and impact at the regional and national level. Simultaneously the document identified the contribution of activities to the work of the ITU study groups, as well as ITU’s contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines and Sustainable Development Goals.

Regional initiatives are the five priority areas that were elaborated and agreed by the members of the Arab region and approved by the World Telecommunication Development Conference, held in 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and are described in the Buenos Aires Action Plan. Regional initiatives are intended to address specific telecommunication/ICT priority areas that require special action of the ITU at the regional level. Under each regional initiative, a set of activities, initiatives, partnerships, and projects have been developed to meet the region's needs. Annual ITU Regional Development Forums have been serving as coordination mechanisms, facilitating implementation of the regional initiatives. The ITU regional initiatives for the Arab region are as follows:

* ARB 1: Environment, climate change and emergency telecommunications.
* ARB 2: Confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies.
* ARB 3: Digital financial inclusion.
* ARB 4: Internet of Things, smart cities and big data.
* ARB 5: Innovation and entrepreneurship

During the discussion the secretariate of the meeting Mr. Adel Darwish, clarified that the a more in depth analysis of the achievements and gaps in implementing the regional initiatives could be conducted in partnership with the membership. Moreover, membership are invited to contribute financially and in-kind to the implementation of future regional initiatives as this was a challenge. Furthermore, membership are also invited to engage in the formulation of the new regional priorities with the goal of making sure they are inclusive of the needs in all countries of the region. In addition, it was clarified that the current ongoing projects will continue in accordance with their time plans.

RPM-ARB welcomed the document and noted the contribution.

# Report on the implementation of outcomes of other ITU Conferences, Assemblies and meetings related to ITU-D work: PP-18, WRC-19, RA-19, and WTSA-16

[**Document 5**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0005/en): The document entitled **“Report on the implementation of outcomes of other ITU Conferences, Assemblies and meetings related to ITU-D work: PP-18, WRC-19, RA-19, and WTSA-16”** was introduced on behalf of the Director of BDT by Mr Marco Obiso, a.i. Chief of the DNS Department.

The document provides a comprehensive view of the implementation of the ITU conferences relevant to the work of ITU-D, based on a mapping exercise conducted by BDT to link the BDT thematic focus areas with the relevant ITU resolutions, the WSIS action lines, the BDT study groups, SDGs and the targets of the Connect 2020 Agenda.

RPM-ARB welcomed the document and noted the contribution.

# Preparation for WTDC‑21

* 1. **Report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)**

[**Document 6:**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0006/en) The document entitled **Final report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)** was presented by Mr Santiago Reyes-Borda, Chairman of the TDAG-WG-Prep. It contains a final report on the work of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep), including those items where the group had not reached a consensus and TDAG-20/3 took a decision.

The Chairman reminded participants about two important initiatives Arab region is involved in, namely: meaningful Youth engagement through [the Generation Connect – ARAB Youth Group](https://www.itu.int/generationconnect/generation-connect-arab-states-youth-group-gc-arb/) and [the Network of Women (NoW)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/NoW/Pages/default.aspx) for the Telecommunication Development Sector, officially launched on the 7th of April. For the first time, these initiatives are part of the preparatory process for WTDC. Moreover the chairman advised that the working group has fulfilled its terms of reference and submitted the final report of the working group outcomes to TDAG-21.

RPM-ARB welcomed the document and noted the contribution.

* 1. **Report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP)**

[**Document 7:**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0007/en) The document entitled **Report of the meeting of the TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP)** was presented by Dr Ahmad Reza Sharafat, Chairman, TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities. It contains the progress report of the meeting of the TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP). The group will continue its work and submit its final report to TDAG-21.

During the session the chairman extended an invitation to the next meeting of the working group planned to take place on the 9th of April 2021. Moreover, he emphasized that he working group will assess if they need further meetings provided that in the end the working group is able to present a timely final report to TDAG-21.

RPM-ARB welcomed the document and noted the contribution.

