ITU WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE 2017
BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

10 OCTOBER, 2017
11:30 A.M. LOCAL TIME

PLENARY: HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT

>> CHAIR: Good morning, everybody. I would ask you please
to take your seats so we can begin. Take your seats so that we
can begin.

Ministers and Vice Ministers who will be with us in the
high level segment today are already here. So I would like to
begin.

Welcome to this fourth Plenary meeting. Before we begin the
high level segment I would ask the Secretariat to make a few
announcements.

>> SECRETARIAT: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is
just to inform again on how to get the floor. The problems that
we had during the previous Plenaries you have in front of you
the microphone. You have this big white button. Just press the
button once, a green light will flash. So stay and wait until
the President, the Chairman gives you the floor.

So after that the floor will be given to you and the red
light will appear. So you can talk. After that you are going to
cut the microphone. It is important to know that during this
Plenary and the other Plenaries we are going to start with the
silence mode. So we are not going to have any sound in the room.
So we are going to listen using your headsets. So it is
necessary to use.

Use also a volume button that you can find in the
microphone. So you can find the volume button. But we are not

going to have any sound in the room. So we are going to use the silence mode from now on. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Secretary. So we can now begin with this third high level segment. I would like to thank the authorities here, the Ministers and the Vice Ministers. Before I would invite the first presenter to the stage I would like to remind you of the importance of sticking to the time limits that have been given to each presenter. So if we can go through our agenda and finish the agenda on time. I would first like to give the floor to Mr. Abdi Youssouf Sougueh, Minister of Communications, Personal Communications of Djibouti.

>> Microphone, please.

>> ABDI YOUSSOUF SOUGUEH: Is it working? Your Excellencies, fellow Ministers and heads of Delegation, ITU Secretary-General, directors of the three ITU bureaus, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, first of all, I would like to express here my warm appreciation and thanks to the Government and people of Argentina for the marvelous and heartfelt welcome that we have enjoyed. I would like to take this opportunity also to extend to all of you here on behalf of His Excellency, President of Djibouti, Mr. Ismail Guelleh, the funniest greetings from the Djibouti people. Moreover, I would like to extend my best wishes to the development bureau to celebrating its 25th anniversary as well as the management team of the ITU.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the World Telecommunication Development Conference here this year focused on ICTs for Sustainable Development Goals is the opportunity for us policymakers to discuss the fundamental role of ICTs in meeting these Sustainable Development Goals. It invites us therefore to renew our strategies and use the best and available resources to address new challenges. Here we are at a watershed moment. And at the same time digital inclusion which will be at the heart of our concerns. And we need to ensure that create the necessary environment that will allow us to achieve the SDGs.

With this in mind Djibouti has moved to a restructuring of the ICT sector seeking to provide far reaching access, starting with connectivity of schools to ensure that we can create a digital Djibouti. Thank you very much for your kind attention.
(Applause.)

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Minister. I would now like to invite His Excellency, Mr. Mohan Bahadur Basnet, Minister of Information and Communications of Nepal to take the floor.

>> MOHAN BAHADUR BASNET: Ladies and Gentlemen, related officials of ITU, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome from the people and Government of Nepal. Let me on behalf of the Government of Nepal, my Delegation and on one, thank the International Telecommunication Union, ITU and the Government of

Argentina for the invitation to this conference. I also take
this opportunity to thank for the excellent (inaudible) for this
conference. BDT activities of the (inaudible) have been very
important and critical in implementing the Dubai Action Plan.
Thou put the Study Groups in common, BDTs, BDT has membership in
setting the policy, legal and regulatory frameworks and creating
conducive market environment. Nepal ITUS citizens with emergency
communication systems during the (inaudible), May 2015. I also
take this opportunity to thank ITU for assisting us in
developing cybersecurity capacity through the formulation of
national awareness framework on cybersecurity and sign online
protection, national cybersecurity policy, cybercrime,
conducting capacity building workshops. Nepal's development in
the ICT sector was guided mainly by the Dubai Action Plan and
ITU Connect 2020 vision that resulted in the formulation and to
have risk of implementation of national broadband policy and
master plan and national ICT policy, 2015. Nepal's density as of
regional 2013 stands at 135% and data penetration stands at 61%.
We have started massive broadband deployment projects both of
Nepal backbone access networks. And the entire population is
expected to be covered by broadband access within the next two
years. We have focused on application sides of ICT by
implementing Government networking and automation eGovernment
master plan, National eHealth strategy, ICT in education master
plan to name a few. Despite immense challenges posed by the
topography and natural disasters, we are feeling the will of
Nepal by 2025. We are highly encouraged and inspired by the
support we have been receiving from ITU and other LLDCs. All of
us have accepted ICT broadband as a means and catalyst for
overall deployment and particularly achieving the Sustainable
Development Goals set by the United Nations. This is the reason
that broadband has taken the central states in the Development
Agenda of every nations.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to bring to the serious
attention of the Delegates of this conference on the following
seven important issues. Firstly without reinventing the wheel,
should be able to utilize the use of very valuable balance and
wisdom that ITU produce. Of course, we can customize this
knowledge to sort without one requirement.

