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PARTNER2CONNECT

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>> FIONA NARINGWA: Good afternoon. Good afternoon, everyone. That is much, much better. We will begin the opening program very, very shortly. And I'd also like to mention that a special guest will be joining us. So when he is making his way, I will kindly ask you to join me in welcoming him. But for now settle in and I will be back shortly when we begin.

(Pause).

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Esteemed guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, help me in welcoming our guest today, Mr. Xavier Bettel, the Prime Minister of Luxembourg who is joining us this afternoon. Give him a warm welcome as he joins us this afternoon. We may all kindly take our seats.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the opening session of the Partner2Connect digital development Round Table. Before we begin, let's watch together the cut and raise video for P2C.

(Video).

>> To help countries rapidly expand connectivity, to reach the 2.9 billion people who are still offline. In coordination with the office of the

Secretary-General's envoy on technology, and in line with the UN Secretary-General's roadmap for digital cooperation, the Digital Coalition is a multi-stakeholder alliance to foster meaningful connectivity in the hardest to connect communities with the focus on but not limited to Least Developed Countries, landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

Based on the principles of inclusion, partnership and SDG focused digital development, Partner2Connect will serve as a leadership platform to mobilize new resources, partnerships, and commitments across four focus areas. Access, connecting people everywhere, adoption, empowering communities, value creation, building digital ecosystems, and accelerate, incentivizing investment. Time is running out in this Decade of Action. We must join forces now and work together to extend universal access and empower the billions of people who are still offline to make use of digital connectivity, to transform lives, communities and societies.

Visit www.itu.int/Partner2Connect.

(Applause.)

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Once again a very warm welcome to each and every one of you. For those joining us who are following these sessions as they are being streamed out to the world, my name is Fiona Naringwa. I'm a senior producer at CNBC Africa. I have the great pleasure to introduce to you our distinguished speakers who will be opening the P2C development Round Table. Help me welcome them. By a round of applause as we welcome Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, the director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau as she makes her way to the stage. A round of applause.

Help me welcome the Honorable Paula Ingabire, she is the Minister of information communication technology and innovation Rwanda.

(Applause.)

>> FIONA NARINGWA: We also have Ms. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, the assistant Secretary-General, UNDESA and acting envoy, United Nations office of Secretary-General technology envoy. We also have Ms. Juliana Novaes, Generation Connect Visionaries board member.

(Applause.)

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Let me give the floor first to Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin to deliver her opening remarks. The floor is yours, Ms. Doreen.

>> DOREEN BOGDAN-MARTIN: Thank you. Thank you so much Fiona. Good afternoon and welcome to this opening of Partner2Connect digital development Round Table series. It is an honor for me, of course, to share the stage today with Minister Paula Ingabire, who is our host of the WTDC and who has been a strong partner since the very begin of Partner2Connect as well as my friend and colleague, Maria-Francesca joining us from New York, Assistant Secretary-General and acting tech envoy. She

has believed in Partner2Connect from its very early days. I'm happy she can be here with us today to see it be formally launched. And I'm also here with Juliana Novaes. We had the pleasure of being together last year for our generation connection Global Youth Summit. Youth has been at the core of partner connect from the very beginning. I'm so happy she can be here with us to share some of the thoughts and views from the young people who have made a pledge to Partner2Connect.

Yesterday when we opened the World Telecommunication Development Conference, we launched the first ever global connectivity report. That report showed that the number of Internet users went from a few million to 5 billion over a 30-year period. But what the report focuses on is the potential of digital connectivity and how that actually remains largely untapped. Why? Well, that's why we are here. Because 2.9 billion people have never ever used the Internet. And, of course, among those that we count as actually being online, hundreds of millions of them do not have sufficient connectivity, speed, cost, content, skills to actually make an impact in their lives. So this new global connectivity report zooms in on meaningful connectivity that we believe is the global imperative for this last Decade of Action before we need to complete the SDGs.

The UN Secretary-General in his digital cooperation roadmap and in his our common agenda has recognized connectivity as a basic fundamental Foundational element to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. This is the perfect time, the perfect time for us to move from vision and collective will to real action.

In this spirit last fall on the margins of the General Assembly we launched Partner2Connect. Partner2Connect is a multi-stakeholder alliance. Its action-oriented and it is all about fostering meaningful connectivity and digital transformation in the hardest to connect communities. So we're focusing largely but not exclusively is on LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs.

Together with our knowledge partner and I want to recognize the Boston consulting group, BCG and our 19 focus area leaders, many of which are in this room and with the support of over 200 organizations that constituted our Working Groups, we have been working since last September to flush out a very comprehensive action framework. An action framework that we believe will help us to achieve those four focus areas. Our pledging platform which was launched in March seeks to mobilize new resources, new partnerships of course. And commitments across access adoption, value creation and accelerated investments.

We also successfully conducted a series of web dialogues, starting in Katowice moving to New York, to Geneva. We had panelists from around the globe joining us and thousands and thousands of people who came to some of our physical sessions as well as our remote sessions. They have been working for what we're going to be unveiling over the next two and a half days here in Kigali. The digital Round Tables that we are kicking off

today are a real milestone for the ITU. We have a multi-stakeholder group gathering together through this Round Table dialogue. I'm happy to share that last week when I arrived in Kigali, we had close to 200 pledges. I was thrilled.

But today we are up to 250 pledges which I think is astounding. I am hopeful to see even more before we conclude Partner2Connect on Thursday. Our program will not only show case and celebrate our current and new Partner2Connect pledges in our ten High-Level Panels but it will also bring attention to specific digital development topics. We have five specific spotlight sessions. So I encourage you also to join those spotlight sessions. We also have our P2C corner, our Partner2Connect corner where you can sit down with some of our partners, learn about what they are committing to and how your company can benefit from their pledges. I want to thank you again for being here with us in Kigali. I want to also thank those of you that are joining us online. Because Ladies and Gentlemen, every pledge counts.

Every pledge is a step forward in our dream of universal meaningful connectivity for all. I wish you all a successful Partner2Connect experience, successful Round Tables, and many memorable moments here in Kigali and many meaningful opportunities to Partner2Connect. Thank you so much. And back to you, Fiona.

(Applause.)

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Thank you so much, Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, for opening the floor for us. I would like to invite Ms. Spatolisano who is joining us online to share her remarks with us as well. Hello. We can see you.

>> MARIA-FRANCESCA SPATOLISANO: Thank you. Thank you very much. Yes. The technician unmuted me. Excellencies, distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm really honored to be here today to address this distinguished gathering in Kigali. Addressing digital in all its dimensions is one of the defining challenges of our times. Our experience during COVID has made even more stark our reliance on ICTs and thus the urgent feed with which the international community must come together to provide global steerage. The WTDC and the important work that you are doing is thus integral to advancing global digital cooperation. Indeed the recommendations of the Secretary-General's roadmap for digital cooperation on global connectivity digital inclusion, and digital capacity building are based on and closely aligned with your objectives and efforts. The office of the Secretary-General's envoy of technology has also been grateful for its close partnership with the International Telecommunications Union. And as Doreen said we work since the beginning.

The United Nations is now prepared for the proposed global digital compact as mentioned by the UN Secretary-General in his remarks. Your discussions and the Kigali action plan will be essential. In particular the work of the partners to connect coalition will bring us closer towards our

collective goal of universal meaningful connectivity for all.

I look forward to discussing the compact at tomorrow's spotlight session as well as the informal consultations on the compact on the 9th of June. And I wish you a very successful conference. Thank you.

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Thank you so much, Ms. Spatolisano. I would like to call upon Ms. Juliana Novaes for her remarks. The floor is yours.

>> JULIANA NOVAES: Ladies and Gentlemen, honorable Delegates, I'm very happy to be here representing the Generation Connect global visionaries board. In the past two years the COVID-19 has caused a sudden transition of our activities to the online world. And this has highlighted the great inequalities we still have in Internet distribution around the globe.

Young people were among those most affected by this. Especially those living in Developing Countries, where connectivity gaps do not allow them to access the Internet in affordable and inclusive conditions.

The ITU has taken several steps to overcome these gaps in the past year. An important one has been the effort to include young people in to the decision-making process which translates itself in the Generation Connect initiative. Another initiative has been Partner2Connect which aims to bring together different stakeholders to bridge the digital divide. But how do the two initiatives connect with each other? In the past week the Generation Connect Youth global Summit has come up with a Call To Action that expresses our hopes and wishes when it comes to connecting the unconnected and our role in this decision-making process.

This is where I believe Generation Connect and Partner2Connect relate with each other.

We need to work together to include young people and to connect the young people who still do not have access to the Internet in the world.

And the way to do so is through partnership and joint efforts. We do not want to be left behind. So we encourage you to consider the needs and the voices of young people during your participation at this WTDC. We kindly ask that your pledges in the Partner2Connect initiative address our needs. When you go back from this conference to your country that the policies that you develop at nation level also take in to consideration the voices of the youth.

So Ladies and Gentlemen, we from Generation Connect have a very simple request for you today. What we kindly ask of you is to become an ally of the youth in the effort to bridge the digital divide.

Please consider the needs of the young people in to the Resolutions that you support during this conference, and the pledges you present to Partner2Connect. The time is now. And the place is here. Let's get together and connect all the young people in the world. Thank you so much.

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Thank you. That sets pace for the discussions that will be held. Allow me to give the floor to Honorable Minister Paula Ingabire, Minister of communication technology and innovation Rwanda for her remarks. The floor is yours, Honorable Minister.

>> PAULA INGABIRE: Thank you very much. To the Prime Minister of Luxembourg and SG of ITU, Ladies and Gentlemen, good afternoon. We heard last year that universal connectivity underpins our country's collective and individual efforts. But we also know that no country, no company, no organization has the resources to achieve universal connectivity or the objective of universal connectivity on their own. We had the youth for the tough, after hitting her challenge but we've also heard that they want to be part and parcel of the policies of the programs that we are putting in place to close the digital divide gap.

What this means is that partnerships are key. We must work together, shoulder to shoulder if we are to achieve the outcomes we are seeking. The Partner2Connect Digital Coalition round table opens this opportunity to engage with each other to form formidable partnerships and that continue to move us forward towards the success that is closing the gaps.

