# Connect and unite

## Outcomes of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference

ITUPP
BUCHAREST2022

26 September – 14 October 2022
Bucharest, Romania

ITU

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# Ready for a new era

**By Houlin Zhao,** ITU Secretary-General

As we approach the end of 2022, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is set to embark on a new era in the quest to connect the world. Agreements reached at the recent ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) in Bucharest, Romania, outline our priorities for the next four years and indicate the direction for ITU's work well into the future.

By putting universal connectivity and sustainable digital transformation at the centre of our new Strategic Plan, ITU Member States have asserted decisively that information and communication technologies must go hand in hand with globally inclusive sustainable development.

Key conference outcomes — including new resolutions on artificial intelligence (AI), sustainable space policies, and mitigating global pandemics — will help build a global economy and society that is more sustainable, more prosperous, fairer, and more connected.

PP-22 has given us a new leadership team, and our membership made history by electing Doreen Bogdan-Martin as the first woman Secretary-General in our organization's 157-year history. We also have a new ITU Council and a new Radio Regulations Board. I congratulate all of them and am confident their work will rejuvenate ITU, as well as benefit the world at large.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the PP-22 host country, Romania, both for first-class conference management and for wonderful hospitality.

This edition of the *ITU News Magazine* reviews some highlights of the conference — the 21st Plenipotentiary since ITU's integration into the United Nations family.

> " *Agreements reached in Bucharest indicate the direction of ITU's work well into the future.* "
>
> Houlin Zhao

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## Outcomes of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference

Cover photo: ITU/A. Smith

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# PP-22 welcomes ITU Member States



From left to right: Doreen Bogdan Martin, Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau; Chaesub Lee, Director of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau; Malcolm Johnson, ITU Deputy Secretary-General; Houlin Zhao, ITU Secretary-General; Sorin Mihai Grindeanu, Deputy Prime Minister of Romania; Sebastian Burduja, Minister of Research, Innovation and Digitalization of Romania; Mario Maniewicz, Director of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau



Sabin Sărmaș, President of Romania's Information Technology and Communications Committee and Chairman of PP-22



Cantus Mundi Choir and National Chamber Choir Madrigal-Marin Constantin
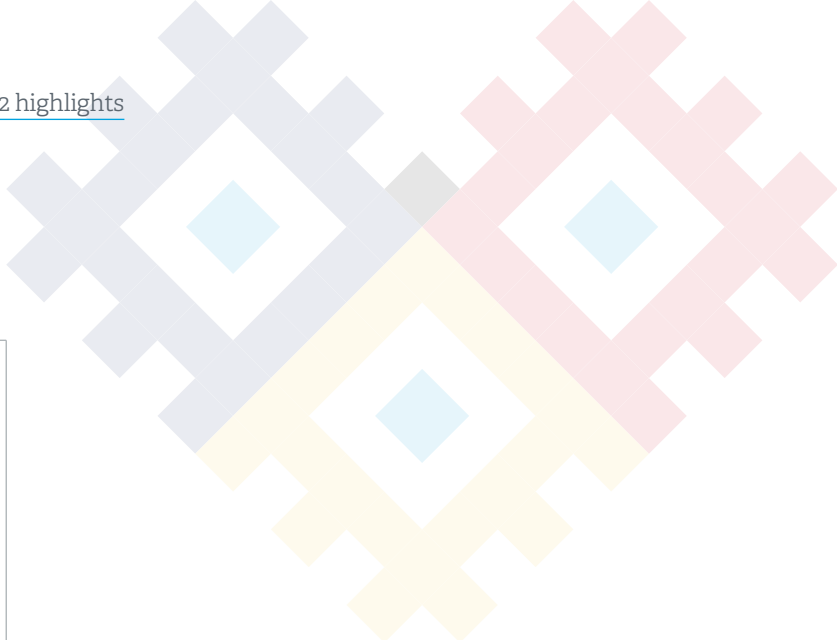
> *It is an honour and a privilege for us to organize the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 in a Member State of the European Union for the first time in 30 years.*

Sorin Mihai Grindeanu
Deputy Prime Minister of Romania

Sorin Mihai Grindeanu speaking at the PP-22 Opening Ceremony

> *It is essential that we seize the opportunities of digital technology while protecting against its risks.*
>
> António Guterres
> United Nations Secretary-General

