



General Secretariat (SG)

Ref: Circular Letter/SPM/CDD/No.19/15

Contact: Negar Takesh

Tel: +41 22 730 6104

E-mail: protocol@itu.int

Geneva, 15 April 2019

To: ITU Member States,

Sector Members, Associates and Academia

***Subject: World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD), Friday, 17 May 2019
Bridging the standardization gap - ITU Secretary-General's Call for Action***

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to advise you that ITU will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of World Telecommunication and Information Society Day at ITU headquarters on Friday, 17 May 2019, from 11:00 to 12:00.

As you will recall, WTISD marks the anniversary of the founding of ITU on 17 May 1865, when the first International Telegraph Convention was signed in Paris.

This year's theme is "Bridging the Standardization Gap." Developing international standards is a foundational pillar of ITU's mission. ITU standards offer a common basis for growth and innovation, and thereby accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. They enable interoperability, economies of scale and grant access to global markets. They create opportunities enjoyed by small and bigger market players.

ITU's Bridging the Standardization Gap programme facilitates the participation of developing countries in ITU's standards-making process, empowers local experts in the standardization process at the national, regional and international levels, and promotes the implementation of international standards in developing countries.

To support WTISD celebrations in your country, please find the first materials for WTISD-2019 [here](http://www.itu.int/en/wtisd/) (www.itu.int/en/wtisd/) and a digital collection of past WTISDs on the *History of ITU* Portal [here](https://www.itu.int/en/history/Pages/WTISDEventsCollection.aspx) (<https://www.itu.int/en/history/Pages/WTISDEventsCollection.aspx>).

I look forward to welcoming some of you at ITU on 17 May and I wish you a very successful World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2019.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Houlin Zhao

Annex: 1

Annex 1

WTISD-2019 Call for Action:

As per Resolution 123 (Rev. Dubai 2018), ITU is committed to bridging the standardization gap by supporting developing countries in their efforts to enhance their capacity to participate in the development and implementation of international standards.

ITU calls upon Member States, Sector Members, Associates and Academia, small- and medium-sized enterprises from developing countries, the leadership of ITU study groups and advisory groups, and the leadership and staff of the ITU Secretariat:

- to commemorate WTISD-2019 and raise awareness of the importance of “Bridging the Standardization Gap”.

Relevant academic institutions are invited:

- to develop and offer undergraduate and postgraduate courses on standardization;
- to develop studies on the relationship between standardization and innovation.

Member States and Sector Members are invited:

- to make financial and in-kind voluntary contributions to ITU for bridging the standardization gap;
- to undertake concrete actions to support ITU's initiatives;
- to work with ITU and relevant academic organizations to enhance capacity building in the standardization field;
- to proactively use the web-based and other tools consolidated by ITU such as guidelines, recommendations, technical reports, best practices and use cases to hasten the transfer of knowledge.

Member States are invited:

- to study the possibility of implementing “*National Standardization Secretariats*”, taking into account the guidelines provided under ITU’s Bridging the Standardization Gap (BSG) programme, in particular in developing countries;
- to continue the creation of national and regional standardization bodies, as appropriate, and encourage the involvement of these entities in ITU standardization work and the coordination of meetings with ITU regional groups, mainly to enable developing countries to communicate about their standardization priorities and requirements;
- to encourage their experts, in particular young and women experts, to join ITU activities and events organized for developing standards.
- to host standardization meetings as well as events (forums, workshops, etc.) related to ITU standardization activities in particular in developing countries;
- to encourage and facilitate experts from small- and medium-sized enterprises, academia and relevant actors, in particular young and women experts, to participate in ITU's standardization activities.

Regions are invited:

- to take an active part in the activities of regional groups within ITU study groups and support regional organizations in establishing frameworks to stimulate regions’ participation in international standardization activities;
- to create regional standardization bodies, as appropriate, and encourage joint and coordinated meetings of such bodies with regional groups within ITU study groups.