Doreen just mentioned the 250 pledges that have been made today. And I want to heed your call Doreen this afternoon and make a pledge on behalf of Rwanda. Rwanda will increase the digital access and inclusion through investment in digital access enablers for underserved areas and groups. This including smart device affordability, financing skills as well as the local activity access schemes targeting offices, schools and hospitals and public areas. We will also work to help and support the vulnerable households to ensure that each household in the country owns at least a Smartphone.

There are at least 2.8 million households that need to be equipped with Smartphones by 2030. As we think about smart devices heeding the call of the youth representative we are also committing to connect all schools to ensure that all the students in schools have access to information, have access to devices that will allow them to engage in the hybrid mode of learning that we are seeing ourselves venture in to today. The second commitment is strengthening the digital I.D. ecosystem that will look at the national I.D., civil registration, supporting the expansion of service delivery in key sectors for all the online transactions.

And we intend to ensure that we have provided this digital I.D. infrastructure for at least 80% of our population by 2026. I'm looking forward to seeing how we as leaders can engage over the next few days to mobilize the resources, the partnerships, the commitments that are needed to achieve universal and meaningful connectivity for all. I'm also looking forward to seeing how the Partner2Connect Forum will position itself to support the implementation of the United Nations Secretary-General's roadmap for digital cooperation as well as the UN Secretary-General's

initiative or report.

Let us use this opportunity provided by Partner2Connect Forum, to create innovative new partnerships and to build on the success that has already been achieved.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Thank you Honorable Minister and thank you to all those speakers for opening this exciting and inaugural Partner2Connect digital development Round Table. We are looking ahead to three very exciting days of announcements and pledges to help us bring meaningful connectivity to everyone around the world. A round of applause as our speakers take their seats.

(Applause.)

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Distinguished audience, I invite to the stage His Excellency Prime Minister, Minister of State, Minister for communications and media, Minister for religious affairs, Minister for digitalization, and Minister for administrative reforms of the Grand Luci of Luxembourg to deliver his special message.

>> XAVIER BETTEL: Just for your information, I'm in government. I don't get everything. I have other colleagues. I would like to say thank you for being able to be here today. And allow me with a personal note to be -- I want to say thank you to Mr. Houlin Zhao for 36 years in the ITU and also I'm now Prime Minister for close to nine years and the good collaboration that we had together, I wanted to thank you for all you did. And I know that your wife is going to be happy that it is done.

(Applause.)

>> XAVIER BETTEL: So I just realized during the speeches that Juliana was on her phone to read the documents. Doreen was on a tablet. And Paula had also a tablet. This is something we wouldn't have done 15 years ago. And when we speak about the ITU, most of us we do not remember that the beginning of ITU was do-do-do-do. Today it means the microwave done its work. That was the beginning.

Where are we today? I'm happy if I'm right for the first time in the history an ITU world telecommunications development conference taking place in Africa. It is the first time if I'm right.

And on one hand, I have to tell you that usually Europeans we love to teach others. But I think that most of you don't know that, for example, here in Rwanda, they have no roaming existing with neighboring countries since longer than the EU. This is something we try to think that we were the first one. It was in 2017 in Europe. And Rwanda with four other countries did it. I want to quote that because very often we think in Africa are they so much they did it.

These are five countries, I don't know how the other countries are, and just when we speak about roaming and allow me to start with this because I

come from a continent where we have a war situation for the moment. And the first things that Ukrainians need when they come to another country is to be able to stay connected. As I told you before with the telegraph, today we stay connected. We want to get use. We want to get FaceTime. I remember when my parents sent me when I was a young guy on holidays, when I sent two postcards during two weeks they were happy. Now if I don't call in the first half an hour when I go somewhere to my mom to say that I arrived well she thinks something happened. So our life changed through telecommunications and we have to know how important the ITU is to be able to have all these work together.

When I speak about a digital life, we realize that digital is a huge opportunities. With tablets of our -- congratulations to have four women speaking to open. I like that.

(Applause.)

>> XAVIER BETTEL: And they spoke not because they were women, because their position. That's what I like. So the fact is when we speak about telecommunication, today we see all the opportunities. But we have also to be aware and I spoke just before about situation that we have in Ukraine also about Fake News. Something we have to prevent. If some of you are in politics or were in politics before, you remind a few years ago a call during morning at 10 o'clock and told you I need an information 'til 6 because after it goes to print. Now he calls you at 10 and he needs an answer at a quarter past 10 because he wants to first have the push news. Telecommunication changed our lives and through Fake News the fact to educate people.

We just came out of a COVID situation. Imagine COVID without digital? Imagine. I -- I was able to have my meetings through all these platforms. I don't want to quote one because then I will forget at least two. But so this was possible to work to do what we call also home working. We had the possibility to do education, to educate people also during COVID crisis. And so this was also a very important step in that direction.

And the lessons learned in fact, from the COVID crisis come forward to me in my vision of a continuous and virtual position, my country as one of the most digital societies in the world. Because it means also resilience through our networks.

And we have prepared without knowing it to this situation by building up connectivity in our countries. Let me say a few words on the instruments through which Luxembourg helps.

The society opened the satellite SOS is one of the biggest leaders in satellite communication and also an ITU sector member.

As providing satellite connectivity solutions to institutions, Governments, schools and hospitals but also enterprises, for example, in energy, also in banking as well international organizations, like the UN agencies, all over Africa, using two constellations of satellite. This means to contribute to

meaningful connectivity.

This company also has partnered with the telecom operator to provide high capacity solutions in several African countries with its new MoU system called O3B and power. It stands for the other three billions of people who are still not connected today.

On that topic also we -- and I really appreciate that President of UNICEF and the ITU and that we try to understand that today not being connected during the COVID crisis, imagine no education, for example, no right to be educated. And we have to be careful that connectivity is not something just for the happy few living in capitals, or in cities, or for young people. We should avoid that at the end we get a gap between people living in villages, in small places or for older people.

There is another instrument which underscores our drive to provide meaningful connectivity to communities also everywhere. The e-Health platform that is a cloud-based platform that the Luxembourg government has brought to life. It provides in regions that are far away from communication infrastructure. These enable mobile health solutions and better communication in order to connect also hospitals in far away places, all through the satellite connectivity enabled bodies company. In the north of Bangladesh, the satellite platform is used by health professionals in floating hospitals and terrestrial hospitals NGO. In Nigeria we were on an official visit yesterday, the health professionals use the satellite platform to establish communications with national and international medical doctors. They are always up to date and can increase their situational awareness. This is another clear example of an instrument that helps to develop Partner2Connect policy goals. Dear Honorable guests, Excellencies I have had the great honor to speak here in Kigali world development conference. We believe in the ITU mission. We stand behind the Partner2Connect policy goal and we want to become the partner you need in order to build and enable meaningful connectivity.

We believe that being connected is today not only the fact that you can have a call, it is a right to get health, it is a right to get school, it is a right to be able to get information. It is a right to defend. It is a right to inform, it is a right to be informed. So don't reduce it just to connectivity. Don't forget, this should never replace human relations. I -- the last time this was a nightmare. I have been for Valentine's Day. I don't know if you celebrate Valentine's day in all of the countries. The neighboring table they were doing picture of food and posting them on Facebook and commenting about likes or comments that one or the other had. I wish you on the 14th of February to switch off your phone. Thank you.

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Thank you so much, Excellency, Prime Minister for your remarks. Ladies and Gentlemen, this concludes this session. But please do remain seated for the departure of our special guests. The next session which will be the first out of the 10 high level

panels with commence immediately after. Once again, thank you so much Your Excellency for making time to be with us today. A round of applause as His Excellency, the Prime Minister departs.

(Applause.)

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Ladies and Gentlemen, we are going to continue with the program today. It gives me a great pleasure to invite the speakers for the first panel. Robert Opp. A round of applause as our speakers make their way to the stage.

(Applause.)

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Okay. Robert, I guess it is now over to you.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you. I'm afraid we are not doing as well in the gender balance on this panel. The Honorable Minister from South Africa seems to be representing that side of humanity right now. Although we have a couple of speakers online as well. So welcome, everyone to this first High-Level Panel for the Partner2Connect digital Round Table. My name is Robert Opp. I'm the chief digital officer for the United Nations Development Programme. And I will be moderating the panel today. UNDP is honored to be part of Partner2Connect coalition. We have been part of the leadership of the focus areas and see this as catalyzing a global movement towards digital inclusion and in fact, I see this especially in the last couple of days being here, this is more than the coalition. This is a community.

And so I really want to congratulate Doreen Bogdan-Martin, the ITU team, and all who really have put this together because it is a spectacular gathering of people who are active in this space. So the high level panels as part of the agenda are really designed to give a platform where people can make announcements about the pledges that they have made.

And so it is really about making those 250 pledges that Doreen talked about, making them real. So we are going to hear from each speaker about the pledges they are making towards the coalition. A little bit of ground rules. Speakers have three minutes each. I am told that when three minutes is up there will be some soft music that increasingly becomes louder. It is kind of like the Oscars speeches or something. Be prepared for that. Apologies in advance if the music or I need to interrupt you for the purpose of time as we have so many speakers. These microphone are a bit distance sensitive. Make sure they are in front of your mouth as much as possible. For those from my Anglophone Canadian background, if I mispronounce your names, apologies in advance. The first speaker that will be mentioning their pledge, Her Excellency, Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies of the Republic of South Africa, Ms. Khumbudzo Ntshavheni.

>> KHUMBUDZO NTSHAVHENI: Your Excellencies, it is an honor to join this Partner2Connect session. South Africa is implementing a broadband connectivity drive through a program we call South Africa easy connect. The goal of easy connect to ensure that South Africans have

access to the Internet by 2024. It is driven through four initiatives. One is social obligations, linked to the successful option of the spectrum which do not only raise one billion dollars. But they will not spend less than 17 billion dollars to connect schools, library, government service centers and traditional authorities by end of June 2025. And secondly is connecting Government by ensuring our Government sites are connected by March 2024. And this is critical for a program to digitalize Government and the digitalization of Government aims to have 80% of our citizens facing services to be online by 2025 with a Government planning to go paperless by end of March 2023. The third driver is the connecting communities, by connecting over the 53,000 community hot spots that will provide Internet access to more than 5.8 million households.

