

AMBASSADORS MEETING

**16.00, TUESDAY 21 APRIL 2015
ITU HEADQUARTERS, GENEVA**

OPENING REMARKS

HOULIN ZHAO

**SECRETARY-GENERAL,
INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION (ITU)**

Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

- Good afternoon, and thank you for coming to this Ambassadors Meeting today.
- During today's meeting we will cover the 2015 session of Council, the ITU 150 celebrations on 17 May, the 2015 WSIS Forum, and the Global Symposium for Regulators.
- I will also be saying a few words about the new Global ICT Entrepreneurship Initiative which we are launching, and events later in the year including the Radio Assembly, the World Radiocommunication Conference and the World Telecommunication and ICT Indicators Symposium.
- First, however, I would like to remind you that we will be celebrating the annual International Girls in ICT Day on Thursday – on the fourth day of the fourth month.
- Girls in ICT Day brings together thousands of young girls and women at hundreds of events around the world.
- Over the past few years we have already seen 3,500 events in 140 countries attracting over 110,000 girls – and this year we know that

there will be events in at least a dozen countries where we have never had events before, bringing our global total up to over 150 countries.

- Here, at ITU, over 100 girls from local schools will get to see and experience ICTs first-hand in practical workshops on coding, mobile apps, satellites, and robotics. In addition, at the career fair, they will learn about different job and study opportunities in the sector.
- We are very grateful for the support of our partners in organizing Girls in ICT Day: Novartis Foundation as a principal partner, LEGO Education as a content partner, and the Missions of Finland, Poland and the United States.

Council 2015

- Council 2015 will be held from 12-22 May 2015, here at ITU headquarters.
- Five new Council Member States were elected at PP-14: Azerbaijan, Lithuania, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Uganda – and we welcome them.
- C15 will be chaired by Wonki Min of the Republic of Korea, who also chaired PP-14. The vice-chair will be Julie Zoller of the USA.
- Main work of C15:
 - General policy, strategy and planning issues.
 - Preparations for major ITU events.
 - Implementation of the strategic plan and activities of the Union.
 - Membership issues.
- Main challenges for C15:
 - Approve the budget for the 2016-2017 biennium.
 - Approve operational plans for the Sectors and the General Secretariat.
 - Review revenue and expenditure and financial operating reports.

- Address staff issues and implementation of the HR strategic plan.
- Review reports from Council Working Groups.
- As per Decision 5, as modified at PP-14, C15 will be a completely paperless meeting. Documents can be accessed through the C15 website and the snyc app.
- C15 meetings will be webcast and interpreted in 6 languages.
- A briefing for new delegates will be organized at lunchtime on the first day of Council, Tuesday 12 May.

17 May

- On Sunday 17 May – in the middle of ITU Council – we will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of the signing of the First International Telegraph Convention in Paris on 17 May 1865.
- This was the event that brought the ITU into existence, and we are proud of our 150 year history.
- On 17 May, at the CICG, we will be celebrating with our membership and our staff here in Geneva and around the world.
- Events on the Sunday will be starting at 1pm, with an opening ceremony featuring very high-level speakers.
- This will be followed by the ITU 150 Awards Ceremony, an innovation break exhibition, and the Member Recognition Ceremony, featuring founder Member States as well as Partners and long-standing Sector Members.
- We will also be featuring videos of global celebrations from around the world, and other entertainments – and surprises! – during the afternoon.
- Let me encourage all of you to come along and share in the celebrations.

WSIS Forum

- In the week after this year's session of Council we will be holding the 2015 WSIS Forum from 25-29 May.
- This is hosted by ITU, but is a joint effort of all UN Agencies, with the aim of coordinating the implementation of the WSIS outcomes – in line with the request of the Tunis Agenda.
- The overall theme of the 2015 WSIS Forum is 'Innovating Together: Enabling ICTs for Sustainable Development'.
- The 2015 WSIS Forum is expected to discuss the link between the WSIS Action Lines and the Sustainable Development Goals, possibly proposing an impact matrix. This will be an important reference point in the future deliberations on WSIS and the SDGs.
- The WSIS High Level Track is planned for 26 and 27 May. It will be held at WIPO's premises, and will offer an opportunity to High Level Representatives to deliver high level policy statements in a multi-stakeholder set up. More than 100 high-level statements are expected.
- Five high level dialogues will be held on innovation, sustainable development, accessibility, cybersecurity, and gender.
- A ministerial round table will take place on 27 May. As of today, the presence of more than 40 ministers and 20 heads of regulatory authorities has been confirmed.
- All administrations are encouraged to ensure the presence of ministers as well as their national stakeholders.
- On 29 May, as part of the WSIS Forum, consultations on 'WSIS beyond 2015' will be held in order to provide a platform for updating all stakeholders on the progress and the way forward for the WSIS Overall Review.
- The WSIS Overall Review is going to kick-off on 1 June.