Secondly, all the commitments we have made to meet the
rural telecommunication ICT targets to ITU Connect 2020 vision.
SIS actually aligns and (inaudible), Dubai Action Plan and also
other reasons real and international Forums should translate in
to excellence. It is my understanding that larger scale
initiatives may be effective and sustainable with and is led by
Governments and driven by private sectors. Thirdly, the digital
divide that invest in multiple dimension spinning across issues,

such as accessibility, viability, affordability, and need to be addressed through specifically designed policy and regulatory interventions market pressure do not work all the times.

Fourthly, cost in the whole of the Government has to be onboarded and adopting and ICT strategy and application flow in the Sustainable Development Goals while ensuring -- while ensuring interoperability and optimal use of the resources. All of ICT agenda and commitments in national, regional and international levels should be connected to the development goals to the international label, should be connected to the development goals, to garner political support in the respective countries and also in regional and international label. Our experiences tell us that while many in Government (inaudible) WSIS, the (inaudible) were not (inaudible).

In the case of these deployment countries, landlocked development countries and small island development states, the cost of the international bandwidth is a serious concern with the whole leaders should find some solution to make international internal bandwidth to these countries in the price that is available in the developed countries. Finally, cybersecurity is becoming a serious issue even in the Developing Countries, ITU in partnership with many of those agencies to design special programs of capacity building in ensuring cybersecurity in the Developing Countries.

Mr. Chairman, I have the full confidence that this conference will be about to tell reasons from the past and future cost of action to ensure that. The ICT and the broadband be -- broadband be not only a flourishing industry supported by the entire ecosystem but also an event and means for -- means for meeting people's aspirations for sustainable development. Before I close let me wish you all a successful and meaningful conference. Thanks once again.
(Applause.)

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Mohan Bahadur Basnet. We now invite His Excellency, Emery Okundji Ndjovu, Minister of Post Telecommunications, new information and communication and technologies from the Democratic Republic of Congo to take the floor.

>> EMERY OKUNDJI NDJOVU: Chairman, Excellencies, Ministers and Vice Ministers, and Secretary-General, Government representatives, director of the ITU Telecommunications Bureau, Telecommunications Development Bureau, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a great pleasure for me to represent the Democratic Republic of Congo at this World Telecommunications Development Conference. Focused on embracing ICTs for sustainable development goals. Information and communication technologies have become nowadays a true driver of growth for our economies

and having an inclusive influence on all sectors. Trade, agriculture, finance, health, education, et cetera.

The Democratic Republic of Congo under the leadership of the President of the Republic, the head of state, His Excellency, Joseph Cabenga has already begun using ICTs as a crucial driver of its socioeconomic development.

And it is with this in mind that we have for several years been implementing a vast program to build basic telecommunications infrastructure, principally for information transport. And our aim is to reach 31,000 kilometers of fiber optic backbone to cover our national territory. The one goal, the form of the legal framework in the Parliament should allow us to further open the telecommunications market to competition and to safeguard the security of private and foreign investment in this sector. The opportunity of this conference to call on all interested investors to come to the Democratic Republic of Congo to support the Government in its work to develop information and communication technologies. The DRC which is similar to that of Argentina, 2 million 345,409 square kilometers and a population estimated at almost 80 million inhabitants offers a number of business opportunities. And the Government is prepared to facilitate administrative tax and customs formalities for investors for the import of ICT equipment and terminals. I recently reiterated this commitment to mobile telephone operators who have met under the initiative of the GSA as a workshop on spectrum management.

