

Speech by

Manuel da Costa Cabral

**Chairman, Com-ITU of the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications
Administrations (CEPT)**

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Your Excellences,

Dear colleagues

I would like to thank the Republic of Lithuania for hosting this event and ITU-D also for co-organizing.

I also thank you for inviting me to participate in this session.

I am very proud to participate at this Regional Development Forums (RDFs) which provides an opportunity for a dialogue between the ITU-D, governments and regulators and Sector Members and also Regional Associations.

Dear colleagues

Development is a priority for European Countries.

We can proudly affirm that over half of all development aid comes from European Countries, making us collectively the world's largest aid donor.

Most of this aid goes to low-income and least developed countries.

This is an eloquent demonstration of our determination and long lasting engagement in Development issues.

In the Development Sector of the ITU, we have the opportunity to work together in the delivery of technical assistance and in the improvement of telecommunication and ICT equipment and networks in developing countries.

In addition, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets specific targets and ICTs act as an accelerator and enabler of many, perhaps all of the SDGs.

Therefore, we have the opportunity to leave our footprint in an area which is key to the sustainable development and growth and also to reduce inequalities.

This adds an increased responsibility on all of us.

In fact, the implementation of this Agenda relies not only on Government nor on the United Nations, and its Agencies, but also on all stakeholders.

Bearing this in mind, I believe that is important to disseminate the message that the 17 goals are there to address fundamental questions for the future of the people and the planet.

I am sure that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will not be completed without the efforts to involve civil society, local businesses, academia and others partners in this sustainable path.

We need to walk this path together.

Therefore, I am pleased to participate in this event which will focus, to a great extent, on the strengthening multi-stakeholder support and partnership for the implementation of ICT4SDG actions.

As a Com-ITU Chair I also note that several participants in this forum come from Countries that are not participating so regularly in our activities.

To those colleagues, we would like to express how important we consider your participation.

We will listen with care the experiences, the challenges you are facing and the opportunities you want to embrace.

We want to tell you that COM-ITU is an opportunity for you to have your voice heard in a European context and through that in a global context.

I hope that in the course of this week that it will become clearer to all of us.

I wish you all an extremely successful and enriching Forum.

Thank you very much.