



## **WSIS Forum 2020: Open Consultation Process, Final Brief**

**Friday 28 February 2020, 14:00-16:00 in Room A**

Mr Malcolm Johnson,  
Deputy Secretary- General, ITU

Distinguished colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I welcome you to this **final briefing** of the WSIS Forum 2020 Open Consultation Process on Thematic Aspects and Format on behalf of ITU our co-organizers, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP.

The main purpose of this meeting is to provide you all the updates on the preparations and also brief you on the outcomes and analysis of the Open Consultation Process.

Firstly, I am sure many of you are wondering whether the WSIS Forum will continue as planned due to the Covid-19 situation. In ITU we have a contingency plan covering all eventualities. [We have provided advise to delegates on our website](#). In Geneva all the UN organizations are coordinated and working closely with the WHO and the Swiss authorities. At a Security Management Team meeting yesterday for Geneva based UN organizations it was agreed not to cancel any meetings taking place in Geneva and there are no travel restrictions. However, as you may know the Swiss government this morning cancelled the Motor Show and issued a temporary ban until March 15 on public gatherings with more than 1,000 attendees. We recognize that we need to give plenty of notice if the WSIS Forum is to be postponed so that participants do not lose their money on hotel bookings and flights. We will continue working closely with Swiss authorities and WHO and advise participants as early as possible of any change in the situation. We have the technology to continue the event using remote participation and webcasting and will of course provide mitigating measures and advice for those physically present. It will be an opportunity to show the power of technology to overcome the challenges posed by this virus.

This year we had a record number of participation in terms of inputs, comments and submissions to the open consultation process. This is proof that the foundations of a just and equal information society set by the Geneva Plan of Action more than 15 years back still remain crucial to all WSIS stakeholders.

The many submissions received show the positive energy and commitment towards the Forum – we received over 350 contributions from Stakeholders worldwide during online discussions, face-to-face meetings and direct official submissions. It is encouraging to note that the highest contribution is made by the Civil Society at 25%, this marked an increase number from last year followed by Government at 22%, followed by Private Sector at 20%, Academia at 18% and International Organisations at 15%.

Building on the OCP, the first draft of the agenda has been published. The agenda clearly displays our special effort to engage with diverse multistakeholders and to display ICT solutions and innovations for SDGs at the WSIS Forum. Along with the UN Family and

all involved stakeholders, we also ensure that the Agenda and programmes also shows a clear alignment of the WSIS Action lines with the SDGs.

The WSIS Prizes 2020 Champions have been announced and we congratulate you for the innovative and creative promotional strategies used for the projects. Out of these, 18 Winners and 72 Champions will be acknowledged and awarded during the Forum in forthcoming month.

The WSIS Forum is extra budgetary and every year we raise funds to defray the operational costs through partnerships. I would like to take this opportunity to thank UAE for their confirmation as the Platinum Partner of WSIS Forum 2020. Also, special thanks to Saudi Arabia as the Gold Plus Partner and Qatar as the Gold Partner.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the following confirmed partners:

Partner for Specific Activities:

Oman, Switzerland, Japan and IEEE

Contributing Partners:

Poland, Rwanda, Senegal, ICANN and ISOC

Supporting Partner:

IFIP, Cyberpeace Foundation, University of Geneva and GCOA

We look forward to welcoming you at the WSIS Forum in April.