

**H.E. Mr Dimitar Nedyalkov, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications of  
Bulgaria**

**Session 2 of the High-Level Segment, Monday 17 November at 16h15 – 17h30**

**The language of the statement – English**

**The contact details of the speaker's focal point – Ms Adelina Ognnyanska, e-mail**

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**Dear Mr. Chairperson,**

**Dear Madame Secretary General of the ITU,**

**Esteemed ITU Officials,**

**Honourable Ministers,**

**Distinguished Heads and Members of Delegations,**

**Excellencies,**

**Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great pleasure to participate in the World Telecommunications Development Conference - the ITU conference, which establishes global strategies for ICT development, fosters collaboration to bridge the digital divide, and creates digital transformation policies for sustainable future for countries all over the world.

The Republic of Bulgaria is actively working to bridge the digital divide by equalising access to digital technologies, internet connectivity and digital skills. As the world becomes increasingly digital, the gap between those who can fully participate in the digital ecosystem and those who cannot is becoming more visible. Technologies and digitalisation are key drivers of economic growth and competitiveness, but they must also be available and accessible to all. We place great importance on ensuring that more people and businesses have the opportunity to participate in the digital economy, regardless of their location, age, gender or social status.

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Recognizing the persistent and multidimensional nature of the digital divides within and between countries on issues such as digital infrastructure, connectivity, socio-economic situation (poverty and income inequalities), skills, age, gender and

rural-urban gaps, among others, Bulgaria reaffirms its commitment to global digital inclusion, including universal full digital connectivity as one of the main levers for sustainable development, social inclusion and economic opportunities.

In this context our country will continue to support innovative policies and mechanisms within the ITU that focus on fair and affordable access, capacity-building, technological innovation and collaboration, while stressing the interlinkages between the infrastructure that provides connectivity and digital skills that enable the use of digital technologies in all socio-economic spheres and activities.

We believe that the principles of non-discrimination, gender equality, protection of vulnerable individuals and groups, and universal access, must be protected and integrated in ITU Telecommunication Development Sector's work.

As the Republic of Bulgaria expresses its clear commitment to the ITU's activities and policies for the ICT sector development including the implementation of the UN Development Goals, I am pleased to inform you about the decision of the Republic of Bulgaria to present its candidacy for re-election to the ITU Council, for 2027-2030 mandate.

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The last but not least, we would like to thank our host – the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan – for the excellent facilities provided and the kind welcome extended to the delegates.

Finally, let me wish all of us a very successful World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC).

Thank you for your attention!