



General Secretariat (SG)

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- To the Administrations ITU Member States
- ITU-D Sector Members
- Regulators
- Observer, Resolution 99 (Rev. Busan 2014)
- World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators contacts
- National Statistical Offices
- United Nations and Specialized Agencies
- Regional and Other International Organizations
- Regional Telecommunication Organizations
- Academia

Subject: **16th ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (ITU Headquarters, Geneva – 10 to 12 December 2018)**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have the pleasure of writing to you to follow-up to the invitation letter you received from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) dated 27 August 2018 (ref BDT/PKM/IDS/DM/048) inviting you to the upcoming 16th ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS-18). I am pleased to inform you that preparations for WTIS-18 have reached an advanced stage.

In this connection, I would like to share with you our observations arising from this year's data collection. Since the shift from 11 to 14 indicators for the computation of the ICT Development Index (IDI) in 2017, ITU has noted that countries are facing a challenge in collecting and submitting quality data. This is despite the fact that following the adoption of the new list of indicators, ITU organized and ran capacity building workshops in all the regions. For this year's IDI, only 42 per cent of all data points required to calculate the 2018 ICT Development Index (IDI) would be based on data submitted by countries, requiring ITU to estimate 58 per cent of data points. Furthermore, only 112 countries were able to submit data for more than half of the IDI indicators. The data collection this year also revealed that some of the data submitted by countries are not in line with ITU's agreed methodology resulting in the data not being sufficiently harmonized.

For these reasons, ITU has decided to postpone the publication of the IDI until 2019. This decision is to ensure that the IDI results are based on country data, so that the IDI remains the key benchmarking tool to track the global information society and to safeguard its accuracy and credibility. Until the publication of the 2019 IDI, ITU will work hard to strengthen the capacity of countries to collect and submit reliable and quality data. ITU will also inform all the countries that could not submit requested data to indicate which data was missing and invite those countries to seek support where needed.

Notwithstanding the above, there is however exciting news. WTIS-18 will launch the ICT price baskets, publish end of year 2018 ICT figures, and share the latest ICT developments and trends. On that occasion, we also look forward to sharing with you some remarkable news with regards to the world's population that is now online. The event will also see the launch of the Measuring Information Society Report, which features new findings on ICT skills and revenues and investments. As this is the last major ITU event before the end of the year, let me wish you in advance a Happy New Year! For those who will participate at the WTIS-18, we look forward to your contribution.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of three Chinese characters: 赵厚麟 (Zhao Houlin).

Houlin Zhao