Ladies and Gentlemen, these efforts will lead to nothing if we do not allow our populations to have easy access to information and communication technology.

In this regard the Government is intending to organize education and awareness raising campaigns, particularly for deprived people in rural and remote areas and also within schools.

My ministry with the support of the international organization of the (inaudible) has organized a successful media Hackathon at the beginning of this month. The aim of this was to insight youth entrepreneurship through the use of ICTs based on local languages and content.

In the near future we plan to establish an incubator to support Congolese young people in developing ICT services which are adapted to the local context.

Outside the cause of the organization of the Fongo fund, we would call on the capacity building and experience, sharing of experiences and would ask the Governmental and Nongovernmental Organizations to not to hesitate to support us in this. In closing I would like to thank the ITU and above all sincerely thank your country, Argentina, for the warm welcome it has shown

us and legendary hospitality and also for so successfully organizing this conference. Thank you.
(Applause.)
     >> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister Emery Okundji Ndjovu. I would now like to invite Her Excellency Ms. Begum Tarana Halim, state Minister of posts and information technology of Bangladesh to take the floor.
     >> BEGUM TARANA HALIM: Thank you. I would like to thank Argentina for their warm hospitality and ITU for their continuous support.
     Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Excellencies, we all know that ICT and telecommunication are key enablers in achieving the SDGs. ICT can dramatically reduce the uptake of SDGs supporting technology and services, speed and scale of ICT uptake, reduce public costs, growth of public awareness, low cost digital training. Digital Bangladesh is an integral part of vision 2020-2021 lead by the Prime Minister which aims at introducing e-governance and ICT education, promoting ICT education development, attracting foreign investment and showing regional and international connectivity. The vision 2020-21 digital concept, five-year plan, seven-year plan is achieving international perspective. Some of the successful initiatives undertaken by the present Government are the UDCs. We have 5257 UDCs which are providing 116 public and private services which provided 5.7 million services and created entrepreneurs and 32.95 million U.S. dollars. UDCs has ensured that the underserved population have access to information and also different services offered by the Government. We have converted amongst 9886 post offices, 8500 post offices in to post e-centers which has created around 17,000 entrepreneurs. Also built post office infrastructure, maximum utilization can ensure digital literacy and entrepreneurship development and banking for unbanked population for rural areas and e-commerce. E-agriculture is promoting sustainable agriculture. We have successfully biometrically verified SIMs. And we have a national database. E-learning, ensuring inclusive and quality education for all. For example, multimedia classrooms and digital labs, teachers, free books for visually impaired ones and training teachers to create digital content. And e-Health initiatives like 24-hour mobile health care services which are available in district and subdistrict headquarters and hospitals and creating a peer group of adolescent girls to promote health and hygiene and ensuring access of marginalized population to health care.
     As most of the countries our upcoming priorities are also cybersecurity, implementation of multi-stakeholders approach in achieving the SDGs infrastructure, investment and innovation. We have 200 cable connectivity and four international story cable

and we have laid 70,000 kilometer of optical fiber and soon having our own communication satellite.

We actually wanted to make Internet more affordable and with a view to this well, keeping this in mind we have actually reduced the price of bandwidth significantly and as a result we have seen a massive boost in data consumption. For example, our domestic data consumption was only 0 in 2006 and gone up 40% in 2017 and broadband penetration was 0 in 2009 and gone up 20% in 2007. Though our targets are 100% density, 65% Internet penetration including 40% broadband penetration. To increase Smartphone penetration in the country the Government has recently allowed tax exemption and nominal tax has been imposed and I have before coming I integrate the first Smartphone manufacturing plant in Bangladesh. So attract foreign LDI Bangladesh Government has investment friendly policies. It is working in innovation sector of the Government's digital Bangladesh vision and they have so far 12 women focused and 13 women led innovation projects which is one-third of the total innovation projects undertaken.

At the same time before concluding my speech let's give importance to elderly -- life expectancy increasing. We have a huge elderly population and we cannot leave them behind. We have been a member since 1973. We are tested, trusted and it is a long friendship. We have been elected by you for as a Council member since 2010. And we hope to continue our journey with you in the future. Thank you. Thank you all.

(Applause.)

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Minister Begum Taran Halim. We'd now like to invite His Excellency Mr. Afamasaga Lepuiai Rico Tupai, Minister of Communications and Information Technology of Samoa to take the floor.