Offloading mobile data traffic from fixed broadband. There is a growing need for ITU to consider more protection of spectrum use for WiFi services. The broadband connectivity program will be emerging through medium and small enterprises. Our intention to create a new technology industry. And for this program the government of South Africa will invest over 161 million dollars over the 36 month period. And the fourth is satellite for communication services to enhance the reach of our broadband connectivity. And South Africa is ready to launch its own satellite. It will address broadband and connectivity issues. It will be complimented by a robust program. And to enable this we will shut down 2G and 3G networks over the same period. And this will commence with a prohibition of importation of distribution in South Africa of 2G devices. Distinguished Delegates, the most fundamental requirement for a digital world is access to broadband connectivity irrespective of geographic location. For this reason that we seek your support for re-election in to the ITU council and to the radio regulatory board. Thank you.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you, Your Excellency. Those are very broad ranging and ambitious commitments. Fantastic.

Our next speaker is going to join us by video, live video. His Excellency, Mr. Khashayar Farmanbar, who is the Minister for Energy and Digital Development of Sweden. The floor is yours.

>> KHASHAYAR FARMANBAR: Thank you. I'm impressed by your pronunciation. It is a pleasure to participate. As we all know the potential of digital technologies is enormous. It creates opportunities for societies to grow and prosper, while giving individuals easier access to information and education when the right conditions are in place.

So bridging the digital divide is one of the main challenges of our time. The global digital divide must be bridged in order to realize the full potential of the digital transformation. It is an important step towards global equality, and cohesion which benefits us all.

Through our telecom regulator, Sweden is currently involved in a capacity building program in Sub-Saharan Africa. Over the past six years,

the Swedish post and Telecom Authority and spider project with Stockholm University has contributed to capacity building in more than 30 countries. We support regulators in supporting their capacity targets while engaging in discussions of joint challenges at the same time. Sweden pledges to work actively to connect the unconnected by enhancing and expanding our capacity building program in Sub-Saharan Africa for the coming five years with the help of spider and telecom regulators. Will focus on ITU regulation in cooperation with other Member States and regulators. Will also continue to strengthen its work with a digital impact alliance which corporates with ITU to support a wholistic approach to the digital transformation. With this pledge and our candidacy to the ITU Council, Sweden wanted to show our strong commitment to the global digital transformation. And to the work of the ITU.

Thank you so much for having the opportunity to talk to you via link. And I think the 30 seconds I will give to the music.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you, Honorable Minister. Yes. Very pleased to see the virtual remote connection working quite well. That's great. Thank you for being with us.

Our next speaker is joining us by video message. His Excellency, Mr. Chris Philp who is the Minister for Digital Technology in the United Kingdom but he will be introduced her by Mr. Paul Gasgow who is the deputy head and Deputy Director for international standards in Internet Governance in the same Department of Digital culture media and sports.

>> Thank you. I would like to introduce the UK Minister who has to be in London at this time. Thank you.

>> CHRIS PHILP: I'm sad is a not to be with you in Kigali today. Thanks to Rwanda on this landmark World Telecommunication Development Conference and the Round Table. We support the Generation Connect initiative. We are proud to have sponsored UK Delegates as well as the Gambian Youth Envoy to the Global Youth Summit last week. Together with the ITU the United Kingdom will host a breakfast session later this week on building cyber resilience. The United Kingdom's bid is driven by the priority we attach to the ITU to connect the unconnected. This ambition cannot be borne by the ITU alone. Member States have a crucial role to play in advancing that agenda and I can pledge the UK will play our full part promoting responsible and sustainable digital transformation across the world and supporting inclusive affordable efficient and secure connectivity. We will perceive this and sharing best practices.

The United Kingdom's digital access program in which we have so far spent 40 million pounds since 2019 promotes safe and secure access in five partner countries in east, west and South Africa as well as in Latin America and Southeast Asia. Develop scaleable and sustainable technology and business models for last mile connectivity, build digital literacy and support local entrepreneurship and innovation. In 2021 alone the UK's digital

access program reached over 2.4 million people in those five partner countries. As part of this program, the UK has codesigned and funded a partnership project on digital inclusion with ITU-D. This UK ITU partnership focuses on providing technical assistance and capacity. And advance digital skills for young people. Last year the UK spent about a million pounds on this ITU partnership and we are pledging half a million pounds to scale it up. We are pledging another 700 pounds for digital project delivery. These funds will mean we can train and mentor at least 105 community network facilitators to reach over 70,000 people. Overall, the UK plans to extend the work of the digital access program until 2025.

Turning to cybersecurity, this is a key issue where we are keen to share expertise. And helped train over 70 security incident response teams. As part of this we partnered with ITU-D to deliver the joint integrated cyber analysis project. Develop better national cybersecurity capacity and also delivered improvements to security and resilience of Government systems and critical national infrastructure.

The UK is passionate about digital development. Whether or not we are fortunate enough to be elected to the Council this year I can pledge today that the United Kingdom will work tirelessly to support the ITU to do all it can to connect the unconnected and bridge the global digital divide. Thank you for the opportunity to talk to you today. I hope to see you in person later this year. Notably at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in September. Thank you.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you, Minister. And thank you Mr. Gasgow for being here. I think we can start to see the numbers are already started to add up. It is interesting process to see the pledges. Our next speaker is Toelupe Poumulinuku, Minister of Communication and Information Technology of the independent state of Samoa. The floor is yours.

>> TOELUPE POUMULINUKU: Thank you Mr. Moderator. Honorable Ministers, head of Delegations, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my pleasure and indeed a privilege to be part of this Partner2Connect Round Table discussion this afternoon. Here in this wonderful part of the world, Kigali, Rwanda. On that note I take the opportunity to thank and congratulate the Government and people of Rwanda for efforts. We would like to acknowledge the efforts of SG and ITU team for the successful event. The Government of Samoa fully supports the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition. And our pledge is on the developing relative policies adopting regulations, and define sustainable financial models to provide affordable and secure access to ICT services for free, to education and health services by 2030.

This pledge helps with our vision to ensure small island states such as Samoa achieve its Sustainable Development Goals 2030. The Government of Samoa has begun its digital transformation journey which includes a number of digital developments, initiated over the years. Aiming to

improve access resilience and affordable. While coverage the challenge of affordable and secure access was recognized as a specific challenge. And the commitment of Government and stakeholders across the Pacific to work together and strive for the common vision that is a digital Pacific.

This is WTDC Partner2Connect initiative is very timely. These allows an excellent opportunity to help our Pacific island states not only to improve local, but a cross-border connectivity, build multi-stakeholder consensus to work towards digital inclusion. These aspirations will be accelerated with Samoa joining as a member of the Partner2Connect. Let me conclude my remarks, by introducing Samoa's candidates to the PP-22 election. Ms. Ina for post of the Deputy Secretary-General, to ITU. Her experience of 35 years in ITU and also in CTL will definitely be a value to ITU. In the ITU's 135 years' history that never been anyone from small island states in the ITU senior management. I strongly believe Lisa, Samoa chief has the potential and skills and a women's touch to provide a strategic vision and leadership to the ITU. With that, I wish you all the very best in our deliberations and way forward during this Forum. Thank you.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you, Your Excellency. Now from the Pacific back to the continent of Africa, our next speaker is Mr. Jacob Korok, Deputy Minister of ICT and Postal Services from South Sudan.

>> JACOB KOROK: Honorable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. Mr. Moderator, as I thank you for this opportunity, allow me to start by extending appreciation of the Republic of South Sudan, the government and people of Rwanda, for the great hospitality shown to us and for working together with ITU to organize this wonderful conference which is the first WTDC to be held in Africa.

The South Sudan becomes independent in July 2011 after 20 years of Civil War. Those years of war seriously impacted the country's general infrastructure, including telecommunications.

The leadership from the onset has been determined to deliver connectivity to the remote areas. To achieve this the Ministry of ICT and Postal Service launched a massive campaign to survey the country state by state to identify critical areas that need connectivity. The surveys are down in collaboration with operators. The Government utilized universal service access fund to public infrastructure, wide operators cover the network, equipment costs. To support in initiative the President in July last year announced the government plans to identify investors and accelerate infrastructure development.

By granting tax exemptions on network equipment and tools. And sector partnerships with credible mobile phone and manufacturer to provide affordable mobile phones of good quality to rural corporations. From the program inception to date, 14 network sites have been deployed and put on air. Never the next four years the Government of South Sudan through these programs intends to support the deployment of more than 200

network sites in rural areas and their connectivity to about 5 million individuals.

The initial costs of this program is estimated at 60 million USD and will be scaled up continuously due to a critical importance of rural connectivity in South Sudan. Thank you very much.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you. Ambitious program in challenging conditions for sure. Our next speaker is the Deputy Minister of Digital Development and Transport, Azerbaijan.

>> ROVSHAN RUSTAMOV: Thank you. Dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm about to express my gratitude to all participants and especially to the Secretary-General and it is imperative of making this event possible to exchange opinions approach enough collaboration models to cross-global connectivity. The event also provides an opportunity for us to announce our pledge that addresses areas of digital development in our countries.

As Madam Doreen mentioned 250 pledges, very huge amount, we wanted to enrich this number and to pledge we provided for this.

Submitted digital transformation pledge as our first pledge. To ensure the application of digital technologies and create affordable connections for the usage. Which will ultimately increase the quality of public administration and citizens' well-being. Not limited to maturity of businesses in line with evolution. The main priorities are set as efficiency in public services. Improvement of entrepreneurship and human capital. Science and technology and final digitalization of the country in the region and globally.

Our next and second pledge is related to Smart City and smart village where the implementation of this initiative aim to ensure economic social environmental sustainability and efficiency.

Increasing speed of organization and their construction then of our territories which were the occupation during 30 years. First smart solutions and demands for inclusivity of remote areas in this. These two initiatives cover the areas of effective management of transportation, digital (inaudible), smart agriculture and farming management, use of alternative and renewable energy sources, minimization of water basin and finally technology based education.

The realization of above-mentioned projects will help reduce the digital divide country. We are open to operation to use your experience, which at the same time to learn from the experience. Concluding my intervention I would like to highlight ITU's critical role of addressing major development challenge. Knowing that as a member of country and member of council, we place our strong commitment to the ITU towards achieving development goals and accelerate programs. Thank you.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you very much, Excellency. Our next speaker is Mr. Mohammed Al-Tamimi who is the governor of

Communications and Information Technology Commission.