António Guterres in a video message at the PP-22 Opening Ceremony
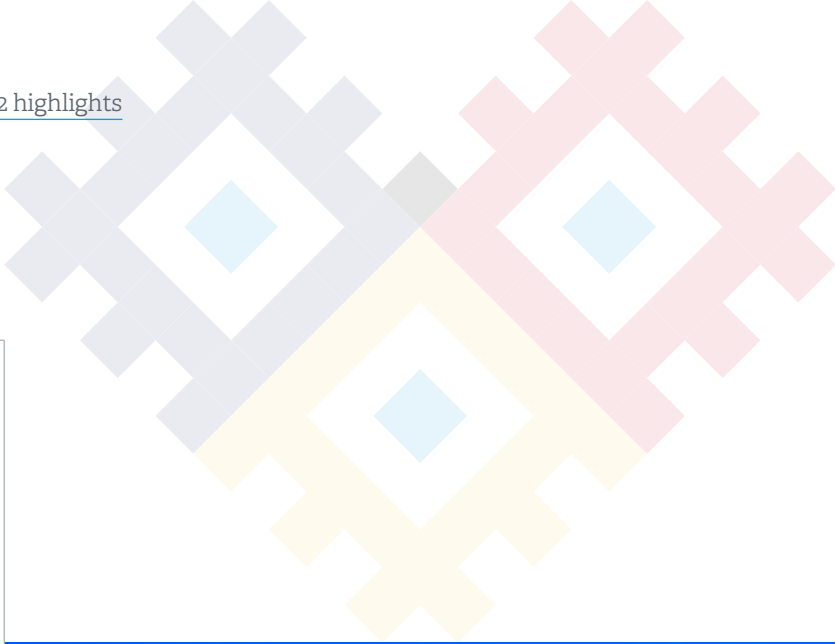
> *This is a momentous occasion, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members, partners and others for their successful and tireless work in promoting ICTs.*

Houlin Zhao
ITU Secretary-General
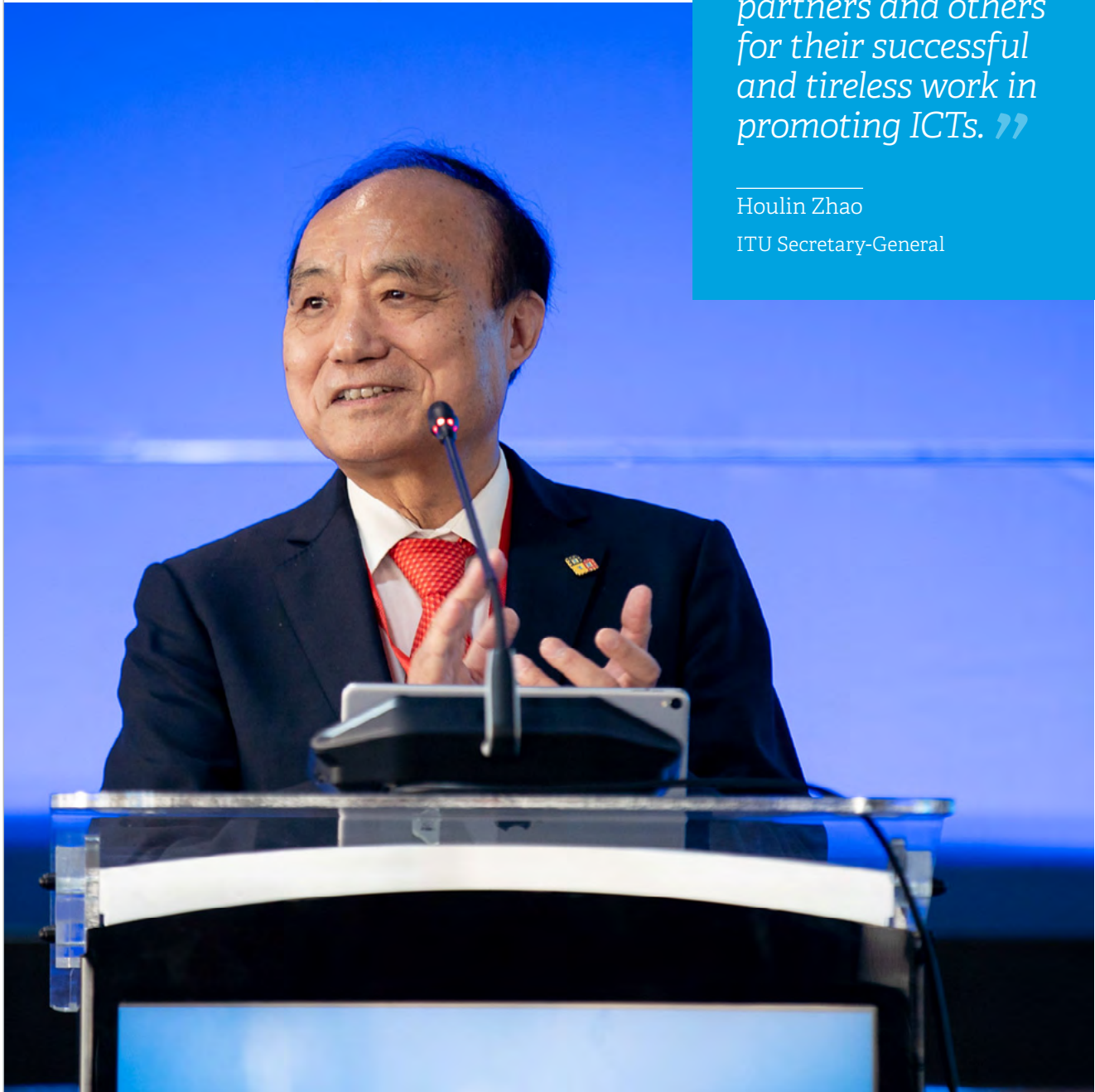
Houlin Zhao speaking at the PP-22 Opening Ceremony