* 1. **TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP)**

[**Document 8:**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0008/en) The document entitled **Report on the meeting of TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP) was** introduced by Ms. Blanca González, Chairman of this group and Head of Unit, Cabinet of the Secretary of State for Telecommunications and Digital Infrastructures, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation (Spain). It contains a report on the activities of the TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP) since its creation. It also contains some recommendations on the way forward, that TDAG-20/3 approved.

During the session Ms. Blanca emphasized on the need for a holistic approach to ensure the participation of all the stakeholders, and improve the linkages between the action plan and the strategic plan.

RPM-ARB welcomed the document and noted the contribution.

# 8 Priority setting for Regional Initiatives, related projects and financing mechanisms

Mrs. Shahira Selim on behalf of the Chairman of the RPM-ARB, invited the contributors to present their inputs on regional priorities. Specifically the following contributions were presented:

**Document** [[9]](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-RPMARB-C-0009)entitled ***“*Arab countries' views on draft regional initiatives*”*** was introduced by Eng . Salim Al-Maawali, Chairman, LAS’s Arab Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans including Regional Initiatives and on behalf of Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Egypt, Morocco. It provides a proposal advocating for the importance of revising the initiatives and their goals in a way that reflects the progress made in telecommunications / information and communication technologies in a manner that ensures that the aspirations and needs of the Arab region are met by contributing to achieving the implementation of the sustainable development goals. The contribution sheds light on the proposed regional priorities of those Arab administrations and they are namely as follows:

1) Promote digital transformation and enable digital inclusion, particularly for rapid response to epidemics and emergencies

2) Building confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/ information and communication technologies in the era of new and emerging digital technologies, including child online protection

3) developing digital infrastructure, promoting universal access and supporting smart cities and communities.

4) digital innovation and entrepreneurship

5) developing digital collaborative regulation and harmonization of policy and regulatory frameworks for information and communication technology and the digital economy.

**Document** [[10]](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-RPMARB-C-0010) entitled ***“*Notes and proposals on regional initiatives for the Arab region*”*** was introduced by Mr. Abdelaziz Al Zarooni, Telecommunication Regulatory Authority, United Arab Emirates. It contains proposal of a number of regional initiatives for the Arab region. The document also addresses recommendations that the United Arab Emirates suggests taking into account when formulating and implementing regional initiatives for the Arab region.

**Document** [[11]](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-RPMARB-C-0011) entitled ***“*Crystallizing Regional Priorities in the Arab Region to prepare for the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-21)*”*** was introduced by Mr. Adel Darwish, Regional Director of the ITU Arab Regional Office. This document presents the report of the event Crystallizing Regional Priorities in the Arab Region to prepare for the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-21), that took place online on 30 and 31 March 2021.

Document [[13]](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0013/en) entitled **“Creating an Enabling Environment for 5G in Terms of Feasibility studies and the Relevant Applications in Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things and Radiocommunication Spectrum”** was presented by Mr. Mustafa Al Bahbahani, the Communication and Media Commission of the Republic of Iraq. The contribution affirms Iraq’s support for the regional priority proposed in the meeting and further suggests the addition of new regional priority as depicted in the title of the contribution. It is noteworthy, that as this contribution was received during the RPM-ARB the meeting approved its inclusion as a contribution to the meeting.

The Vice-Chairman thanked the membership for the contributions received and also, the efforts of the ITU Arab Regional office to inform the discussions regarding regional priorities using innovative ideations methodologies as presented through the I-CoDI platform. Moreover, the vice-chairman requested the Arab Preparatory Working Group for WTDC-21 to consider in their work the contributions received in the RPM, specifically under agenda items 4 and 8 with the view to elaborate and enhance the Arab regional priorities. Moreover, the working group should target to elaborate and enhance the regional priorities to identify clear KPIs and targets including identifying the targeted countries to implement each of the identified regional priorities. Also, as this has demonstrated to be a good working methodology, she also suggested that the Arab Preparatory Working Group for WTDC-21 considers the suggestions made by the ITU Arab Regional Office to organize deep dive workshops for each of identified priority areas using I-CoDI proposed methodology. This suggestion would be considered as one of many options that maybe considered by the working group in their efforts to formulate the regional priorities.