>> MOHAMMED AL-TAMIMI: Thank you. You are doing a great job. I will deliver my intervention in Arabic. For those who want to put the headphones to translation, we already have a side talk with Doreen about women in power and the Prime Minister of Luxembourg and how he is proud of having women in the side panel. The women workforce in Saudi Arabia exceeding 28%. We are surpassing EU and G20 average. If you could join me in a round of applause for all women that work in ICT. These blessing be upon you, it is my pleasure first of all to thank you the Government of The Republic of Rwanda for generously hosting this event. We are happy that the WTDC is being held in Africa for the first time. I would be remiss not to mention and thank His Excellency Mr. Houlin Zhao and BDT director Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin for organizing this conference.

We in the KSA attached particular importance to the development of the digital infrastructure and believe in the importance of equipping this infrastructure with the state of our technology in order to develop the ICTs. Therefore, we have established national or authority commission with the view of providing a cohesive organization and streamlining common digital issues and most towards collaborative organizations. We collaborated with the ITU on a number of projects and initiatives, including Connect2Recover, in countries impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The kingdom attaches a particular importance to sustainability. It made it one of the main axes of the kingdom's 2030 vision. We made huge strides in several human development fields. We invested in human resources and our wise leadership invested in the development of capabilities and the human capital in general. We are therefore, ready to build a bright and promising future for all. We are cognizant of training. Generation Connect which aims to encouraging world youth to take part in the decision making. We are -- we have joined the ITU in 1949 and the Council in 1965. We harness our capabilities in order to support all these activities. And I would like to therefore present with your support our candidature for the re-election of the king of Saudi Arabia to the ITU Council and the radio regulation board in the forthcoming ITU's PP conference. By way of conclusion, I would like to wish you full success in your work and hopefully we will be able to serve the interests of all people in the world. May the peace and his blessings be upon you.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you so much, Excellency. Our next speaker will join us by video address. Ms. Jutta Urpilainen, who is the Commissioner for International Partnerships at the European Commission. But sitting in for her here to introduce that video address is Mr. Peter Marian from the European Commission as well who is the team leader of digital governance.

>> PETER MARIAN: Thank you. Excellencies, distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, the European Union launched the global gateway our now global connectivity strategy this past December. The EU

aims to mobilize 150 billion Euros for investments in Africa, in six sectors whereby digital is a priority sector. Working with our partner, we aim to attract investments along with EU grand funding.

Global gateway is about increasing investments promoting Democratic values and high standards good governance and transparency, equal partnerships, green and clean secure infrastructures that catalyze also private sector investment.

Apart from working together on policy and enabling environment, and skills and digital education, the EU envisages investments and amongst others submarine and online fiber optic cables, last mile connectivity and green data centers. The programming of our financial instruments is finalized and we are building partnerships to identify concrete investment opportunities.

I'm happy to share with you a message from our Commissioner for international partnerships, Ms. Jutta. So this is a video message.

>> JUTTA URPILAINEN: World Telecommunication Development Conference comes at a crucial moment. We know that digital will be at the heart of globe am prosperity. For this reason, the EU promotes accessible inclusive and secure digital connectivity that puts people first. Through global gateway the EU offers sustainable high standard investments in hard and soft digital infrastructure.

We connect Europe and partners across the globe. Based on values, which also apply to the Internet. An open, secure and global Internet is what is needed to cope with new and future developments.

And to foster innovation and growth. To achieve this we need to work together in the digital space. EU fully supports the ITU Partner2Connect initiative. A multi-stakeholder alliance helps to bring meaningful connectivity and digital transformation globally. Especially to Least Developed Countries, landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States. We look forward to collaborating in this initiative to ramp up investment in digital ecosystems, connect people and empower communities.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you, Ms. Jutta. And thank you Peter, for being here.

Our next speaker is Mr. Tuaha Mote, who is the Chairman of the board of directors, INCM Mozambique. The floor is yours.

>> TUAHA MOTE: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. And all present here panelists. Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Mozambique actually pledge to commit to achieve the goal of SDG and the digital inclusion. Mozambique has around 30 million population, the majority of them leaving in very rural areas with a very low purchase power. That's why I make this challenge of communicating, putting digital infrastructure very challenging. It has also been difficult for the government to incentivize private operators to deploy telecom infrastructure in that area. That's why the Government

has taken several actions from the regulator perspective and policy defining. One of the actions was to start using universal access fund. Since 2018 we are implanting three public WiFi to several communities, schools. And so far we have connected 91 schools and public squares. But the price for connecting this place is very expensive, if you can imagine. We are paying yearly 1.3 million to connect just 19 sites. So that's why this year for the first time in Africa we awarded a license to the global Internet operator SpaceX which we will call Starlink Mozambique that will deliver access. With this money we can connect all the unconnected. We are planning to connect until 2024, more than 600 schools and also public squares. Additionally, also we are concerned that all these services must be delivered with high quality of services. Also we are worried about the need for spectrum from the industry. So we decided to reform the spectrum and then we are giving the operator more megahertz in the 3G. To make each block 10 megahertz for each operator. Another action we have taken is to -- we have reserved spectrum from the possible fourth operator. But this spectrum no one is using. Now we are introducing the model of leasing this operator to make available for the operator. So these are the pledges that we will make efforts so that everyone must be connected because even people living in the rural area, if everything goes digital, they must not be left behind.

And thank you.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you, sir and congratulations on the ambitious vision and commitment. We are going to turn now to the private sector. One of the things that makes Partner2Connect so special is that it is a multi-stakeholder coalition. And we have several members of the private sector here who are going to speak about their pledges as well.

So our first speaker in that group is Mr. Hans-Matthias Boos, who is the general manager, R&SASIA Rwanda branch and business development director for Africa. The floor is yours.

>> HANS-MATTHIAS BOOS: Thank you. Good afternoon, dear Honorable Ministers. Dear honored customers. Yesterday we celebrated the official opening of our software development laboratory in Rwanda. We actually celebrated just here at the Kigali Convention center and we had the honor, His Excellency, President of the Republic of Rwanda, Paul Kagame as part of this inauguration. To allow us to make use of one of the conference rooms here at KCC for this inauguration while the opening of the ITU WTDC conference. I would like to share you -- with you some experiences we have made from practical perspective here in Rwanda with the first of its kind software development lab in Africa. I will say why experience in the inauguration was yesterday. We opened the office in December 2019 but you due to COVID we had to delay the official inauguration until yesterday. Push innovation in the industrial Internet of Things, IoT development at the global level and we have the right experience in Rwanda to develop

homegrown solutions for the African market and beyond.

We are super impressed about the exceptional motivation that comes from our local employees and I would like to take the opportunity to thank them for their excellent contribution to improve our products and solutions. With all that said and the experience we have made we will expand and double the number of our current software development engineers at our office here in Kigali. To keep pace with that growth we need to educate and train our employees and I would like to quote Nelson Mandela, education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. We invest in people's personal development. We invest in the most precious resource we have got and this is building capacity for the sake of our people and the company's future.

Furthermore, last year we finished training programs and engineers from the National Cybersecurity Authority, providing program skills, knowledge about network protocols and network and IT skills. The best from the courses were offered an internship in our branch office in Rwanda. More than 50% of the students out of the 37 found a job or started their own business after the training. I would like to thank the Rwandan government and our partners for their continuous great and reliable support and collaboration to further create jobs, focus on capacity building. Thank you very much.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you. Some excellent local commitments there. It is fantastic. Our next speaker is Mr. John Giusti, chief regulatory office and Head of Authority, GSMA.

>> JOHN GIUSTI: Thank you Robert. Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, we work very hard to unite the entire global ecosystem around a shared vision, unlocking the full power of connectivity. So let me first say it is a privilege to participate on this panel today. As the ambitions and objectives of Partner2Connect are so closely aligned to our mission. Multi-stakeholder action is really Foundation to digital transmission. I commend the vision with Partner2Connect and the action-oriented partnerships that we are already hearing. Bringing together the both public and private sector. Today mobile is the primary and the only way that people in many parts of the world connect to broadband. More half the world's population is connected to broadband via a mobile network. The flipside of that is almost half the world's population is not. Through extensive network investment we have made great progress on closing the coverage gap. Those living in areas without any broadband connectivity and that's down from 24% in 2014 to only 6% today. The vast majority that are not connected and we are talking over 3 billion people live in areas that are covered by broadband networks and they are just not using them. We need to be creative together to tackle this usage gap that are removing barriers. We have been inspired to close the usage gap. We are strengthening our commitment to address shortages which is a major barrier

to digital inclusion and second we are focused on building capacities for marginalized groups and communities in underprivileged areas. First through our commitment to connected women commitment initiative we are mobilizing mobile operators to reduce the gender gap in digital and financial inclusion.

Second we are partnering with the ITU, EY and the women's World Wide Web to design and I provide access to free gender transformation training. Powers equals partnership. We aim to reach more than 200,000 people by the end of this year and more than one million by the end of first half of 2024. And fourth we are partnering with the Telecom Regulatory Authority of Pakistan to deliver mobile skills. We are also continuing our commitment to capacity building. By the end of 2022 we will commit to deliver free training. I really thank you for the opportunity to participate today. And more importantly for inspiring us with Partner2Connect. Thank you.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you John. I couldn't agree more. Partnerships are the only way we are going to get where we want to go. Our next speaker is Mr. Goran Marby who is the CEO of ICANN Sweden. The floor is yours.

>> GORAN MARBY: Thank you. Thank you. First of all, I'm honored to be on this panel. But I'm also very happy to see you. You might not know that that you meet me several times a day on many different devices and sometimes at very odd hours per day. Every time you go online you hit about something that originates from me or my technical partners. We what we do is to provide everyone the groundwork of the Internet itself. Which is necessary function for you to connect. And thanks to you, you actually created the biggest global community with 5 billion users, the interoperable Internet. Everywhere can go online without having anyone asking questions. Actually just two years ago, one and a half years ago it was the biggest Internet day ever. It was 8 and a half trillion questions. I don't know why at all.

And I think that's a success. If someone have told me that 30 years ago I wouldn't have believed it. But there are things we need to do. For instance, we have to work to make Internet more local at all. And that's why I want to thank Doreen for this, she convinced us to bring the technical community together to the ITU and we make a pledge for this. And a pledge is very technical and very simple. One of the ground rules of the system is what we call the Country Code operators. You all know them. Because you all are using them. It is identification of your country on your Internet. There are many good ones but unfortunately here in Africa and other places there are still countries that need to develop them better. Without that you won't have a local Digital Economy because it is so fundamental to make it work. So what we are going to do now and together with our partners here in Africa we are going to do a special attention to ten of them to create processes and regulations and make sure

the power of that stays within the country. Because one of the benefits over the Internet is a country and region makes all the decisions, how this Internet works. I'm proud to make this historical pledge and I want to thank Doreen for the help we get. Thank you.

