

Dear Mr. Director of the Telecommunication Development
Bureau,
Your Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here with you today at the opening of the ITU Regional Conference for Europe, organized in partnership with the national regulator of the Republic of Poland.

I would like to thank for the kind invitation to attend this important event.

I believe, you would agree that the regulators from the EU and ITU Member States have similar missions, despite the geographical diversity. ITU and national regulators play a major role in addressing the challenges of the dynamic technological and market developments in the sector. The wide deployment of the Internet networks opened a new era in our everyday lives and in the global telecommunications ecosystem. We need a better global understanding of developments like virtualization, cloud technologies, Internet of things, OTT services, etc. It is not an easy mission to find successful solutions at European and global level. These modern applications drive an increasing demand for network capacity and the operators are the key players to expand it. Creating conditions for investment and roll-out of broadband fiber networks, as well as of 4G and 5G mobile networks, is vital for the development of new, effective, integrated and intelligent public services to the benefit of consumers. In this context, the broadband infrastructure mapping is a key factor for success. It shall enable the assessment of the broadband initiatives to analyze the need for regulatory intervention and highlight the trends with

the aim of appropriate planning of public investment. In this line, the subject of the conference is extremely important.

The deployment of high speed broadband access networks is crucial for fulfilling the commitments of the Member States, related to the goals of Europe 2020. In this aspect, the priorities of the Republic of Bulgaria are outlined in the “Digital Bulgaria” National program. They are specified in the National plan for deployment of NGA broadband infrastructure, integral part of which is the Roadmap for its implementation. The main competences of the Communications Regulation Commission under the Roadmap are related to ensuring effective use of radio frequency spectrum allocated for provision of terrestrial public electronic communications services. For this purpose CRC is introducing in Bulgaria the provisions of the new European Commission Decisions on the harmonized use of radio frequency spectrum, leading an active and transparent dialog with the stakeholders.

As a result of the undertaken actions, the Internet speeds in Bulgaria are among the highest in the European Union (EU). Forty three per cent (43,0%) of the broadband Internet access consumers use download speeds of 30 to 99 Mbps. Bulgaria ranks among the first in Europe in the provision of broadband NGA access, where more than 70,0 % of all broadband subscriptions are provided by means of NGA networks. This is twice the EU average indicator of 35%. The number of mobile Internet access subscribers increased last year with an impact also on the indicator for mobile Internet access penetration per capita. According to preliminary data this indicator has reached 80,3%.

The wireless broadband Internet access is a key tool to improve competition and consumer choice and to enhance accessibility in remote and sparsely populated areas. The effective use of wireless technologies shall ensure high speed broadband

access in places where the deployment of fiber networks is economically inefficient.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The development of wireless broadband access is one of the tools for achieving the goals of Europe 2020 and plays a key role for provision of quality Internet access services. We participate and we are responsible for the implementation of the Digital Single Market Strategy for Europe. Reaching the targets shall allow better access for consumers and business to online goods and services across Europe. It shall accelerate the development of digital networks and services and shall strengthen the confidence in the digital environment.

I believe that all of us gathered here today have the will and willingness to discuss the important issues which shall mark the development of the sector in the near future.

Let me finally wish all of us a successful conference and a fruitful discussion!

Thank you for your kind attention!