High Level Session on 'ITU enabling the wireless ecosystem'

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Opening speech

François Rancy, Director, ITU Radiocommunication Bureau

Excellences Ministers, Ambassadors and Heads of regulators, dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is privilege to welcome you to this high-level session within the 2017 WSIS Forum to address how the ITU is enabling the wireless ecosystem.

Just six months ago, we celebrated the 110th anniversary of the ITU Radio Regulations, and how these regulations help in providing certainty for the development of the radiocommunications ecosystem, by committing all the world's governments and regulators to the application of a single set of international regulations on the use of spectrum, which evolves with technologies and practices whilst protecting both existing and future investments.

This year will mark the 90th Anniversary of the CCIR, which was superseded by the ITU-R Study Groups 25 years ago. We are happy to start this celebration with you today, by discussing how the adoption of standards, reports and handbooks by the ITU-R membership in a process driven by consensus, is complementing the ITU Radio Regulations review process by World Radiocommunication Conferences so as to enable all spectrum stakeholders to invest in the manufacturing of equipment and devices, in the production of content and in the deployment of networks and services to develop and maintain a sustainable and vibrant wireless ecosystem.

Today most of the attention of government and regulators is focused on ensuring that internet access is made available to all the citizens in their countries. By 1Q 2017, global Internet penetration was reaching 49.6%,

with mobile internet penetration at 49.1%. This highlights the role that wireless is playing and will continue to play in providing access to information worldwide, and the importance of ensuring that the wireless ecosystem continues to grow in a sustainable manner.

Because spectrum is becoming so important, governments and regulators will be increasingly subject to pressure from vested parties to take decisions that affect the wireless ecosystem. In this context, the ITU-R process, which associates all spectrum stakeholders, guarantees that ITU-R outputs will continue to provide you with the best guidance and practices to manage spectrum and ensure that the citizens in your countries enjoy the most efficient, affordable and sustainable wireless solutions.

For the discussion of this afternoon, we have invited several ministers and regulators to present their views on this topic. We have also invited four keynote speakers, who are prominent actors in building the global wireless ecosystem and I would like to give them the floor now.