>> ROBERT OPP: Thank you so much. Our final speaker is me. I get to tell you about UNDP's pledges. Which are in two areas. Since 2019 UNDP has been undergoing a corporate level transformation of our own organization so that we can serve our 170 partners around the world in a better more effective way, particularly as they go through the challenges that have been mentioned, some of them have been mentioned here because we do see digital inclusion leaving no one behind in the digital -- in this digital effort, in the bridging the digital divide is so critical to achieving the sustainable development goals. Our pledges are in two main areas. The first is around our support in working with our partners on inclusive digital transformation. This is about building a strong, digital inclusive ecosystems that are leaving no one behind, and are really enabling development outcomes. And so this is a lot of work that we do in assessing digital readiness, planning together with Governments on digital transformation strategies, and then helping them execute also and implement those strategies using that as a platform of partnership.

And our pledges that by the end of 2023 we will have worked with 70 countries worldwide on this work. The second area is around developing digital infrastructure. This is part of our commitment as well to the digital public goods charter which will be spoken over the course of these few days. How can we ensure we are leveraging digital public goods to their maximum impact and building this ecosystem of digital public goods. Our pledge is we will explore this issue with 50 countries by the end of 2023, I think. I didn't write it down here and with ten countries we will work delivering technical assistance to implement digital public goods and we will with five digital public good platforms and work to develop those and have them enter in to the public domain. I want to thank all the speakers for their pledges and commitments. Congratulations and all of those. I'm looking forward to moving from pledge to action to all of you with partnership. With that we close this panel and back to Fiona.

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Thank you so much, Robert. And thank you so much to all our distinguished speakers of the High-Level Panel one.

A round of applause as our distinguished speakers exit the stage. And now for our next session, I hand over to my colleague, David Kirkpatrick. He will take you through today's spotlight sessions. I will see you at 4:45 p.m. for High-Level Panel 2. David, the floor is yours.

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Could the speakers join me on stage? Development and you will see there are enormous opportunities for partnering around education. So I want to just say quickly I'm David Kirkpatrick, I'm a journalist based in New York and I have had the honor of

moderating a number P2C sessions since September. I'm feeling tremendous energy here at this session. The whole P2C program is just extremely dynamic. Very, very impressed.

So this September at the 77th UN General Assembly the Secretary-General will convene the transforming education Summit. In order to learn more about that I would like to turn to Fayaz King who is the deputy executive director for field results and innovation at UNICEF.

>> FAYAZ KING: Thank you. GIGA program started in 2019. And again a big thank you to the ITU, a big thank you to Doreen and team. Within this very short space of time, we were able to map 1.3 million schools. And understand where the schools were. When we started we asked ourselves a question, how many schools are there in the world. And nobody could give us that answer. So GIGA went out and we decided to focus on three things. The first thing was happening. We had to map each and every school, to understand where the schools. The second aspect would be arranging the financing. How are we going to fund, or how are we going to connect these schools. And then the third item was to go out and do the procurement. But to do this we need partners. The first round of partners was basically between the ITU and UNICEF. And the ITU have been fantastic partners in mobilizing the Member States in getting them organized and also getting them interested, especially in the regulatory framework as to how we are going to do this. The second step that we did was also to bring in our private sector partners, thanks to Ericsson, thanks to Dell and also thanks to international towers and the mask Foundation who have been supportive in providing the technology and know how on how to connect schools. We worked with the Islamic development bank and we worked with the World Bank, we managed to unlock some 300 million dollars to connect schools. And we worked with others will continue to work with them. It is important that we work for innovative ways of financing. This with respect, we have looked at NFT where we were able to raise a million dollars to connect schools and we looked at crypto currency to pay for connecting schools. We cannot rely on traditional methods. We also looked at procurement. It is important we assist Member States on how best to procure. We did 13 test case procurements where a million children are benefitting from the connectivity from these procurement test cases. We have worked with Member States and work very closely to do this. In transforming education Summit it is important that we look closely to connectivity. To put connectivity in the forefront because without connectivity, you cannot get on to the Internet.

We saw this during COVID. We saw this when we had 1.3 billion children out of school. And unable to learn.

So with this, I would like to share with you a short video if allow you me. And to give you a flavor of what GIGA is all about.

>> I want to study computer hardware engineering.

>> I want to study computer engineering to put (inaudible).
(Video).

>> Internet has been a game-changer, even in the performance and grades of our students in school. So now many of them because they can learn on their own, they can discover things that on their own, their attitude has changed greatly. The learning becomes more interesting because there are different ways of accessing the same information.

>> We get to introduce a lot of new things to children. They are excited about using Internet and technology. It is about learning. So it is really, really exciting for the children. They can't wait to get online to meet the teachers to find out what's going to happen today, what are we going to do today. Where are we going to go today because we are connected via the Internet.

>> Our pledge, David is to connect every school and every child to the Internet. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Wow. Could not think of a better pledge. Thank you so much for that. And I think the GIGA is an extraordinary example of public/private partnership. You saw the partners listed there on the screen. I'm very pleased and honored to introduce a special guest who is with us today to talk about education as an educator. He is a Rwandan high school teacher. His name is Issac. Did I say that right? He is a biology ICT and physical education teacher at Niguaca school in Rwanda. It is such a pleasure to you have here. We really, really honor people like you who devote your life to teaching. You are working in a school that's part of the GIGA program that's very exciting. Sort of early on the journey of GIGA in your school. But you have been using connectivity with your students already. Talk a little bit about how connectivity makes a difference for you and your students. And press the button at the bottom and then hold that mic right up to your face. The gray button.

>> Issac: Thank you very much. Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm a teacher in the school from GSN UNCA. We are benefitting from a GIGA project. This one has changed the way or approach in which we use while teaching. Because actually we gain access on learning resources, materials, through the Internet. Whereas before only we were based on the hand, especially hard books, or hard papers. But actually while the approved book of the process of printing now we can access e-books from the website. It has become more interactive because the learners will be using information. They can also share the ideas because we give them some of the topics, because here we are still waiting to get the smart classrooms. Now we borrow from our fellow teachers some laptops, we make a group of five or six in the classrooms. And the learners will be sharing the Internet and get access on a day as such. Also learners are also getting especially updated by getting new information so they can also get

or search here some tutorials.

Also in other issues is that from this the teacher also be getting developments. You can go and check instead of waiting to go and check in the books. This will be a benefit for our school because we help especially the students because you are in rural areas, there is no many cyber cafes. When learners are moving in the schools, they do not get lost because they are familiar with the laptops. The awareness here, especially primary teachers are no longer using computer because they were not available.

Thank you very much.

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Thank you so much. Really important work and I just hope we can follow you as you continue your journey. And you are very good at this by the way. So next let me turn to Chris Fabian who is the colead for GIGA at UNICEF.

>> CHRIS FABIAN: Thank you. I want to ask you a weird question. I want you to be on the phone the whole time I am talking. There should be a slide for me. If you see that address on the projectconnect.world. Go to that address while I am talking. I would like to you go to that website, projectconnect.world and look for your favorite country or least favorite country or the country where you are from. Could all be the same one. And I would like you to explore that map while I talk.

The whole idea of GIGA started with this simple question, Greg Weiler, and Doreen were talking a few years ago about how you could start to connect every school in the world. You needed a map like the one you see above, the one you saw in the video that Fayaz talked about. You see realtime data about schools, schools that are green are well connected. The ones that are red are schools where there is no connectivity at all and it refreshes every four hours you get new data for 50,000 of those schools. You can see a realtime map where possibility for students in the future.

If you look at Brazil, if you look up in the Amazon region. You can see places where there is a lot of red Minister Paula was telling me how important it was to see the images on the map. She was with us in the first meeting. Just to be able to visualize and show and count and quantify the lack of opportunity. We heard from so many countries today about the exciting pledges going on. And make sure that they are all mapped and online and are able to use this for policy and contracting in the years to come. Thank you. It is great to see you online, Tariq. Another one of our advisors. Thanks, David.

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Thank you. Now we have a virtual speaker. Joining us His Excellency Dr. Tariq Al Gurg, who is the CEO and Vice Chairman for Dubai Cares, focus area leader, Partner2Connect Digital Coalition. The floor is yours.

>> TARIQ AL GURG: Can you hear me?

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Yes, we can.

>> TARIQ AL GURG: Good. There was an issue technically on the

link. There was no link. So it took time. I can't hear the other speakers except for probably Chris and Chris good seeing you again as well.

David, look the World Economic Forum this year, that got concluded last week or the week before, put the spotlight on a statistic that poses one of the biggest threats to human progress and development. Nearly 3 billion people are still offline. That's 37% of the total human population. We know how hard the last two years for the education sector, in terms of disruptions and challenges that negatively affected learners and educators from all over the world. As leaders and policymakers we are here to talk the about opportunities and learnings that COVID-19 presented us with. How we came together as a community to prioritize learning and agree amongst ourselves that education needs to be shock proof to account for any other unexpected turmoil. We also know for a fact that connected technologies and EdTech will be the main drivers for the development of a more resilient education system. And learning that do not always rely on people being in one location. They can also contribute toward more effective administration of education systems.

And probably facility innovation, to facilitate innovation as well as empower teachers and learners in the most meaningful way. You can ask me what's key. Collaboration and meaningful partnerships are the only way forward if we are able to work together and if we are to transform education globally. And let's not forget last December, launched rewired global connectivity for education during the due by Summit and it was a partnership with UNESCO, and involved the entities with us today in this panel. This is a true example of the effected partnerships that I mentioned earlier. We are confident that this will serve as a framework for better coordination and resource mobilization. As we move toward operationalizing the Declaration it is very important to highlight and support some of these mega initiatives that are already showing impact on the ground such as GIGA and Partner2Connect. Let's not forget the rising entity that's shining now which is also the Edison alliance which is under the World Economic Forum. Dubai has been supporting these initiatives right from the outset. And now we have another golden opportunity with the upcoming transforming education Summit where we can galvanize strong support using technology to prevent any further collapse of our education systems in the face of any new large scale disruption similar to what we witnessed with COVID-19. We are responsible to push for more convergence and better alignment for increased connectivity. Connecting the dots to foster digital transformation should be a key priority moving forward. While connectivity itself cannot serve as a solution to tackle education gaps, it can be harnessed as a tool with technology to enhance education when leveraged with the right resources and partners of course. So let's all work together so we have be called the generation that worked together and shaped tomorrow. Thank you very much.