>> AFAMASAGA LEPUIAI RICO TUPAI: Your Excellencies, Mr. Chairman, Honorable Ministers, Excellencies, heads of Delegations, Ladies and Gentlemen, from beautiful Samoa and I bring you warm greetings from the Government of Samoa. It is indeed an honor for me to attend my first ITU WTDC conference since becoming Minister in March 2016. In this lovely city of Buenos Aires, I wish to acknowledge your sincere gratitude, kind hospitality accorded to by the Government officials and the people of Argentina. Muchos gracias.

Let me emphasize the cooperation and standing together as small island developing states and LDCs and LLDCs and sharing resources, financially even in areas of policies and regulations, et cetera. That I believe is our only way we can keep up with this fast changing role of information technology.

Currently in Samoa our international needs are served through the private submarine cable but with limited capacity,

satellite capacity is also our own option both of which are very expensive for us. In 2015 we formed a public/private partnership with three telecom operators and three public institutions. And the company is now called Samoa Submarine Company, SSC. SSC together with the other small islands and World Bank and ADP equals our new submarine cable connected by Fiji and landing and to be connected in 2017. And cost is expected it be reduced dramatically by more than 50% with unlimited capacity for the next 25 years.

    With assistance from the government of New Zealand and Asian Development Bank equals our new submarine and to be commissioned in December 2018 regarding restoration for us and the first cable connectivity for the other three small island nations. Cost is expected to be reduced with much more capacity. Fortunately in the beginning of 2017 two trans-Pacific cable giants hearing about our brands now want to coin and land cables in Samoa. We are expecting to have four submarine cables by 2022 of which we wouldn't have had if we were to do it alone. But it is possible when we work together in harmony with other small islands developing states and our partners.

    Our island will be a submarine cable hub 2022 and the world is now looking in. ICT companies are now inquiring about setting up in Samoa and our people will have education, agriculture, and other areas of development. Our lives and our everyday living will never be the same again. But for prosperity. My point Ladies and Gentlemen, together we are better.

    Finally I thank the Secretary-General for facilitating this WTDC where we can share our experiences and successes as well as challenges of our areas that need to be addressed with appropriate actions to be taken. I thank ITU-D for the continuing technical assistance given to assist LDCs and LLDCs especially in building capacity and knowledge of our telecom and ICT staff to facilitate our digital transformation. Muchos Gracias.
(Applause.)
    >> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister Afamasaga Lepuiai Rico Tupai. I would now like to invite Her Excellency Ms. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful, communications of Ghana to take the floor.
    >> URSULA OWUSU-EKUFUL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary-General of the ITU, Your Excellencies and Distinguished Colleagues, heads of Delegations, Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Republic of Ghana, let me convey our gratitude to the Government and people of Argentina for the kind hospitality and warm welcome accorded to me and my Delegation since our arrival in the beautiful and historic city of Buenos Aires. Thank you very much. We are delighted that you have the

pleasure and responsibility of leading this conference to adopt a strategy for the continuing global development and indeed guidance to the critical ITU Telecom development sector. We couldn't have chosen more capable hands and are confident that the successful completion of this meeting will attest to this choice. We also thank Mr. Brahima Sanou, director of BDT, for preparing for this historic conference which marks the 25th anniversary of the BDT. And we congratulate Secretary-General Mr. Houlin Zhao and Mr. Malcolm Johnson.

The theme of the conference demonstrates the cross-cutting nature of our sector which is indispensable for accelerating efforts for all sectors in human endeavor, poverty reduction, job creation, women's empowerment and the list is endless. The President of Ghana, His Excellency, is the current co-Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Goals advocacy group and he sends his thanks to the ITU for the adoption of this theme for the conference. He is anxiously awaiting the outcome of the conference and counting on even greater cooperation and collaboration with the ITU to facilitate the only realization of the SDGs.

Mr. Chairman, 12 years ago as a managing director of the second telecommunication operator in Ghana, I was the only woman in a room of Telco CEOs. Today when the CEOs of telecom operators meet there is only one man in the room. And the rest are all females. (Applause).