GSR

- The 15th Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) will take place in Libreville, Gabon, from 9 to 11 June 2015.
- It will be preceded by a series of pre-events on 8 June 2015.
- The theme this year is: *'Mind the Digital Gap - Regulatory incentives to achieve digital opportunities'*
- Participants will explore ways to ensure that all citizens can benefit from the social and economic opportunities brought by the digital economy.
- For digital opportunities to fully materialize in today's increasingly complex and pervasive environment, an adaptive, consultative and innovative approach to regulation is required more than ever. But what kind of regulation is therefore needed to close the digital gap?
- Regulators, policy makers, industry leaders and other key ICT stakeholders will share their views, engage in interactive discussions and identify best practices moving forward.

ITU Telecom World 2015 / Global ICT Entrepreneurship Initiative

- We are launching the Global ICT Entrepreneurship Initiative.
- Several Member States have highlighted the importance that innovative ICT-related SMEs (small, medium and micro-sized enterprises), start-ups and entrepreneurs have for sustainable social and economic development.
- They have asked ITU to explore ways of supporting countries' national innovation ecosystems, to help SME growth and development, and address rising unemployment, especially amongst youth.
- One of the most frequent actions undertaken by governments is the creation of technology parks, innovation centres and incubators to help grow start-ups and SMEs in a local/national environment.
- It has been noted however that there is a lack of an international platform to enhance efforts of governments to promote such SMEs,

enabling them to benefit from the global pool of expertise, finance and markets.

- To further support these national programmes and policies, ITU will be launching a new Global ICT Entrepreneurship Initiative, this year. This is a brand new global initiative to support ICT SMEs and digital entrepreneurship.
- The initiative will be a central part of ITU Telecom World 2015, which is taking place from 12 to 15 October, in Budapest, Hungary.
- I am inviting all ITU Member States to showcase their initiatives aimed at promoting ICT SMEs in Budapest – with the view of establishing a platform that will allow the promotion of partnerships between governments, private sector organizations, investors and entrepreneurs for accelerated innovation.
- This will be a central part of the Exhibition at ITU Telecom World 2015.
- Similarly, the Forum programme for this year's edition of ITU Telecom will also put a strong emphasis on this issue, under the theme '*Better, sooner: accelerating innovation*'.
- Let me invite all of you to reach out to your respective administrations and encourage them to join us in Budapest in October, and to bring your national initiatives to ITU Telecom World 2015.
- As a preparatory process leading towards ITU Telecom, we are proposing two consultative meetings during the WSIS Forum here in Geneva at the end of May, including a ministerial level breakfast and a consultative meeting with potential operational partners.

RA-15 & WRC-15

- The 2015 Radiocommunication Assembly (RA-15) will be held from 26 to 30 October 2015 here in Geneva.
- The duties and functions of the Radiocommunication Assembly are defined in Article 13 of the Constitution and Article 8 of the Convention, while the working methods of the Assembly are described in paragraph 1 of Resolution ITU-R 1-6.

- RA-15 will be followed by the 2015 World Radiocommunication Conference, WRC-15, which will be held in Geneva, from 2 to 27 November 2015.
- WRC-15 will review, and, if necessary, revise the Radio Regulations, the international treaty governing the use of the radio-frequency spectrum and the geostationary-satellite and non-geostationary-satellite orbits.
- Many issues will be discussed at WRC-15, including aeronautical, maritime and other issues, as well as flight-tracking, which was added to the agenda by PP-14.
- There are a number of so-called controversial issues, including the need for additional spectrum for mobile communications, which need to be balanced with the needs of the satellite and broadcasting sectors in order to ensure continued development.
- We are confident that membership, with its careful studies, and strategic understanding of the future development of our technologies, will be able to find the necessary compromises to satisfy the different parts of the radiocommunications ecosystem.
- In March, the second Conference Preparatory Meeting, CPM15-2, held here in Geneva, was the best-attended CPM ever, with 1,250 participants from 105 ITU Member States. The meeting made an important contribution to the future success of WRC-15, with the adoption of its Report.

WTIS

- The 13th World Telecommunication and ICT Indicators Symposium, WTIS, will take place in Hiroshima, Japan, from 30 November to 2 December.
- WTIS is organized by the Telecommunication Development Bureau, BDT, and hosted by the Government of Japan.
- WTIS-2015 will serve as an international forum to discuss international ICT policy and measurement topics.

- It will bring together ICT ministers, heads of national telecom/ICT regulatory authorities and national statistical offices, heads of international organizations, chief executive officers of private sector companies, and statistical experts from around the world.
- WTIS-2015 will feature several high-level debates addressing key questions related to ICT policy and measurement, including the role of ICT as a driver of innovation and entrepreneurship, in both developed and developing countries.
- WTIS-2015 will feature discussions on pertinent topics such as big data from the ICT sector and the data revolution, progress in measuring the impact of ICT, ICT indicators and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) monitoring framework and measuring ICT innovation, alongside new developments in data visualization.
- The results of the work of the Expert Group on Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (EGTI) and the Expert Group on Household Indicators (EGH) will be presented for adoption by the WTIS-2015.
- The WTIS-2015, open to all the ITU membership, is primarily targeted at those responsible for ICT statistics in relevant Ministries, regulatory agencies, telecommunication operating companies and national statistical offices. Experts interested in the subject of information society measurements are also welcome to attend the Symposium.

Questions & comments

- Let me now take this opportunity to open up the floor to any questions and comments you may have.