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Thank you so much. We are all responsible. We heard from Issac and zoom out to the national Government perspective from our good friend, Her Excellency Minister Paula Ingabire who will reflect on what she has heard and make some closing remarks.

>> PAULA INGABIRE: Thank you. I think mine is going to be an easier job because not only have we heard from people who have carried the vision of GIGA connecting schools but we have also heard from schools who have benefitted from some of the pilot initiatives that already in place and programs I could also add that when we started talking with both the ITU and UNICEF we were already well on our way in terms of connecting most of our schools. But it was also evident and again I talked about it earlier without the right partnerships it was going to be very difficult to close on these gaps in the shortest time possible.

And you can imagine if I give you a bit of statistics looking at over 6,000 schools and we perhaps had not more than a 1,000 schools connected and that had been work we invested for over 15 years what that meant if we are going to close the gap on the 5,000 schools that will remain. And also I note Dr. Tariq talked about the nearly 3 billion people that remain unconnected. This morning at a different session we were talking about last year we quoted 3 billion people that remained unconnected. This year 2.9. When you look at it in perhaps a space of one year, we have only been able to connect 100,000. So what happens the remaining 2.9 billion, does it mean -- and someone quickly did the statistics and was telling us we need about 116 years to connect the 2.9 billion. Can we afford that? That's the question we need to address as partners, if we go at the pace. And please remember because of COVID there is accelerated efforts in connecting the unconnected. We still have a long way to go in we are not thinking about creative and innovative ways of doing it. This is initiative where GIGA comes in because it is not just the broad ambition. It is also figuring out what are the barriers to connecting this school which is around affordability which is also thinking about how many schools are connected with physical infrastructure and how do you sort of create a strategy an allows for us to have not just innovative but affordable ways of connecting these schools. So as a lead -- as one of the GIGA lead countries Rwanda had the opportunity to work with UNICEF and ITU last year to connect a pilot of 63 schools. 50 of which are districts that have already been connected and we still have 13 that in refugee camps and that brings us to the question around how do we make sure that digital inclusion is really at the heart of all the investments that we make as partners, all of the interventions that we make. Even as we think about the underserved groups that include refugees and talk about people with disabilities, then this is where the inclusivity agenda is very important. So for me even in reflection of the partnership that we have heard, I'm very grateful for partners like ITU,

UNICEF that we will really have heeded the call and seeing the urgency to connect. And also making the decision to work with us. Now it is not just Rwanda. May have been one of the lead countries that was select but the idea was to approve a concept. Whether it is ITU, UNICEF they work with Member States to figure how we can pull in the partnerships and resources to close on this gap. When I did make a pledge in the earlier session around making sure we connect all remaining schools at least within the next three years I can confidently say that because of a proof of concept that was proven. Seeing that we are able to do it, if we are able to do it with this much resources, then with the right partners on board we should be able to close on this gap. And so please join me in thanking ITU, UNICEF for drafting this visionary leadership. It starts with mapping out your school connectivity needs because it is difficult to know if you haven't done that mapping. As a Call To Action for the other countries is figuring out what we can do as the first state of mapping the school connectivity needs and then taking it forward. Finally, I think it might perhaps also do justice to share what has it meant to connect the 63 schools. And the teachers -- he did a great job of telling us the benefits around it because for us it was not just putting broadband infrastructure in schools. It was equipping the teachers with the digital literacy skills that will allow them to navigate and use the devices and infrastructure that has been given to them. It was giving them the devices they need to do so. But it was also able to work with other startups that already digitizing the curriculum and learning material. It is a whole of system efforts that requires that you bring in the development agencies, the Governments, startups that are building really amazing EdTech solutions but also giving them a platform where they can test some of these. Without that kind of, you know, full rounded partnership it would have been very difficult to make the necessary investments and close on this. Thank you and please once again join me in thanking all our partners that have made this possible.

(Applause.)

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Thank you Paula. It is very inspiring to listen to you. You are a visionary Government leader. With that we conclude this panel and we are going to have a coffee break. And I thank you so much my panelists and particularly Issac for taking a break from teaching to come and join us here today. So thank you to everyone.

He can teach remotely Paula says. Right. We will resume in this room at 4:35.

(Coffee break).

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: I love the intellectual energy in the room but we are going to get started again in just a moment. So please take your seats for another spotlight session.

Did you hear me? You are supposed to take your seats. What? Oh, you are taking a picture of me. So perhaps my speakers can join me on

stage. Fode Ndiaye and Solomon Tegegne. Come on up. Solomon is getting photographed. We are near how to talk about advancing the Doha Programme of Action through Partner2Connect, and perhaps if you are not going to be watching the section you might want to move your conversations outside. We are starting. Okay.

Sit down if you can. That would be great. We're being recorded. Thank you very much. If you feel like coming a little closer it would be nice. But it I would like to see you closer. He is a very touchie-feelie kind of guy. So we are talking here about this upcoming session in Doha and to help LDCs achieve meaningful connectivity. So I'm going to really defer to our speakers to help us understand what that means. And I'll introduce them. We have two people. This is going to be a little more of a conversational session. Fode Ndiaye who is UN resident coordinator for Rwanda. And Solomon who is the national focal point for Ethiopia. What -- tell us a little bit about the Doha conference and what are you hoping to get out of it.

>> FODE NDIAYE: Thank you very much. Is it working?

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, you have to lean over.

>> FODE NDIAYE: Okay? Thank you very much. It will be the fifth conference on the LDCs. What we want to get really is to have an opportunity to recommit after the approval of the Doha Programme of Action in March 2022. And, of course, because we know that the problem is not lack of frameworks. The problem is how do we commit, how do we deliver, how do we monitor, how do we make sure that results have impact on transforming people's lives. So this is a crucial opportunity for people and institutions who need to deliver on the Programme of Action and its promises to come together, and, of course, it will be about partnership. I can come later on. We will have UN system as an international partners, private sector, Civil Society organization, and, of course, politicians and Governments and youth representatives. Because I do think that the digital era is kind of intuitive to young people. And they are the ones moving the needles when it comes to this. And the issue and what we want to really achieve is to make sure that what we have committed in the Doha Programme of Action, we implement. And work is already, of course, underway in the areas of Doha. And it will be an opportunity for new announce. A new pledges, we hope even beyond the Doha Programme of Action.

And, of course, last important aspect between the -- really transcending the partnership between the LDCs and private sector and Civil Society to overcome structural challenges that those countries are faced with. Piggyback on opportunities to achieve structural transformation and deliver on the SDGs and other commitments that we are having. And we hope by doing so, we will help more countries graduate because we are not doing well in graduation. Since 1971 we only have six countries who graduated. Can we make it as a speed transformation for graduation? This is what we

expect from Doha.

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Just one last thing, talk about Partner2Connect and how you see that dovetailing with the Doha Programme of Action.

>> FODE NDIAYE: I think this morning you were the one moderating, we expect to have together really Civil Society Organizations, and the Doha is a call for people to make sure we have the safe, affordable, and meaningful digital connectivity by 2030. And frankly speaking people and institutions who attended this Partner2Connect discussion this morning and follow-up on building networks unlocking opportunities will not ask this question because it becomes obvious that we are strongly going to get joint working and long term partnership. And the Partner2Connect is really in my humble view a truly inspiring example. Action on really delivering on from various stakeholders. We are in a complex world and you need many actors to come together. Because they are bringing different capacities. They are bringing different investments. They are bringing innovative tools. They are bringing approaches. And they have a common goal that would really impact the LDCs. And, of course, I really want really to have as a call for action for Partner2Connect initiative. And I want all of us to join our efforts to really deliver on that. And that's what I want to really see this partnership going forward is a private sector, the UN system as an international partners and Civil Society. When we come together I think we could build a better world everywhere for everyone. As they say in Rwanda, we are together. Together nothing is impossible.

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Great. Partner2Connect is a break through concept. I'm so pleased to be helping here today. As a national focal point for Ethiopia, what's your role of ensuring Doha is implemented in Ethiopia and what's that mean?

>> SOLOMON TEGEGNE: Thank you. Thank you David. As a national focal point, looking at the implementation of the Istanbul program and taking lessons from there, now the Doha program has come with six concrete goals. As a national focal point you are attending this session as well we should understand what really takes when we say the Doha Programme of Action. And understand the priority areas. After understanding the priority areas and internalizing them is good to mainstream in our cascading our national plan and budgeting systems regard the of the pledgors and supporters. The first one is to understand and the second one is to cascade and plan ministry. And after that to monitor and regularly follow the progresses. And then take lessons from the each progress. And then finally, as a focal point I will use also -- I will use this opportunity to tell -- to liaise on pledges and commitments here and take back home our line ministries, our Government partners can benefit from these pledges and commitments.

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: So you see the Partner2Connect initiative

really helping you achieve the ambitions laid out in the Doha Programme of Action?

>> SOLOMON TEGEGNE: Yes, that's right. For this is good to look at some figures, like 3 billion people are not connected and then if you come to Ethiopia and not more than 30% of our population are using Internet. And then still the mobile subscribers are like 50 to something percent of our population. So this initiative is helpful in terms of addressing or in terms of unleashing the potential of not connected. So in this regard you can see the digital system or the connectivity one is an enabler and the other is an opportunity. In this regard it enables the other sectors to bring the structural transformation which is a barrier for Least Developed Countries and then this opportunity or this initiative is an enabler to unleash the population. And to -- I mean bring effectiveness and appreciation in our economy. So you can see that -- to unleash the ICT sector as well this connection is very important. And this initiative for sure will help us. That's only -- but it will help us to achieve the Doha agenda.

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Good so that many things are happening at once. I forgot to play the video at the beginning. Can we still do that? Yes?

(Video).

>> At the front lines of climate change, the Least Developed Countries are falling further behind. The Doha Programme of Action is the blueprint to help them emerge from these crises and build a better, more sustainable future. It tackles the hardest challenges from poverty to climate change. But to achieve its promise, it will require significant political will, technology, and investment.

Transformational change requires the whole international opportunity to take part because the Least Developed Countries and those who live in them, have enormous potential. They can drive economic growth. Food security, and green energy revolution for all of us. LDC5 in Doha must be where we deliver on this promise. And build a new generation of partnerships and coalitions for peace, prosperity and sustainable development.