I am elated to notice that the gender divide in telecommunications are closing slowly. Countless numbers in senior management positions in the industry and young women engineers and tech professionals are preparing to take over the reigns. Hopefully our numbers can only increase. I salute any Ghana sisters and you brave men who dare to be different. As we mark the 60th anniversary of the independence of Ghana this year, our new governor sworn in January -- it is digital time in Ghana. This slogan demonstrates our prioritization of ICT and its use as an enabler of socioeconomic development in recognition of the crucial contribution of ICTs to the realization of the SDGs. The Government of Ghana through the Ministry of Communications is kindly developing our robust framework to support our digitization efforts. With widespread broadband infrastructure in the country and international bandwidth provided by five submarine optic fiber cables. Ghana's population of about 28 million people has over 20 Internet service providers and average download speed of 4.78 megabits per second. We intend to scale up our universal access program to ensure that we narrow or even close the digital divide and drive down the cost of accessing data. We are establishing a network of connected community information centers and

modernized post offices to serve as e-services centers and bring Government closer to the people. We are implementing an e-commerce program and this covers all sectors of administration in health, education, business and finance and immigration and environmental monitoring. And to demonstrate our resolve within nine months of taking office the Government has launched the state of the art 12- digit biometric national I.D. card enhanced with new technologies, including tactile and elements for the visually impaired and e-passport and payment applications. And we have launched the national digital property addressing system which was developed locally which maps out every five square meters of our territory and taxes digitally and providing a unique digital address linked to post codes.

The introduction of a paperless port integrated e-immigration system, e-procurement, Parliament, justice, e-cabinet and smart web cases among other initiatives which are all at various stages of implementation. Development of an interoperability framework to integrate Government databases and a system to link electronic payment platforms and scale up mobile money usage all represents significant milestones in Ghana's journey to digitization and this is only the beginning. In an effort to support the vibrant local -- we set up an ICT incubator hub which is also home to state of the art grade A plug and play, commercial office space for ICT businesses and business process outsourcing. We are developing ICT parks to promote entrepreneurships and enhance ICT research and development. Our aim is to encourage the transfer of knowledge and development of human resource capacity to meet the increasing digital demands of the country and boost youth and employment. As we become increasingly dependent on the use of ICTs, we are scaling up our cybersecurity efforts, working with stakeholders across the country and internationally to build resilience and ensure we are operating in safe cyberspaces and enacting policies to protect our children online. We are holding a cybersecurity weekend from 23rd October this year to continue the dialogue. And you are all cordially invited. However, much as we try to protect ourselves our efforts will be fruitless without a robust international legal regime to address the continuing threats of cybercrime and cyber enabled crimes.

We need something akin to a Geneva Convention against cybercrime to protect us all from cybercriminals and people who threaten our collective cyber peace and security. We cannot develop in isolation and we support all efforts that connecting and linking up our subregion and the continent at large. We are proud of the work done by the ITU over the years. Humbled by our membership of Council and seek your support to continue serving on the Council to work together to build a better interconnected

world.

As the Secretary-General said yesterday we are stronger together. Mr. Chairman, we come in solidarity with the membership of the ITU and are committed to addressing the needs of our people. And in this regard we support all actions to improve access to broadband and address cybersecurity issues and build conformance and interoperability structures. We trust the proposals to be deliberated upon here and also consider the mobilization of resources for the development sector and indeed the ITU. You can count on Ghana's support. And I thank you Mr. Chairman. Wish you all a successful conference.
(Applause.)

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Ms. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful. I would now like to invite His Excellency, Mr. Lihua Liu, Vice Minister of Industry and Information Technology of China to take the floor.

>> LIHUA LIU: Honorable Chairman, Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, Director Lee, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, good afternoon. It is a great pleasure for me to come to the beautiful city of Buenos Aires to attend this conference. First and foremost on behalf of the Chinese Delegation I would like to express my warm sense to add you and our host for the excellent organization and hospitality. ICT has grown in to an important driver for this, the sustainable economic and social development. Within the UN system Development Agenda 2030 is being launched we are convened here to discuss how ICTs can be more widely applied to promote the socioeconomic development under the same ICT for SDG. It is just the right timing and could have a far reaching impact on the future. The Chinese Government has committed to promoting the development of ICTs.

By August 2017 we have registered over 270 million FTTx subscribers. Accounting for 80% of the total broadband users. The number of base stations has exceeded 3 million providing service to 930 million efforts. We have -- expand the coverage of universal telecom services. The Chinese Government is promoting the Digital Economy and the size of which has reached 22.6 trillion in 2016, contributing over 30% to the overall GDP.

