

tinuing cost of diesel fuel to power generators across many networks' base stations is still eating away at profit margins — and polluting the environment.

Robert G. Conway, CEO and Member of the Board of the GSM Association (GSMA) said that in the mobile industry which he represents, “energy is obviously one of the key elements powering our ability to reach out and connect people”. But at the same time “we need to reduce that energy consumption, and as part of connecting people, we need to connect those who are off the electrical grid”. As mobile network infrastructure is built in increasingly inaccessible regions, operators need a viable alternative to diesel. Mr Conway outlined GSMA's “Green Power for Mobile” programme, which has set the goal of helping the industry use renewable energy sources for new and existing off-grid base stations in developing countries.

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Mr Conway shared another vision with the participants on how individuals can control their energy consumption. The mobile phone, for example, should empower consumers to monitor and lower their power consumption in real time, using smart meters and embedded sensors in other machines in their homes and offices. “Imagine a future in which we have a phone in our home, and devices which have chips in them. These radio chips would be connected to the phone and this would tell you the amount of consumption in your own home. As you switch down the lights, you see the reduction of energy consumption and the cost saved,” he said. “As much as we want to think green, the reality is that people need incentives. One of the greatest incentives is cost,” he added. If people can see immediately how much money they save by reducing energy use, that will make a difference. “That vision is possible and achievable, and with broadband and mobile broadband, it becomes a reality,” said Mr Conway.

Sunil Bharti Mittal, Chairman and Group CEO of Bharti Enterprises, India, said that India is beginning to bridge the digital divide which was “staring them in the face” only a few years ago. “We are now connecting 10 to 12 million people