We will see you again in 2023. Join us there.

>> DAVID KIRKPATRICK: Thank you. Really excited about Doha. (Applause.)

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Thank you so much David for leading us through the spotlight sessions. I would like to thank all our speakers. Our distinguished delegates, we have space here at the main auditorium. So feel free to join us in the main auditorium or if you are comfortable there it is very much okay. So now Ladies and Gentlemen, this brings us to the next part of our program, I would like to invite our speakers for the High-Level Panel 2 to kindly come and take the stage. Also welcoming our Moderator for this particular session, Mr. Alex Rogers, President of

Qualcomm Technology at Qualcomm Inc. You are welcome. You may take the stage. All our speakers kindly make your way to the stage. You are welcome. Alex, it is over to you.

>> ALEX ROGERS: Thank you very much. Distinguished Excellencies, Delegates, honored guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, good afternoon and welcome to High-Level Panel 2. My name is Alex Rogers, President of Qualcomm Technology, and licensing and global affairs. It my great pleasure to moderate this panel. This digital development session provides Member States the private sector and international organizations and others with the opportunity to announce their pledges under the Partner2Connect initiative to work, to bridge the digital divide, and enable digital transformation and meaningful connectivity for all.

So without further delay, let us move to the first distinguished panelist and pledge. What I may suggest that you please hold your applause until the end, and we will work through the pledges and then give everyone a robust round of applause at the end before we break for the end of the day.

So first, we give the floor to Mr. John Jack, deputy chief information officer within the Ministry of the Prime Minister of Vanuatu. And he will introduce a video presentation. The floor is yours.

>> JOHN JACK: Thank you Mr. Moderator. Let me take this time on behalf of the government and people of Republic of Vanuatu to thank the Government of Rwanda. Government of the people of Rwanda for the great hosting of this event which marks towards greater good. The great showcasing of African hospitality by the good people of Rwanda, but to commit itself on focus areas to connecting everyone since 2014 and our universal access policy.

Allow me to introduce the High-Level Panel discussion our statement by our Honorable Prime Minister, Minister responsible for ICT and media, Honorable Bob Loughman.

>> BOB LOUGHMAN WEIBUR: ITU Secretary-General, Mr. Houlin Zhao, ITU directors, Distinguished Delegates, young leaders, Ladies and Gentlemen, good afternoon to you all. I have this great honor to deliver this video address on behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Vanuatu. Mr. Moderator let me take this opportunity to thank ITU and partners for a true wholehearted effort to foster meaningful connectivity. And increased natural defense hosted by our No. 1 challenge being climate change. It is committed to ensure meaningful connectivity up to 98% of its population and to transform our communities by ensuring our people are smart, in the use of ICTs.

Vanuatu has pledged its commitment to support a Partner2Connect through our policy that includes legislative and regulatory frameworks. Vanuatu cannot do it alone. We give our heartfelt thanks for the support this far towards our smart island program. We welcome support from other partners. I thank you Mr. Moderator and God bless you all.

>> ALEX ROGERS: Thank you. As we work through connectivity, meaningful connectivity for all, it is important to remember climate change. Next let's give the floor to Her Excellency, Ms. Ursula Owuau-Ekuful, Ghana.

>> URSULA OWUAU-EKUFUL: Thank you, Alex. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, Ghana is delighted with a commitment to ITU members and telecommunications ICT development partners have demonstrated to ensure access adoption, value creation, and incentivizing investments in the pledges that have been made and are being made. However, it is time to move from rhetoric to action. Ghana has a Partner2Connect focus link. It is the first Member State to pledge policy initiatives and financial commitments. We have committed 155 million Euros to supplement the Universal Service Funds. To boost broadband services in rural areas. As part of the project 2016 sites are being built across the country to connect 3 million Ghanians. In addition to building this shared infrastructure for rural connectivity, Ghana has also pledged an open spectrum policy to facilitate the usage of technology across the country.

In our rural and underserved and unserved communities. To develop and utilize digital solutions. To address social and economic challenges. The government of Ghana has committed 2.6 million U.S. dollars to add to innovation centers and train 3,000 people by 2024. The annual target for the girls in ICT program was 1,000 girls. But from this year, we have upscaled it to train 5,000 girls from basic to junior high schools and an equal number up to the tertiary level. We agree with the smart African alliance to train up to 22,000 persons by 2023. Our universal access fund administration straightens over 220 ICT centers across rural communities which are used to capacity building and skills training and business advisory services. Ghana is collaborating with ITU and NORAD to train more than 14,000 people by 2023 utilizing this network of CICs. One of the trainers who benefitted from this training program, 26-year-old man from rural Ghana attended the Generation Connect Youth program. We are seeking collaboration with partners and financiers to deliver digital skills to at least 200,000 people by 2024. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

>> ALEX ROGERS: Thank you so much, Minister. Impressive. Specific and concrete.

Next we give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Yuji Sasaki, Vice-Minister of internal affairs and communication, Japan.

>> YUJI SASAKI: Thank you. Good afternoon. Almost 3 billion people are not connected to the internet. Partner2Connect is an extremely important initiative. Japan considers it is important to consider digital infrastructure, develop human resources. First, with regard to the development of digital infrastructure, Japan in cooperation with the ITU, launched the Connect2Recover project. To date Japan has contributed over one million U.S. dollars. In addition, in cooperation with ITU the agent office, Japan is promoting project to develop resilient infrastructure and

eliminate digital divide. We also take the initiative in solving issues by technologies. Over medium term period, we will strive to achieve high altitude platform system. Secondly, the promotion of DX. We have supported introduction of ICT services such as e-Health and smart agriculture. We plan to allocate approximately 7.5 million U.S. dollars. We also share best practices including 5G use cases. Finally, a human resource development, Japan has emphasized human resource development. It is to maintain and develop ICT environment sustainably.

Human resource Development Programs and cybersecurity capacity building support by Asian Japan cybersecurity capacity building centers just example. This year Japan launched policy and technology training for government officials responding to rapidly developing technologies in various countries.

We plan to invest a total of 2.2 million U.S. dollars.

We will continue to develop human resources that needs to target all countries. The use of digital technology, must be more inclusive and in harmony with the global environment, which will be able to enjoy the benefits of these new technologies in every corner of the world, reasonable and as soon as possible. For this purpose, I would like to pledge the improvement of three points, promotion of digital development, promotion of DX. And human resource development. Thank you for your kind attention.

>> ALEX ROGERS: Thank you so much Vice-Minister. We promise diversity of technology proposals and I think this panel is delivering. We give the floor to Her Excellency, Minister of digital transformation Slovenia, joining us virtually.

>> It is a great honor to participate at today's digital development Round Table. The development of telecommunication and digital transformation holds an immense potential to serve humankind. Due to the global nature of today's digital space we can only succeed by working together. Our first commitment addresses the digital inclusion. Slovenia's challenge brought us knowledge and experiences we would like to share. In the 30 years of the membership in the ITU we will celebrate this important anniversary on the 16th of June. We have come a long way to connect our citizens and develop a resilient and ICT ecosystem. This is the first such law in Europe that approaches the promotion of digital inclusion in a systematic and sustainable way. We stand ready to share the knowledge on how to build the regulatory environment and how to prepare the measures to bridge the digital gap. Our second commitment is related to our support of Ukraine. We condemn the attack of sovereign and independent country. Slovenia was among the cosponsors of the ITU Resolution for rebuilding their telecommunications sector and stands ready to engage further with the ITU to ease the consequences of the war in Ukraine. The Republic of Slovenia and Slovenian companies, estimated in total value of 250,000 Euros. Slovenia is also one of the coordinating

companies donation for 5,000 Starlink kits. It is an active partner in EU initiative digital for development hub. While the African Union, European Union D4D hub is already operational.

And it is expected to commence projects in the near future. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address and wish you a successful conference in Kigali. Thank you.

>> ALEX ROGERS: Thank you Minister. Interesting remarks and the leading the way on legislation regulation to help with connectivity is interesting and important point.

Next we also have a virtual presentation from Her Excellency, Ms. Hana Tovarkova, Chair of the board of Czech telecommunication office, the Czech Republic.

>> HANA TOVARKOVA: Dear Excellencies, Mr. Secretary-General, Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen on my own behalf and on behalf of the Czech Republic I would like to thank the Government of Rwanda and the ITU secretary for preparing this conference and the Partner2Connect initiative. It is my real pleasure to have the opportunity to participate at this absolutely unique Round Table. As a Member State it is actually being working with ITU structure from the very beginning currently also in the Council. We have clearly that could result cannot be achieved with deep involvement, collaboration, and without finding good partnership. Now let me turn to the main proposed why we are all here today. I wish to introduce you two pledges which make the pledges from the knowledge and particularly experiences of the Czech telecommunication office, regulatory authority in electronic communication. Provide at least ten internships on spectrum monitoring at our offices in Prague and Borneo to share development, implementation and promotion on technical tools for regulatory controls, monitoring data processing and ensuring of information. This will be focused on connectivity via radio spectrum usage. To provide a series of workshops in how to run consumer orientation projects dedicated to the capacity building that focuses on vulnerable social groups working with communities and submitting information towards (inaudible). My colleagues who have the advantage to be directly in Kigali right now are ready to explain all the details. Coming to my last point, let me highlight the regional partnership among the countries. They are bringing down the unnecessary barriers and help to improve the quality of life of the citizens and families living on the different side of the state border. As a current Vice-Chair, I must confirm that Eastern partnership is great example of such a sufficient partnership with positive results. Ladies and Gentlemen, I know this conference will be a successful one and bring valuable contributions to the global development of telecommunication. Happy to be part of it.

Thank you very much for the attention.

>> ALEX ROGERS: Thank you so much for your pledges and for your

insights. I next give the floor to Mr. Javier Juarez Mojica, Chairman of Federal Telecommunications Institute, Mexico who will deliver his remarks in Spanish.

>> JAVIER JUAREZ MOJICA: Thank you for organizing this event. And to thank the ITU and its organizing Committee for allowing us to be here.

