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(WTIS-14)**

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Speech

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WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION/ICT INDICATORS SYMPOSIUM 2014

OPENING CEREMONY

MONDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2014
TBILISI, GEORGIA

OPENING SPEECH

BRAHIMA SANOU

DIRECTOR,
ITU TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BUREAU

Your Excellency, Mr Irakli Garibashvili, Prime Minister of Georgia,

Mr Dimitry Kumsishvili, First Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development,

Mr Vakhtang Abashidze, Chair of the Georgian Communications Commission,

Mr Houlin Zhao, Deputy Secretary-General, and Secretary General elect of ITU

Honourable Ministers,
Director-Generals,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

- It is an honour for me to welcome you to the 2014 edition of the *World Telecommunication and ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS)* here in Tbilisi, with its unique and ancient cultural heritage.
- I would like to thank the Government of Georgia for hosting the event and for the kind and warm hospitality extended to all of us.

- This year, WTIS is bringing you some very positive changes.
- For the first time, we are launching the Measuring the Information Society report during WTIS.
- The availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data and a robust international measurement framework is of paramount importance. For that reason, I recently commissioned a study aimed at evaluating our current data collection and processing. The expert will present to us his final report at this Symposium.
- Further, one of the key topics this year is big data. ICTs are part of the debate on the data revolution because data revolution or data capital, as some call it, is mainly driven and dependent on ICTs. This is why I commissioned a report on big data that will be presented this afternoon to trigger discussions.
- As you know, ITU's mandate and work in data, statistics and measuring the Information Society has been reinforced by resolution 8 of the sixth World Telecommunication Development Conference, and resolution 131 of the just-concluded ITU Plenipotentiary Conference.
- We count on your support in order for us to continue providing reliable data and statistics to all the stakeholders of the ICT ecosystem.
- I take this opportunity to thank all the Member States, International Organizations, industry, and experts that support our work in this area.
- Our two statistical expert groups – the Expert Group on Telecommunication and ICT indicators (EGTI) with around 500 members and the Expert Group on ICT Household Indicators (EGH) with around 300 members – work continuously to improve methodologies, define new indicators and review existing ones. I thank all the experts who work hard by contributing to the work of the two groups.

Your Excellency the Prime Minister of Georgia and our Gest of Honor

- I would like to take this opportunity to you and your Cabinet Members here present.

- Your Excellency, You have demonstrated political will by your government to embrace ICTs for socio-economic development. Your country has also set the bar high for the next hosts of this Symposium.
- **Thank you so much for gracing this Symposium by your presence here today.**
- To all the Ministers, Director Generals and other VIPs who are here with us and who will share their vision, expertise and ideas, I thank you and hope that you will also participate in future WTIS to continue this strategic dialogue.
- I also recognize and welcome the presence of our very high-level speakers and look forward to each session.

Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

- Let me now conclude by saying this: It is in fact, **Our** ideas and our actions that can help shape the 21st century agenda and make a real difference in people's lives. When I look at the work we do, beyond the figures, I see people.
- I see the very young boys and girls, I see women and men, I see people with disabilities, and I see the elderly who all rely on ICT to change their lives.
- ICT impacts each one of us, let us be the change agents driven by a shared vision - a vision to make the fruits of the Information Society accessible to all.
- I thank you for your attention.

Didi Madlava