



General Secretariat (SG)

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To the Administrations of the Member States of the Union

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Subject: **Invitation to the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021 (WTDC-21)**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have the honour to inform you that, following the kind invitation of the Government of Ethiopia and the approval by Council with the concurrence of a majority of the Member States of ITU, the forthcoming World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-21) will be convened in **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 8 to 19 November 2021**.

World Telecommunication Development Conferences (WTDCs) are convened in the period between two Plenipotentiary Conferences to consider topics, projects and programmes relevant to telecommunication development. WTDCs set the strategies and objectives for the development of telecommunication/ICT, providing direction and guidance to the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D).

WTDC-21 comes at a defining moment for the world and our place in it. The COVID-19 global pandemic has brought home the stark reality that in today's hyper-connected economies, connectivity is not just important, it is absolutely critical. As it is increasingly clear that digital solutions will be instrumental to the success of this final Decade of Action in achieving the SDGs, our joint efforts will be more decisive than ever. In recognition of the central role of ICTs, and as decided by TDAG at its meeting on 23 November 2020, the theme selected for WTDC-21 is **"Connecting the unconnected to achieve sustainable development"**. The draft agenda of WTDC-21 will be submitted to the 2021 session of Council for approval.

I have the great privilege of inviting your Government to be part of this important mission and to send a delegation to WTDC-21. This is in accordance with Article 25 of the ITU Convention and Section 3 of the General Rules of conferences, assemblies, and meetings of the Union.

Member States are informed that this invitation is also being sent to Sector Members of the Telecommunication Development Sector, to ITU Academia, as well as to all concerned organizations, institutions, and entities in conformity with Article 25 of the ITU Convention and Resolution 99 (Rev. Dubai, 2018).

The draft structure of WTDC-21, along with the practical details concerning registration, fellowships, procedures, and deadline for the submission of contributions will be sent to you in due course.

Membership will soon receive an invitation letter for the Regional Preparatory Meeting (RPM) in their region. RPMs are being organized in line with WTDC Resolution 31 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017), during the first part of 2021. A schedule of these meetings is attached as **Annex 1**.

In addition to RPMs, a number of other events and preparatory processes will help to plan and prepare for the conference, with further information available on the [WTDC-21 website](#).

In line with ITU gender equality and mainstreaming policy and Resolution 198 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) on empowerment of youth through telecommunication/ICT, I would also like to take the opportunity to encourage you to include women and young people in your delegation.

I very much look forward to your participation and contributions to ensure that WTDC-21 is a solution-oriented conference that makes a real difference in the lives of all citizens in the world.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Houlin Zhao

Annex 1: Schedule of Regional Preparatory Meetings (RPMs)

Annex 1

Schedule of Regional Preparatory Meetings (RPMs)

Region	Dates	Place
Europe: RPM-EUR	18-19 January	Virtual
Asia and the Pacific: RPM-ASP	9-10 March	Virtual
Africa: RPM-AFR	29-30 March	Virtual
Arab States: RPM-ARB	7-8 April (tbc)	Tbd
Commonwealth of Independent States: RPM-CIS	21-22 April	Tbd
Americas: RPM-AMS	26-27 April	Virtual