To present these four commitments, these four pledges of Mexico within this aspiring initiative, Partner2Connect. First pledge or commitment we are taking relates to infrastructure. We cannot speak to digital transformation if we don't have telecommunications networks that provide that connectivity. Therefore our commitment is this year to establish what we will call the small operator's Committee. This is a regulatory initiative and an initiative for cooperative regulation. Coordinating these small commercial and community networks identifying all areas of opportunity and where barriers are to regulation so they can grow and they can get their services through to more places. Now if we are realistic and here comes our second commitment, our second pledge, if we are realistic, the market will not resolve all problems related to connectivity. There are places where the market will never bridge. And that is why we have our project under the Department of Telecommunications and transport of Mexico. This will ensure satellite connectivity to many rural communities that they do not have connectivity. We are not only seeking to provide coverage but to train people so they can use and make best use of that connectivity in order to bring about meaningful connectivity that we all want in order to ensure that we generate welfare for people, but the population and I think that's the end goal of bringing these services to our people.

Our third pledge relates to a topic that I would say is always overdiagnosed perhaps. That's gender equality. We can't keep simply diagnosing the problem. We have to act and we are trying to do so through a project called experts who transform. This is a project that goes across our institution and we are looking to producing units and capsules for women working across our institution that will provide inspiring stories of how they have worked in their career in telecommunications. We will be bringing about skills training programs not only in areas of technical experience but in other activities such as media management and communications. And finally, and we are speaking about this here in Rwanda, cultural diversity as well as Spanish, we have 68 different languages in Mexico. We have 68 places of seeing and understanding the world. Through digital education in their own languages. These are the pledges that here we are making public and we are working to make them a reality. Thank you.

>> ALEX ROGERS: Thank you so much for these pledges. I think we actually agree coming from the private sector that the private sector and the market will not solve all problems. Will not address all problems. That's why public/private partnerships are important. We next give the floor to

the Director-General of the United Arab Emirates, Majed Sultan Al Mesmar.

>> MAJED SULTAN AL MESMAR: Thank you. Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, good afternoon to all of you. First allow me to begin by thanking the Republic of Rwanda for hosting WTDC-2022 and congratulate them for the first African country to host this and for the great opening. For every passing year we are getting closer to achieving the SDGs in 2030.

When I say getting closer, through slow but we are moving forward. And that's what we are betting on. We in the United Arab Emirates confirm that we are following the course of this noble human journey with great interest and significance.

And take this objective into consideration when developing our strategic national plans and projects.

In this context I'm honored to represent the telecommunication and digital Government regulatory authority in the United Arab Emirates in making the following pledges. First in the pillar of Internet access we commit to collect disaggregated data and to share experiences on achieving universal connectivity with the ITU-D sector experts for reference and applications. Second, within the same pillar, we commit to connect rural areas by broadband telecommunication technologies by 2026. Third, in the pillar of adoption we pledge to train 500,000 people through our digital academy by 2025 to improve their digital skills.

Fourth, in the pillar of value creation, we pledge to invest 1.5 million dollars to support the international center of digital innovation initiative. Through hosting iCoDI regional hub for the next five years and hosting workshops that enables Member States and ICT innovation. We pledge that 80% of our citizens in the UAE would have national digital identity by 2025. Sixth we commit to coordinate with relevant stakeholders to develop state of the art digital platforms for monitoring the UAE progress in achieving universal connectivity. As I announce these pledges before you today, reiterate the commitment of my country United Arab Emirates to spare no efforts to achieve the good and development of humanity. I thank you and I wish you a very successful WTDC.

>> ALEX ROGERS: We promise diversity of pledges and I think we are delivering.

Thank you very much for that.

Next we will have Ms. Preeti Sinha, UNCDF secretary. She is represented by colleagues Mike, Jane Jamison senior strategy advisor and Roslin, country lead for UNCDF in Rwanda.

>> PREETI SINHA: With my time I would like to make three pledges on behalf of the UN capital development fund that are all in alignment with the two key pillars of the Working Group 3. Digital innovation, and entrepreneurship, and Digital Economy.

First, UNCDF pledges to lead a multi-stakeholder leadership called digital

futures. It will organize a workforce comprising public and private sector actors. Digital futures will deliver advanced digital and 21st Century to 50,000 youth and women in multiple LDC locations.

To support the implementation of the digital futures, UNCDF has developed a partnership with IBM. We have the IBM skills build as well as an ecosystem of local organizations to support digital and workforce skills training. Second, UNCDF plans to lead a catalyst initiative. They will convene a strategic ecosystem of public and private sector partners, donors and development banks to accelerate the digitalization of thousands of MSEs while leveraging digital data to unlock new forms of capital for SMEs. They will be piloted in Africa and extended to Asia and Pacific. It builds on the learnings of UNCDF's previous flagship programs. To support the implementation of the digital catalyst, UNCDF is collaborating with Google as well as ecosystem to support the MSE digitalization component with a pilot phase currently underway. Pledges to deploy the inclusive development economy scorecard in at least 25 LDCs in Africa and Asia and Pacific. It is a policy tool to help develop strategies and ensure that strategies are inclusive of women and other vulnerable populations. It has been piloted in several countries and recognized as an important instrument in promoting inclusivity in Digital Economies.

Planning and resource allocation.

It is a demonstrable impact of UNCDF's role in supporting policy and collaboration with the public sector. Thank you.

>> ALEX ROGERS: Thank you so much for that. Skills training is so fundamental to every pledge here to moving forward. And the scorecards are very interesting. We now give the floor to Rajeev Suri from Immarsat joining virtually. Sir. I think we have to get volume. Audio.

>> RAJEEV SURI: Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you very much for the invitation too the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition Round Table. I'm Rajeev Suri. I look forward to giving you information and ideas on how Immarsat can make a meaningful contribution. The work of P2C is important and timely. Engaging stakeholders in mobilizing and resources, partnerships and commitments towards universal around meaningful connectivity is crucial. We know that meaningful connectivity can only become a reality when we all work together. Bringing connectivity to the hardest to connect community is key, as CEO of one of the world's leading satellite companies.

Immarsat is a leader in the global satellite communications and operating a system of 14 satellite that provide communication solutions to customers on land and in the air and at sea.

Immarsat as a long track record of operating mobile satellite telecommunications networks sustaining mission critical safety and operational practical. Today I'm pleased to talk about Immarsat to donate 1.2 million dollars satellite of airtime. Our pledge was announced on

February 24, 2022 and it is directed to focus area 1. Connecting people everywhere. Satellite technologies is essential to achieving connectivity, particularly in the world's hardest to connect communities. It is lot essential to preserving and saving lives when other technologies are not available due to disasters. We are helping to connect individuals and communities in developing nations, including those facing natural and manmade disasters. We applaud the Secretary-General and director of the BDT for their excellent leadership and important work they are doing with P2C. We hope that together we can make a real difference in reaching universal and meaningful connectivity. We look forward to contributing to the work of P2C, seeing the impact of the coalition and continuing our exchanges. Thank you very much. And let us work together to bring connectivity to all.

>> ALEX ROGERS: Thank you for that generous pledge. Now let's move to give the floor to Ms. Maria Alexandra Velez, senior director of Government regulatory affairs, SPA corporation, United States.

>> MARIA ALEXANDER VELEZ: Thank you. Good afternoon. I'm going to be the last and I hope to be the one with the shortest one you can relax a little bit.

Access to information and communication technologies is not only the basis for economic prosperity. It is also an essential support for the exercise of fundamental rights, the rights to education, to work, to health among others. And the pandemic as we all know highlighted this very clearly. A third of the world's population still lacks connectivity. Imagine how that lasts close to three years for them. To address the need for connectivity, Governments wireless operators and all members of the telecommunications systems need to come together and support the investment necessary to bridge the global digital divide. The tower industry which I represent is a critical part. Telecommunications ecosystem. Our business model is anchoring the principle of infrastructure sharing. And it has proven to be instrumental in accelerating access to quality mobile connectivity, for individuals and for businesses in emerging markets.

In this context, SPA is proud to be part of Partner2Connect. To support the understanding and socialization of how the tower industry is instrumental in securing the wireless infrastructure necessary to bring connectivity to rural and underserved areas. Among others, we have commissioned an independent study on the tower industry which will include public policy recommendations on how to incentivize an orderly and efficient deployment of infrastructure. Accelerate the deployment, reduced investment needs, reduced operational costs. And minimizing impact for the environment. We are also supporting training workshops for local authorities in the markets that we operate. As you all know, deploying infrastructure is a municipal part.

Today requires strong digital economy. And we are very proud to be part of the ecosystem that's going to make it a reality. Thank you very

much.

>> ALEX ROGERS: Thank you so much for that. The tower industry is part of the backbone of cellular and finding ways to create efficiency in deployment is important. That pledge is very much appreciated. Ladies and Gentlemen on behalf of all of us I would like to thank the panelists for the work they are pursuing. I also humbly and briefly add Qualcomm's pledge. For over 30 years Qualcomm has driven technology and enabling the reach of Voice&Data connectivity. For over a year Qualcomm has supplemented commercial efforts with wireless reach program, investing in bringing communications technology to those that need it most, impacting over 24 million people through 130 different projects in 49 countries. And today Qualcomm is honored to pledge our commitment to work closely with the Partner2Connect initiative and bring wireless technology to an additional 3 million people in the next three years through the wireless reach program.

In doing so, we particularly aim to bridge the digital for teachers and students and health care providers and patients and micro entrepreneurs and prepare students for the digital future of work. We look forward to collaborating with our partners at the ITU and with that, I want to thank the ITU, the ITU-D. And I want to particularly thank Doreen Bogdan-Martin for her tremendous leadership on the Partner2Connect initiative. Please join me in thanking the panelists and everyone for their tremendous pledges.

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Thank you so much Alex. And thank you to all of our amazing speakers for today. A round of applause as they exit the stage.

Before you leave, let's pause for a quick picture. If we could have the photographers to kindly get a snapshot. Yes. And --

>> Dear participants we kindly ask you to turn on your cameras for those who are joining online.

>> FIONA NARINGWA: We will take a quick picture. I would like all of you to welcome Susanna from the ITU to summarize how today went. The floor is yours.

>> Thank you. I promise you it won't be three minutes. It has been tremendous. We would like to thank everyone who made pledges. This is a new thing for ITU. Please we look forward to more. There will be another eight sessions and another three spotlights to look forward to. I want you to clap for all our speakers. We look forward to tomorrow. 9:30.

>> FIONA NARINGWA: Thank you. As she said we had discussed the challenges and opportunities related to digital development. We heard concrete pledges and new partnerships have been forged. Tomorrow at 9:30 a.m. we will have amazing sessions and amazing speakers that have been lined up. Looking forward to seeing you all here tomorrow at 9:30 a.m. Do have a good evening.

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