> *It's normal to feel overwhelmed by the pace of innovation but also blessed that we can be here to discuss it, to debate it, to decide what we'll do further and how we answer the difficult questions that lie before us.*

Sebastian Burduja

Minister of Research, Innovation and Digitalization of Romania



Sebastian Burduja speaking at the PP-22 Opening Ceremony

# Setting the agenda …

The International Telecommunication Union's (ITU's) 21st Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) opened in Bucharest, Romania, with delegates from around the world pursuing digital cooperation and transformation for the good of all.

PP-22 set ITU's general policies, adopting four-year strategic and financial plans, and addressing key issues related to information and communication technologies (ICTs) as requested by ITU members.

More than 3000 participants attended PP-22, including heads of government, ministers and other delegates from most of 193 ITU Member States, as well as representatives from private companies, academic institutions and national, regional and international bodies.

PP-22 took place from 26 September to 14 October in Bucharest's Palace of Parliament.

## Some key topics discussed at PP-22

Applying AI technologies for good

Bridging the standardization gap

Confidence-building and sustainable development in outer space

Connect 2030 including broadband

Empowering women and girls through digital transformation

Expanding digital inclusion

Frequency assignments by military radio installations for national defence services

How new technologies can mitigate the climate crisis

How technologies can protect against global pandemics

Internet of Things for smart and sustainable cities and communities

## … for a digital future

# Participation at ITU's 2022 Plenipotentiary

**3234**
total participants