RPM-ARB noted the documents and agreed to further discuss in order to achieve consensus on a common proposal for the regional initiatives and to deep dive by developing the expected results and KPIs taking also into consideration these contributions.

# 9. Other Business

***Network of Women (NoW)***

RPM Arab region established the [Network of Women (NoW)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/NoW/Pages/default.aspx) for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector as the fourth regional network to be launched by ITU BDT. This initiative aims at building a community to support female delegates, expand their network, and advocate and share experiences and knowledge with other female delegates. The Network of Women also aims at promoting the active participation of women in ITU activities and the tech sector in general. It is noteworthy that the RPM-ARB was recognized by Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, the Director of BDT, as the most RPM to have a majority of women participating (around 50%).

The Network of Women (NoW) encourages gender balance in the activities leading up to the World Telecommunication Development Conference, WTDC-21, scheduled to take place from 8 to 19 November 2021 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

***Generation Connect – Arab Youth Group:***

The [Generation Connect - Arab Youth Group](https://www.itu.int/generationconnect/generation-connect-arab-states-youth-group-gc-arb/) (GC-ARB) has been established within the framework of the Generation Connect initiative to promote meaningful youth engagement and participation in the international dialogue on digital development. GC-ARB aims at providing a unique participative process for youth to virtually discuss regional opportunities and challenges related to digital technologies. Through this platform, youth can share their interests, concerns and perspectives on digital transformation, especially in the context of the RPM-ARB and the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021 (WTDC-21).

During the RPM-ARB side event on GC-ARB, 4 youth representatives aged between 18-24 shared their thoughts and insights on the common major digital issues facing young people in the Arab region and their perspectives on the future of digital communication. Following the RPM, the GC–ARB members will be working together to identify regional thematic priorities and to ideate related key opportunities and challenges. The goal is for GC-ARB to elaborate on a crowd-sourced document to be presented by the digital youth envoys at a specific meeting after the RPM-ARB. The young participants will continue to be engaged in Generation Connect Initiatives on the journey to WTDC-21 and the preceding Generation Connect Youth Summit.

RPM-ARB noted both these initiatives and encouraged all the members in the region to contribute actively to both of them.

***Launch of the ITU Arab Regional Office Twitter Account:***

Mr. Adel Darwish, Regional Director of the ITU Arab Regional Office announced during the meeting the launch of the ITU Arab Regional Office twitter account. He emphasized that this account will be an additional mechanism for the regional office to share information with the membership and the general public on ITU activities in the region. It is noteworthy that this launch coincides with the 30 year anniversary of the establishment of the ITU Arab Regional Office.

RPM-ARB noted and welcomed this launch.

During the discussions under this agenda item, the secretariate advised that the next meeting of the Inter-Regional Meeting for the WTDC-21 will take place from 12 to 13 May and the report of the first meeting will be issued in due course.

Moreover, the participants of the meeting will be submitting contributions pertaining to the declaration specifically within the work of the TDAG-WG-RDTP.

# 10. Main outcomes

RPM-ARB, after considering all input documents and discussions, came to the following conclusions:

