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| ITU logo | INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION**TELECOMMUNICATIONSTANDARDIZATION SECTOR**STUDY PERIOD 2017-2020 | **TD 072**  |
| **TSAG** |
| **Original: English** |
| **Question(s):** | N/A | Geneva, 1-4 May 2017 |
| **TD** |
| **Source:** | Deputy Secretary-General, ITU |
| **Title:** | Opening address at TSAG Meeting, 1 May 2017 |
| **Purpose:** | Information |
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Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group

1 May 2017

ITU Headquarters, Geneva

*Welcome Remarks*

Houlin Zhao

Secretary-General
International Telecommunication Union

Director of TSB, Chaesub Lee,

Chairman Bruce Gracie, vice-chairmen,

Distinguished colleagues and friends,

Good morning and welcome to this first TSAG meeting of the 2017 to 2020 study period.

Let me start by congratulating Bruce Gracie on his appointment for a second term as TSAG Chairman. I also thank TSAG’s eight Vice-Chairmen for their commitment to steer TSAG’s work.

I thank you all for your leadership and I look forward to working with you in this new study period.

Distinguished colleagues,

**WTSA-16 put ITU-T in a strong position** **to support the next phase of ICT innovation.**

WTSA reviewed our work programme, working methods and structure, establishing a clear framework to guide our standards work to 2020.

TSAG will offer valuable guidance to our Study Groups on how best to respond to the directives of WTSA-16.

I have been briefed about the documents to be considered by this TSAG meeting.

I see that this meeting intends to bring greater clarity to our response to WTSA Resolution 44 on bridging the standardization gap between developed and developing countries.

I wish you all the best in this endeavour. This is fundamental to our mission as an organization. It is crucial that we empower developing countries to draw maximum possible value from ITU standardization. Here WTSA Resolution 44 is a vehicle of great strategic importance.

I also note that ITU’s engagement with open-source projects has made a return to the TSAG agenda.

ITU seeks to be a valuable partner to all interests driving ICT innovation. The open-source movement has begun to influence the business of ITU members quite considerably. I commend TSAG for its efforts to address the changing dynamics of ICT sector.

**On this note, I would like to thank the ITU Standardization Sector for the proactive approach that it has taken to subjects such as 5G, Digital Financial Services and Artificial Intelligence.**

ITU-T’s 5G networking studies are an essential complement to the 5G radio work of ITU-R.

Our Focus Group on network aspects of IMT-2020 provided valuable stimulus to ITU-T work on 5G, and I would like to thank Huawei for its strong leadership of this group.

Our work on softwarization and slicing, fixed-mobile convergence and information-centric networking is attracting significant attention. I understand that we will see new ITU standards emerging in these fields midway through this year.

This work is not only of great value to network operators looking for smarter ways to orchestrate network operations – this work has also raised awareness of the importance of cohesive 5G innovation; it is contributing to improved collaboration among industry players and standards bodies.

We are very pleased with the direction that this work has taken.

I would say the same of our work on Digital Financial Services. Our Focus Group on the topic was the first initiative to bring together all the actors working to expand digital financial inclusion.

Here I would like to thank the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for its leadership in establishing this Focus Group and guiding it towards meaningful results.

The 85 policy recommendations and 28 supporting reports delivered by the Focus Group have been extremely well received by financial-inclusion advocates.

The collaboration initiated by the Focus Group will continue, supported in equal measure by ITU, the World Bank and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

I would also like to highlight the significance of the upcoming AI for Good Global Summit in Geneva, 7-9 June.

The summit will convene government, industry, civil society and academia to determine our respective roles in ensuring that AI follows a development course able to benefit all of humanity.

ITU has called for an inclusive global dialogue on AI, recognizing that the scope of this debate extends far beyond the scope of any single organization.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has been especially supportive.

We will move closer to understanding how AI will help us to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Distinguished colleagues,

**Common to all of these successes is ITU’s commitment to collaboration**.

We collaborate with our members to give all countries equal opportunity to benefit from international standards.

We are exploring how we might accommodate the collaboration emerging between telecoms and open-source communities.

We are encouraging industry to take a holistic view of the innovation required to achieve its 5G ambitions.

And we are providing a platform for the collaboration of the ICT sector with verticals such as financial services.

I would like to thank ITU-T for its vision. We are taking the steps necessary to ensure that ITU remains a central point of reference within the ICT ecosystem.

I wish you all the best for this TSAG meeting and every success on the road to 2020.

Thank you.

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