**2**
deputy prime ministers

**64**
ITU Sector Members

**2940**
physical participants

**87**
ministers

**4**
United Nations and other entities

**294**
virtual participants

**71**
deputy ministers

**68**
observer organizations

**184**
Member States represented
+ Observer State of Palestine

**106**
ambassadors

**27**
heads*
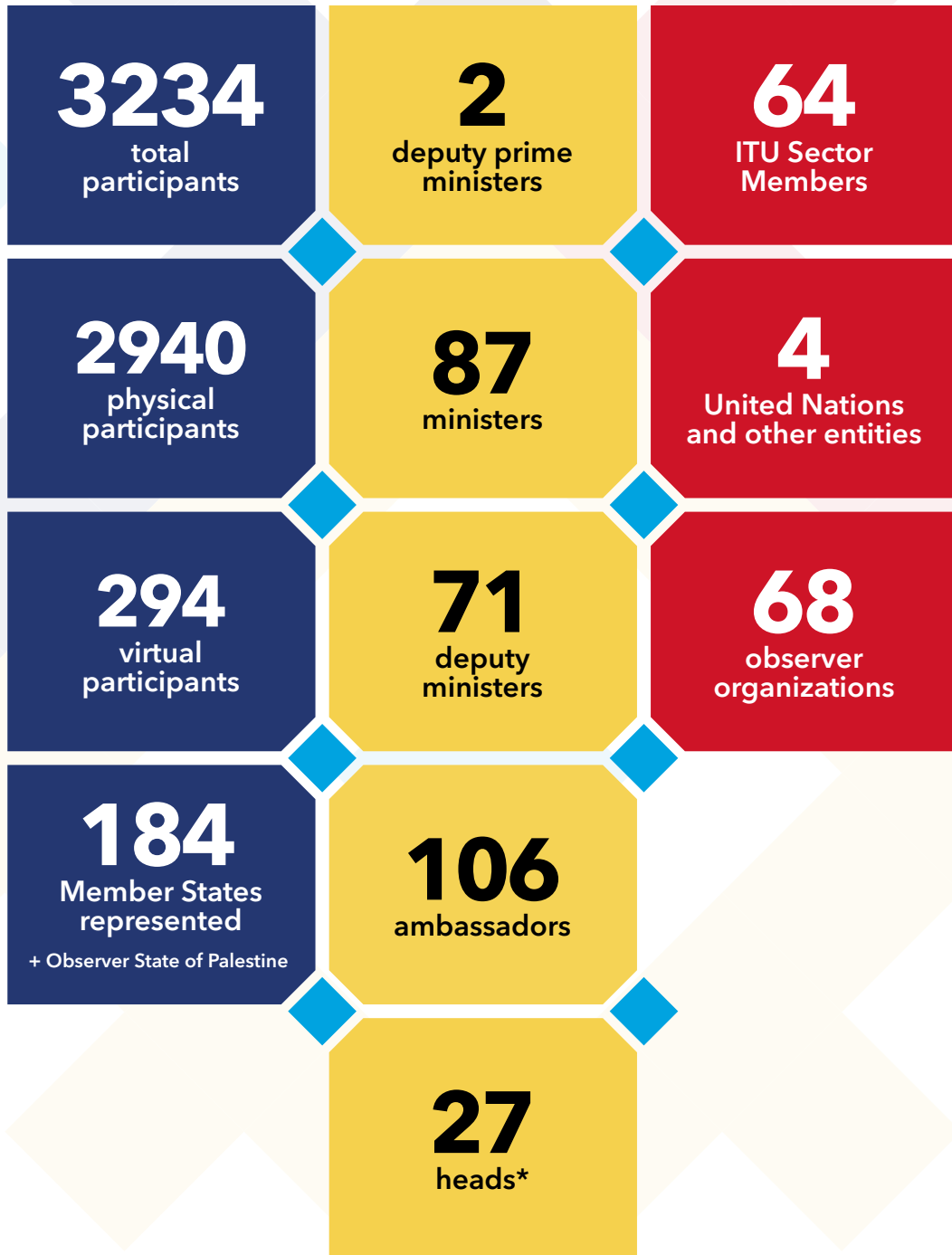
*\* Heads of intergovernmental regional telecommunications organizations and other special guests*

# Conference structure

Sabin Sărmaș, President of Romania's Information Technology and Communications Committee, was elected Chairman of PP-22.

**The conference comprised three substantive committees**

| Committee 5 (COM5) *Policy and Legal* | Committee 6 (COM6) *Administration and Management* | Working Group of the Plenary (WGPL) |
|---|---|---|
| chaired by **Mina Seonmin Jun of the Republic of Korea** | chaired by **Vernita Harris of the United States** | chaired by **Kwame Baah-Acheamfuor of Ghana** |

**The statutory committees of PP-22 comprised Committee 1 (Steering) composed of the Chairman and Vice Chairmen of the Conference and of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the other committees and Working Groups of the Plenary**

| Committee 2 (COM2) *Credentials* | Committee 3 (COM3) *Budget Control* | Committee 4 (COM4) *Editorial* |
|---|---|---|
| chaired by **Al-Ansari Al-Mashakbeh of Jordan** | chaired by **Bakhtiyar Mammadov of Azerbaijan** | chaired by **Christian Rissone of France** |

# Connecting and uniting in Romania

The highest decision-making body of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) opened in Bucharest, Romania, on 24 September 2022, with delegates from around the world pursuing digital cooperation and transformation for the good of all.

ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22), featured elections for the organization's top management posts — Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, and Directors for Radiocommunication, Telecommunication Standardization, and Telecommunication Development — along with the 12-seat Radio Regulations Board and 48-seat ITU Council.

"We are in the middle of a digital revolution that enables and provides the means for the development of new industries and converged services, such as smart vehicles, health care, smart cities, and homes," said Romania's Vice Prime Minister Sorin Grindeanu in his opening speech to PP-22.

> *We are in the middle of a digital revolution that enables and provides the means for the development of new industries and converged services, such as smart vehicles, health care, smart cities and homes.*

Sorin Grindeanu

Vice Prime Minister, Romania

"At this turning point in technological development, we must not forget our essential duty to respect the human being," he added, stressing the need "to protect the freedom and prosperity of future generations, in whose lives the technologies we see today as emerging will play a determining role."

ITU is the United Nations (UN) specialized agency for information and communications technologies (ICTs). As the conference opened in the Romanian capital, ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao said efforts must be expanded to make technology accessible and affordable to everyone, everywhere.

Digital networks and technologies have empowered billions of people worldwide, facilitating business, education, government services, trade, and social interactions through the toughest phases of COVID-19. Yet Internet uptake has slowed over the past year, leaving 2.7 billion people – or one-third of the world's population – still unconnected.

"Equitable access to ICTs is not just a moral responsibility, it is essential for global prosperity and sustainability," said Zhao, who has led the organization for the past eight years. "The decisions made here in Bucharest will determine our direction and priorities in line with the evolving needs of ITU's diverse and growing global membership, helping shape the future of the information society in both developed and developing countries."

## Shaping global digital growth

Delegates at the quadrennial conference include government ministers and officials, representatives from national, regional, and international bodies, academic institutions, and the private sector – companies dealing with telecommunications and the Internet – reflecting an aspect of ITU's membership mix that is unique in the UN system.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres highlighted "the opportunity to form common positions that will shape global digital transformation for years to come" and urged delegates to "seize the opportunities of digital technology while protecting against its risks."

In a pre-recorded video message, he called on the high-level audience from government and industry "to put humanity's progress at the centre of your discussions" over the next three weeks.

*The decisions made here in Bucharest will determine our direction and priorities in line with the evolving needs of ITU's diverse and growing global membership, helping shape the future of the information society in both developed and developing countries.*

————

Houlin Zhao
ITU Secretary-General

## How the conference works

The Plenipotentiary Conference, held every four years, enables nations and governments to reach coordinated decisions on the advancement of vital technologies. PP-22 provides a crucial forum for governments spanning every world region to build consensus on the radio and satellite harmonization, telecom standardization, and digital development.

The election for ITU's next Secretary-General began in the morning of Thursday, 29 September. Elections for ITU's senior management team followed.

After all elections concluded, 2500 delegates from ITU's 193 Member States began their discussions to decide on the organization's strategic and financial plans, as well as set out its roadmap for connecting the world over the coming four-year period.

"In a world increasingly dependent on technology, ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference is an opportunity to address crucial topics that will shape our digital future for generations to come," said Sabin Sărmaș, PP-22 Chairman and President of Romania's Information Technology and Communications Committee. "Our primary goal – to improve people's lives – can only be achieved by adopting a shared policy blueprint reflecting green, gender, and youth inclusion priorities. This is what I, along with the Government of Romania, will stand for during PP-22."

Read on for more highlights and outcomes and achievements of PP-22.

*In a world increasingly dependent on technology, ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference is an opportunity to address crucial topics that will shape our digital future for generations to come.*

Sabin Sărmaș

PP-22 Chairman and President of Romania's Information Technology and Communications Committee

# High-ranking delegates deliver policy statements

During the first week of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 high-ranking delegates from ITU Member States, for the most part ministers responsible for telecommunications and ICTs, were invited to deliver policy statements on sharing their country's plans to accelerate digital transformation.

Statements included national accomplishments, commitments, announcement of new partnerships and initiatives, as well as required support by ITU as an organization.