Ladies and Gentlemen, today ICTs and industrial revolution continue to evolve and ICT has become a vital driving force for optimizing economic structure and promoting economic goals. Taking this opportunity I would like to make three proposals on leveraging ICTs to promote sustainable development. To continue to push forward the construction of information, infrastructure and speed up migration and upgrade towards Article fibers and networks. And to actively promote the development of Digital Economy to share experiences and to innovate applications with

ICTs, promote the transformation of economy and society and improve their well-being for other citizens. We hope ITU, the sector in particular could continue to strengthen your work and ICT application and statistics and ensure, continue to coordinate the strength of its Member States to an open and sharing development landscape. We call on other Member States to strengthen our support from ITU.

This year China will increase the contributor units from 14 to 20 and request 6 units. We are ready to continue to partner with all other Member States to support ITU in seeking converged space and innovative development of global ICTs and to contribute in building a global Information Society and realizing 2030 sustainable development goals. On that note I wish the conference a complete success. Thank you for your attention.

(Applause.)

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Minister Lihua Liu. Before we continue I would like to ask the interpreters if we can continue for a few more minutes. Ten more minutes.

>> Yes, that's fine.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much to the interpreters. I would now like to ask the next speaker His Excellency, Mr. Elmir Velizadeh, Deputy Minister of Transport, Communications, and High Technologies of Azerbaijan to take the floor.

>> ELMIR VELIZADEH: Honorable Chairman, His Excellency, Secretary-General, Excellencies, dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to express our appreciation to ITU and the Argentina Government for its successful organization of this conference. It is a great pleasure for me to be here and share with you our vision on the role of ICT in achieving Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs. Numerous discussions of this topic prove that we're confident about ICT's essential role in achievement of SDGs. ICT is indeed considering it as a fundamental base for development of our global society. In many countries ICTs serve as the main accelerator of economic growth and social inclusion and environmental sustainability which are pillars for the sustainable development. ICT was directly appointed as an essential tool for four SDGs which include increasing quality of education, gender equality, industry, innovation and infrastructure. And partnership of -- for the goals as means implementation of these goals. ICT can definitely improve people's lives in many spheres, especially through education, skills development and innovation. In ICT in achieving SDGs, excuse me, in investing in ICT in coming years is highly important for progress in achieving SDGs which also means investment of -- in the SDGs.

Azerbaijan determined its own approach in the realization

of SDGs and state condition and chaired -- of Deputy Minister has created for those purposes. The government has adopted the state program on implementation of SDGs which targeted also the development of ICT sector and innovative development of the country.

We also think SDGs is a remarkable tool in improving our future activities. By investing in its development we will achieve the great impact towards helping Governments to a build more sustainable world.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to especially indicate the role of ITU as a special UN agency on ICT which clearly defines the role of ICT on SDGs. Such position assists us on a national level and subpart on international level. I believe that we can meet SDGs only by establishing this gap between Governments, industries with international organization and among the other stakeholders within our countries. Thank you for your attention. (Applause.)

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Minister Elmir Velizadeh. I would now like to invite His Excellency, Mr. Pansak Siriruchatapong, Vice Minister of Digital Economy of Thailand to take the floor.

>> PANSAK SIRIRUCHATAPONG: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman. And ITU Secretary-General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Ministry of International Digital Economy of Thailand I am given the honor to participate in the BDT team. Through the role of our little economy as we call the digital Thailand, as a key mechanism preparing Thailand's little transformation, the Thai Government has made substantial progress in the critical project of ICT infrastructure development called (inaudible). That plan to roll out fiber optic broadband infrastructure, including free WiFi to all 25,000 villages nationwide. We emphasize everywhere in Thailand by the end of next year. This enabled all Thai Committees to get access to ICT and reduce disparity by helping (inaudible) additional income of this data infrastructure. Local villages have been provided digital skills and encouraged to sell their product and service online to e-commerce platform. This will help generate about 9,000 U.S. dollars per year.

These are affordable and reliable digital infrastructure. The Thai Government will carry out the community digital center project. Clearly we have 2280 community digital centers have been established nationwide. Governmental services, this center offers a facility for access, open online process and space for working, learning and various activities.