* RPM-ARB considered the final Report of **TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)** and noted the contribution.
* RPM- ARB noted the implementation of the Arab regional initiatives with appreciation.
* RPM-ARB considered the progress Report of **TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP)** and noted the contribution.
* RPM-ARB considered the progress Report of **TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP)** and noted the contribution.
* RPM-ARB recognized that the ITU-D regional priorities constitute an effective mechanism for fostering implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
* RPM-ARB invites the League of Arab States Preparatory Working Group for WTDC-21 to continue the work to elaborate and enhance the regional priorities and consider in their work the contributions received in the RPM, specifically under agenda items 4 and 8. Moreover, the working group should target to elaborate and enhance the regional priorities to identify clear KPIs and targets including identifying the targeted countries to implement each of the identified regional priorities. Also, as this has demonstrated to be a good working methodology, she also suggested that the Arab Preparatory Working Group for WTDC-21 considers the suggestions made by the ITU Arab Regional Office to organize deep dive workshops for each of identified priority areas using I-CoDI proposed methodology. This suggestion would be considered as one of many options that maybe considered by the working group in their efforts to formulate the regional priorities.
* RPM-ARB welcomed the report on “Digital trends in the Arab Region in 2021” as an important contribution to developing the regional initiatives taking into account the developments and challenges at the regional level in field of ICTs.
* RPM-ARB welcomed the report titled “GAP Analysis on the Status of Thematic Priorities of the Development Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union in the Arab Region” and invited the ITU to share this information with other ITU field offices. Moreover, memberstates are invited to provide feedback on the report to ensure that the analysis depicts an accurate status of the gaps pertaining to the thematic priorities in all the countries of the Arab region.
* RPM- ARB launched the Network of Women (NoW) for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector, paving the way for the involvement of more women in WTDC-21.
* RPM-ARB welcomed the creation of the GC-ARB Youth Group, which could serve as a means for meaningful engagement, empowerment and participation of youth in the work of ITU.

# 11. Closing ceremony

Mr. Adel Darwish, Regional Director of the ITU Arab Regional Office delivered the closing remarks on behalf of the BDT Director, Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin as he emphasized the success of this RPM-ARB as an emblematic example of the spirit of dialogue, cooperation and collaboration permeating ITU-D. Such spirit will be brought into all meetings and interactions engaging ITU-D membership, such as TDAG-21 and finally WTDC-21.

He noted the important outcomes reflected in the Chairman’s report, which would serve as the building blocks for the region’s contributions to WTDC-21.

He reiterated the importance of making WTDC a more inclusive process through youth engagement and by ensuring gender balance.

He thanked the Chairman, Mr. Mansour S. Alqurashi, as well as the Vice-Chairmen, Eng. Alansari Almashagbah, Eng. Salim Hamood Salim Al-Mawali , Eng. Samira Belal , and Mrs. Shahira slim, for their excellent leadership of the meeting and for facilitating consensus on the issues discussed during the meeting.

He also thanked all delegates for their contributions and for sharing their views and ideas, as well as those who worked behind the scenes to help make the meeting a success.

He concluded by thanking The BDT Director, Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin emphasized the success of this RPM-ARB as an emblematic example of the spirit of dialogue, cooperation and collaboration permeating ITU-D. Such spirit will be brought into all meetings and interactions engaging ITU-D membership, such as TDAG-21 and finally WTDC-21.

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He also thanked all delegates for their contributions and for sharing their views and ideas, as well as those who worked behind the scenes to help make the meeting a success.

He concluded by thanking the ITU staff, including the ITU Arab Regional Office staff for their dedication and contribution to the success of the meeting.

Closing the meeting, Mr. Mansour S. Alqurashi, expressed his gratitude to all ITU members having participated in the work of RPM-ARB. He also expressed his particular gratitude to Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin, BDT Director, to Mr. Adel Darwich, the Regional director for Arab region. He also thanked the ITU staff for their assistance in the organization and running of the meeting.

Mr. Mansour S. Alqurashi also reiterated the importance of the constructive discussions and deliberations of RPM-ARB, in particular those aimed at bridging the digital divide and connecting the unconnected.

The RPM-ARB participants thanked the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the meeting for their effective leadership, as well as for their excellent organization of the meeting and for the facilities and working conditions provided, highlighting in particular the spirit of collaboration among membership and with ITU.

Mr. Mansour S. Alqurashi ,   
Chairman, RPM-ARB for WTDC‑21

8 April 2021, Cairo