See all PP-22 policy statements.

# ITU elects new management for 2023–2026

ITU Member States elected its top executives during the 21st Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22):

- **Doreen Bogdan-Martin** of the United States was elected to the post of ITU Secretary-General.

- **Tomas Lamanauskas** of Lithuania was elected to the post of ITU Deputy Secretary-General.

- **Mario Maniewicz** of Uruguay was re-elected to the post of Director of the ITU's Radiocommunication Bureau (BR).

- **Seizo Onoe** of Japan was elected to the post of Director of ITU's Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB).

- **Cosmas Zavazava** of Zimbabwe was elected to the post of Director of ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT).

This is the first time ITU Member States have elected a woman Secretary-General in ITU's 157-year history. PP-22 also elected the twelve members of the Radio Regulations Board (RRB) and the members of the ITU Council.

The newly-elected officials will take office on 1 January 2023, for a four-year term.

Read more about the elections and the results.

# Doreen Bogdan-Martin
## United States

# Elected ITU Secretary-General

> *We're 157-years old, but what we represent – connecting the unconnected, bringing digital technologies and applications to all the world's people – it's never mattered more.*

Doreen Bogdan-Martin received 139 votes from Member States at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference. 172 Member States were present and voting, and the required majority was 83.

# Doreen Bogdan-Martin's vision for ITU

"We're 157-years old, but what we represent – connecting the unconnected, bringing digital technologies and applications to the world's people – it's never mattered more," says Doreen Bogdan-Martin, newly elected as the next Secretary-General of the International Communication Union (ITU). "The role of ITU has never been more important."

Connectivity will be a key enabler for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals set out by the United Nations for 2030, Bogdan-Martin notes. This has become especially evident over the past three years. "The pandemic demonstrated how much we rely on connectivity, and how much digital undercuts every sector of the economy," she says.

"COVID-19 was a wake-up call. It was a real game changer for connectivity." As countries around the world strive to build back better, Bogdan-Martin adds, "ITU can, and must, be at the very centre of global digital transformation."

This means mobilizing global support to connect the 2.7 billion people who still lack Internet access, with unprecedented funds, commitment, and public-private partnerships. One good example is Partner2Connect, the global initiative Bogdan-Martin put together as Director of ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau over the last four years.

> *It's not just connecting you to the Internet. It's about what you can do with that connectivity.*

> *Let's not talk about One ITU, let's actually be One ITU.*

For more insights, watch the full video interview.

Partnerships and collaboration will remain a key focus in her new role, as ITU strives to ensure making connectivity not only universally available but meaningful for every kind of user. "It's no longer just about the connection, Bogdan-Martin explains in an interview following her election in Bucharest, Romania. "It's not just connecting you to the Internet. It's about what you can do with that connectivity."

Promoting digital skills to leverage and use connectivity, while ensuring that connectivity is trusted and safe, affordable, and empowering, remains an important focus. "It's the whole of what the digital ecosystem can bring – that goes much beyond the actual connection," she says.

At a time of heightened global tensions, the world needs a neutral forum for international cooperation on connectivity where all members can work together to connect the world, regardless of current geopolitical challenges, she adds, calling this "the beauty of ITU being 193 Member States, having close to 900 Sector Members, 150-plus academic institutions and civil society." This unique multi-stakeholder membership "makes ITU rich, makes ITU meaningful, and makes us relevant."

The need for digital connectivity to achieve sustainable development stands out as an important point of consensus across the international community. "That's the sort of shared vision around which we can all unite, put aside our differences, and find ways to connect the unconnected – because a fully connected planet benefits everyone," she says.

Asked about her first 100 days in office, which will begin on 1 January 2023, Bogdan-Martin outlines her vision of an "ITU that inspires, includes and innovates."

Key objectives for her include fostering **meaningful strategic partnerships** with ITU staff and Member States through "much listening and intensive dialogue"; **transforming delivery** to make ITU the preeminent thought leader and reference point on digital issues; and ensuring **results-based implementation** of ITU's strategic, financial and sectoral plans.

