



Telecommunication  
Development Bureau (BDT)

Regional Office for Africa

Regional Office for Arab States

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To:

- African and Arab Administrations of ITU Member States;
- African and Arab Regulatory Authorities;
- ITU-D Sector Members and Associates;
- Academia;
- African and Arab Regional and International Organizations concerned;

**Subject: Invitation to the online ITU Inter-Regional Week on “Emerging Technologies for Development” in the Arab and African Regions, 13-18 December 2020**

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are pleased to invite you to the first ITU Inter-Regional Week on “**Emerging Technologies for Development**” in the Arab and African Regions scheduled to take place from 13 to 18 December 2020. The objective of this year’s ITU Inter-Regional Week is to promote the wide-scale deployment of emerging technologies including, Artificial Intelligence, IoT, Big Data, low orbiting satellites, and 5G, to ultimately contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Established in 1865, ITU has reaffirmed its reputation worldwide as one of the most resilient and relevant organizations and it continues its work as the specialized agency of the United Nations for telecommunications and information and communication technologies. ITU is a unique neutral platform for organizations to network and collaborate with industry, governments, regulators and academia. ITU has a global membership of 193 Member States (Governments, administrators and regulators) and over 800 Sector Members from the information and communication technology (ICT) sector and more than 600 Members from academia. The ICT world is a fast-changing one, and ICTs remain good means of accelerating progress in all sectors of life, and this particular context of the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, all along the way, the importance of ICTs for the countries’ resilience through the sustainability of daily business, operations, healthcare among others.

Indeed, since the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has been facing a global recession that is adversely affecting the global economy at large and developing countries more acutely. Nevertheless, as countries plan for the new normal, there is potential for increased investment in emerging technologies –characterized by their novelty, fast growth, coherence, and prominent impact on development in general. ITU plans to hold this event annually with a new theme each year that focuses on specific emerging technologies and targets a

number of SDGs. The focus this year will be on SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 3 (Health and Well Being), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure).

The Inter-Regional Week provides an excellent opportunity for countries to share their experiences in using emerging technologies to mitigate the socio-economic impact of COVID-19, with a view to achieving the SDGs in the medium and long run.

This Week will highlight potential challenges as countries plan for economic recovery and prepare for the new normal. It will showcase best practices, enlarge the space for participation and support efforts to leverage emerging technologies in endeavors to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Inter-Regional Week will be conducted **online in English, French, and Arabic** with simultaneous interpretation for most of its sessions. Please note that all information related to the Week organization, including the Agenda and practical information is available on the ITU website at: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/ET/2020/Pages/default.aspx> . No participation fee is required for this event; you are invited to register online using the following link:

<https://www.itu.int/net4/CRM/xreg/web/Login.aspx?src=Registration&Event=C-00008633>

Should you require any further information regarding the event and your participation, the following ITU colleagues are at your full disposal: Ms Aminata Amadou Garba, Programme Coordinator, ITU HQ, ([aminata.amadou-garba@itu.int](mailto:aminata.amadou-garba@itu.int)), Mr Ali Drissa Badiel, Area Representative, ITU Area Office for West Africa ([alidrissa.badiel@itu.int](mailto:alidrissa.badiel@itu.int)) and Mr Karim Abdelghani, Programme Coordinator, ITU Arab Regional Office ([karim.abdelghani@itu.int](mailto:karim.abdelghani@itu.int)).

Given the importance of the upcoming Inter-Regional Week for the Digital Economy Sector and ecosystem development in African and Arab States, we count on your availability and participation to make this event a success.

Yours faithfully,



For

**Andrew Rugege**  
Regional Director for Africa and  
Liaison Officer to UNECA and AUC



**Adel Darwish**  
Regional Director for Arab States