

H. H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai,

Your Highnesses,

H.E. Charlot Salwai, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu

H.E. Abdullah Abdullah, Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Your Excellencies,

H.E. Houlin Zhao, the ITU Secretary-General,

The elected members of the ITU

Distinguished Guests,

Holding the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in the United Arab Emirates is a testament from the international telecommunications community of the UAE achievements in the field of rational use of telecommunications technology for the benefit of humanity, state building, as well as economy and civilization.

Today, thanks to God and the efforts of the UAE leaders and citizens, the country is at the forefront of the region in the use of telecommunications technology for the prosperity of humanity and the progress of civilization, and in TRA, we are proud that we guard the gate in providing the best possible quality in this field.

As the figures show, the UAE ranked second globally in mobile subscriptions, fourth globally in the percentage of access to computer from home, seventh globally in percentage of households with internet access, and eighth globally in the percentage of overall Internet users. However, the UAE has ranked first regionally in all these percentages, which highlights the role of telecommunications technology in achieving sustainable development in our country.

Your Highness,

Mr. Zhao,

Distinguished Guests,

This excellence has been achieved thanks to God and the efforts of the government in developing the telecommunications infrastructure, which is regulated and monitored by TRA, to ensure the commitment of the executing companies to the highest international standards in accordance with the best practices adopted in technology and regulations.

In this context, TRA is cooperating with local telecom operators to complete the infrastructure and frequencies of the fifth generation communication network (5G), which will be launched publically before 2020, making the UAE among the first countries globally to adopt the 5G.

To support this role, TRA is leading the Arab Spectrum Management Group, with a view to agreeing on the fifth generation spectrum in the Arab region during WRC-2019.

Your Highness,

Mr. Secretary-General,

Distinguished Guests,

Under the directives of the wise leadership, TRA has contributed to the ultimate goal of the telecommunications sector, namely, sustainable development and human service, which is in line with the UAE's policy to spread happiness as a key component of the UAE lifestyle.

The telecommunications role in achieving happiness and improving life quality is a comprehensive and integrated one, and we are pleased that, today, the UAE represents the best global model for the efficiency and success of this role not only in daily life matters but also in linking the government and business sectors through latest technologies.

In this context, TRA has played a key role in providing the necessary regulatory requirements for electronic and smart government at the federal and local levels. It has also provided the regulatory structure required to use new technologies such as cloud computing, big data, e-learning and, more recently, the Blockchain technology. Today, the UAE has become the largest laboratory outside America and Western Europe for the use of Blockchain in government and commerce.

I am delighted to invite you to take advantage of your presence in the UAE in the next few days to learn more how telecommunications technology can practically achieve happiness and improve life quality.

Welcome to the UAE, the open laboratory of future technologies.

Thank you

Al Salamou Alaykom.