The Thai Government has also played an active role in increasing Thai citizens' quality of life. But the top priority project is (inaudible). That aims to enhance public health

through digital technology and innovation. In addition in order to boost ICT and innovation given the economy of the country, the Thai Government has also embarked on a number of initiatives, including youths', citizens' startups to take advantage of digital technologies and innovation. Thereby strengthening the digital capability and skill which allows them to broaden their (inaudible) and update their digital connectiveness. Furthermore, the Thai government is moving forward to establish digital pack Thailand. Advances in technologies and build investment for digital innovation as specified in the Government e-commerce corridor policy, through a public/private partnership.

Our work in the ranks of (inaudible) ICT and digital innovation become fundamental as a labor of development and enable to practically -- and indicate airports to sustainable and inclusive code. However, success in appealing the (inaudible) SDG it is not easy as I thought. Multi-stakeholder collaboration, multi-issue coordination should be reinforced together to enable the potential of digital technology and consequently access the sustainability and possibility. Thank you very much.
(Applause.)

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Vice Minister. I would now like to invite Her Excellency, Ms. Tembisa Ndabeni-Abrahams, Deputy Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services in South Africa.

>> TEMBISA NDABENI-ABRAHAMS: Allow me to take this opportunity to offer congratulations to you on your election as chairperson of the conference. We are indeed confident that we are incapable and in good hands. We also express our heartfelt -- successfully convening this conference in advance. Ladies and Gentlemen, the theme of this conference is very much aligned to our national development plan 2030 as well as the African union agenda of 2063. That of building an Information Society and knowledge based economy to drive inclusive growth for all nations. We all know that ICTs and broadband in particular have the potential to transform sectors and accelerate progress thereby bringing us closer to achieve the SDGs. Over the two weeks we will identify SDGs but also promote digital inclusion, accessibility, gender and capacity building so that nations become more equal.

As the African region we call on the ITU and all international partners to put more resources and programs to ensure equitable access to development and innovation. In South Africa for the 8% of our citizens which is an estimate of 22 million people, and not yet connected to Internet. Through our national Government priorities such as the nine point plan, the

broadband national policy we are implementing strategies to ensure maximum social and economic inclusion focusing on digital skills as well as supporting business, youth and women on digital entrepreneurship in order to minimize the digital divide and ensure radical transformation through wider active participation in the Digital Economy. In May this year we adopted the Internet for all initiative which seeks to address matters and barriers to universal Internet access through partnerships, coordination and collaboration between public, private, multilateral and non-profit organizations.

Honorable Chairperson, South Africa views the Internet as important and integral to registering socioeconomic inequalities. WTDC-17 is expected to provide the world with a new paradigm and alternative vision for increased infrastructure and local content and skills development.

Distinguished Guests, October has been dedicated as a cybersecurity month. And provide resources, so that citizens can protect themselves online through education and sharing of good practices. And in South Africa we are happy to announce that we have a national policy and established cybersecurity hub which provides information, increased awareness on cybersecurity as to encourage South African citizens and organizations to be secure online.

My dear brothers and sisters, to ensure maximum effectiveness of this goal we are encouraging you to strengthen international cooperation on the basis of framework established within the remit of the ITU. So Chairman, South Africa remains committed to contributing to the work of this union and we are representing candidature for the ITU conference during the Plenipotentiary Conference in the UAE in 2018. And we seek your support in this regard. We look forward to cooperating with the ITU -- outcomes to -- regions and global community. Together we can move the world forward. Thank you in advance.
(Applause.)

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Vice Minister, Deputy Minister. Given the time I would like to ask you that we continue this session beginning at 2:30 in the next meeting. And we will follow the order in which the Ministers have already been called to speak. And then we will need to continue with other activities. So I would invite you to come back at 2:30. And I would ask us all to bear in mind the time limits. I would like to give the floor to the Secretariat for some announcements.

>> SECRETARIAT: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Just two announcements, the Government of China is inviting all heads of Delegations plus one person to a reception at Calima Adventis. That's a two-minute walk outside the Hilton. The map

is attached to the invitation. There is a gift from Ghana for heads of Delegations to be taken at the gifts distribution desk in the second basement. And as you said we start with the high level segment at 2:30 at this room. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

    >> CHAIR: Thank you very much. With these announcements and once again we thank the authorities who have spoken and this meeting is adjourned.

    (Session concluded at 12:46 p.m. ART)