

Ref: WSIS Forum 2023/01
Contact: Gitanjali Sah
Tel: +41 22 730 6240
Fax: +41 22 730 64 53
E-mail: wsis-info@itu.int

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To: All WSIS Stakeholders

- Governments
- Private Sector
- Civil Society
- Academia/ Technical Community
- International Organizations

Invitation to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as the co-organizers, are pleased to invite you to the WSIS Forum 2023, which ITU will host. The WSIS Forum is scheduled to be held from 13 to 17 March 2023 at the ITU Headquarters premises in Geneva, and remotely, under the theme of *WSIS Action Lines for building back better and accelerating the achievement of the SDGs*. Virtual sessions will continue in April and May 2023.

The WSIS Forum represents the world's largest annual gathering of the 'ICT for development' multistakeholder community and is a global multistakeholder platform facilitating the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines for advancing sustainable development. The platform provides an opportunity for information exchange, knowledge creation and sharing of best practices, while identifying emerging trends and fostering partnerships.

The WSIS Forum builds upon the outcomes of the UN General Assembly Overall Review of the implementation of the WSIS outcomes (UNGA Resolution 70/125) that recognized the necessity of holding this Forum on an annual basis and called for close alignment between WSIS and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this context, the WSIS Forum will leverage the WSIS-SDG Matrix and serve as a platform for discussing the role of ICTs as a means of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, with due regard to the global mechanism for follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (UNGA Resolution A/70/1).

The WSIS Forum is organized with the engagement of other United Nations Agencies, including FAO, ILO, ITC, UNDESA, UNEP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNODC, UPU, UN Women, UN Tech Bank for LDCs, UNU, WFP, WHO, WIPO, WMO and UN Regional Commissions.

Its format, agenda, and thematic focus are the result of an open consultation process with the involvement of all WSIS stakeholders. The Forum will build upon two tracks, the *High-Level Track*, consisting of policy statements, interactive high-level dialogues, a WSIS Prize ceremony, a ministerial round table, and the *Forum Track*, which will offer participants a series of WSIS Action Line facilitation meetings, country workshops, thematic workshops, training sessions, special tracks on various thematic areas, knowledge cafés, a Hackathon as well as an exhibition addressing issues that are critical to WSIS implementation and follow-up in a multistakeholder setting.

To ensure gender balance at the WSIS Forum 2023, we encourage all WSIS stakeholders to plan gender-balanced representations and nominate women speakers for sessions and workshops, in particular the high-level segment.

Relevant documentation, the format and timeline, agenda and registration can be accessed at www.wsis.org/forum. We look forward to welcoming you to the WSIS Forum 2023.

Yours faithfully,

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Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Secretary-General, ITU

Ms Audrey Azoulay
Director-General, UNESCO

Ms. Rebeca Grynspan
Secretary-General, UNCTAD

Mr. Achim Steiner
Administrator, UNDP