

GSR-23
Sharm-el-Sheikh
Opening remarks
Dr Cosmas Zavazava
Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau, ITU

Excellency Dr. Amr Talaat,

Eng. Hossam El-Gamal, NTRA Executive President and Chair of GSR-23,

Excellencies, Ministers here present,

ITU Secretary-General, Doreen Bogdan-Martin,

ITU Elected Officials,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I join those that spoke before me to welcome you to GSR-23, which is being held under the auspices of H.E. President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of The Arab Republic of Egypt. From the onset, I want to thank our host for the hospitality extended to all of us, and for the beautiful facilities provided to us.

It is great to be meeting in-person. It had been a while since we met in Vanuatu in 2019. GSR is a great platform to exchange and share experiences. I hope that we all take time to meet, engage and exchange at a personal level even on matters outside regulation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have recently experienced a number of challenges: the pandemic, natural disasters, and ongoing climate change impacts. We all know the quintessential nature of meaningful connectivity. To our regulators, the message is clear: let us regulate for **People – Planet – Prosperity**.

Even in the face of challenges, as there are many, that come with regulating a dynamic, fast-moving, and fast evolving sector such as ours. We should remind ourselves that, **“The road to success is always under construction.”** In that construction there is need for dialogue with other sector regulators, with industry and private sector and with the consumers.

As you may have noted, this year we put emphasis on what I call triple play: we have policy makers (Ministers), Regulators, and Industry. For we need collaborative and consultative regulation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are moving from narrow to cross-sectoral, from silo to collaborative, AND bridging silos and leaping gaps is now more important than ever.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The pre GSR-23 events were remarkable. Today and the next two days are going to be even more exciting. By including human-centric topics on in the agenda, we have taken GSR-23 a notch higher - a case of continuous improvement, you may say.

At this point, I want to thank all the Regulators for contributing to the GSR-23 Best Practice Guidelines consultations on “**Regulatory and economic incentives for an inclusive sustainable digital future**”. I thank our GSR Chair, Eng. Hossam El-Gamal for his leadership.

As I conclude, I want to say a few things about GSR-23 and it’s pre-events:

1. First, I want to thank our regulators who through the country reviews carried out by ITU on collaborative regulation and digital transformation pathways, shared their experiences, challenges, and good practices.
2. Second, GSR-23 has within it, novel regulatory approaches and innovative tools for regulators and policymakers.

3. Third, as part of the Regulatory Associations meeting, we launched a new initiative i.e. the **Digital Regulation Network** meant to facilitate and accelerate sustainable digital transformation through laid out approaches to collaborative regulation that will include twinning.
 4. Fourth, the Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers meeting was exciting and addressed the complex regulatory and business landscape which is shaping our digital future to be shared with the Regulators.
 5. And fifth, the Heads of Regulators Executive Roundtable was an eye-opener, rich in content, and provided a moment of sharing – which is critical and essential if we are to answer the questions: How can I learn from my neighbour? And, where do I go from here and how? What was also a remarkable moment was the adoption of the GSR-23 Best Practice Guidelines by Heads of Regulators. I must say, everyone involved in the consultation process deserves unstinting thanks.
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Ladies and Gentlemen,

I conclude:

- Today, more than ever, collaboration is the name of the regulation game.
 - Digital transformation has a fluid, borderless – and yes, multidimensional form.
 - New conversations and innovation should sum up GSR-23.
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The world has changed. For us to thrive, we need collaborative regulation across sectors, across borders, and across regions. In Egypt, there is an old saying: **One hand can't clap!**

I wish you a great GSR!