Does being the first woman ever elected as leader of the 157-year-old organization entail added responsibility to pave the way for other women in the field? "I think all of us would like to see more women and girls engaged in the technology sector as a whole – and in the work of ITU," she says. (See: Setting sights on gender parity)

Lastly, Bogdan-Martin has earmarked "One ITU" as the overarching theme for her first hundred days – and beyond – as ITU's next Secretary-General. Regional officials and headquarters need to work in tandem, while radiocommunication, standardization, and development work must be consistently integrated with each other. "Let's not talk about One ITU, let's actually be One ITU."

## Career path |
### *Doreen Bogdan-Martin*

*Doreen Bogdan-Martin was elected at the ITU Plenipotentiary in 2018 to the position of Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau, and has nearly completed her four-year term in that position.*

*From 2008 until 2018, she served as Chief of ITU's Strategic Planning and Membership Department, advising two Secretary-Generals and overseeing ITU's corporate communications, external affairs, corporate strategy and membership – as well as managing the ITU-UNESCO Broadband Commission for Digital Development.*

*Prior to this, she headed the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau's Regulatory and Market Environment Division and Regulatory Reform Unit.*

*Prior to joining ITU in 1994, Bogdan-Martin was a Telecommunication Policy Specialist at the National Telecommunication and Information Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce.*

# Tomas Lamanauskas

Lithuania

## Elected ITU Deputy Secretary-General

> *The biggest power that we as the ITU have is the attention, credibility, and the mandate of the countries.*

Tomas Lamanauskas received 105 votes, with 179 Member States present and voting and with a required majority of 89.

# Tomas Lamanauskas – building on ITU's legacy

During a video interview at the recent Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22), Tomas Lamanauskas of Lithuania discusses his plans to build on ITU's legacy in his new role as the next Deputy Secretary-General of ITU.

As Deputy Secretary-General, he will assist newly elected Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin and carry out specific tasks and management functions as the organization moves forward in the digital age.

"I'm here to support Doreen, I'm here to support the elected directors, and I'm here to build on what's already been achieved," says Lamanauskas.

While bringing fresh ideas as ITU's youngest-ever Deputy Secretary-General, Lamanauskas values experience within the organization and aims to put that to good use.

"We have a 157-year legacy. We have a lot of people both in ITU – and also delegates. They have a lot of knowledge, a lot of experience, and they have a world of valuable insights as well," he says. "We need to harness that insight, harness that experience, and then put it to use – to refresh it together."

> *I'm here to build on what's already been achieved.*

> *We need to clarify our role in the digital world.*

For more insights, watch the full video interview.

Lamanauskas stresses the importance of the secretariat, which he describes as "the engine" of ITU. "We talk about policy, regulation and space, and different other topics, but it's the secretariat that supports the membership – and that secretariat needs to run as well as a well-oiled machine," he says. "For me, that's really the first priority."

Lamanauskas also highlights the terms "intersectoral' and "One ITU", pointing towards the importance of building a unified spirit and maintaining close collaboration across ITU's radiocommunication, standardization, and development activities. ITU's five elected officials need to "always work as one team," he says.

Lamanauskas intends to continue campaigning and bringing a voice for what ITU stands for, such as raising ambitions on tackling climate change, connecting everyone, and making sure that all countries have a say and decision-making power. "The biggest power that we as the ITU have is the attention, credibility, and the mandate of the countries," he added.

Today's digital age brings clear opportunities, but also challenges for the organization, which was first established to regulate international telegraphy in 1865 and became a United Nations specialized agency in 1947. "We need to define what digital is for us, and what is our core strength and capabilities to contribute," he says. "We need to really clarify our role in the digital world."

As a UN specialized agency with unique public-private reach, ITU is well positioned to align industry priorities with inclusive global sustainable development.

Lamanauskas, who previously headed ITU's Corporate Strategy Division, will return from private-sector consultancy work to join the new ITU leadership team, whose mandate begins on 1 January 2023.

"We need to engage with the industry and be relevant with them," he says, underscoring the need to keep up with the rapid evolution of digital services and technologies. "We can find out by listening to them on where the world is going and how we can contribute."

Lamanauskas stresses the importance of strengthening links with the UN and its activities, including through collaboration with the recently established office of the UN Tech Envoy. "We need to build a very strong relationship with those agencies, and to make sure that we support each other – that we support them – and they support us," he says.

## Career path |
## *Tomas Lamanauskas*

*With more than 20 years' experience in telecommunications and broader information and communication technology (ICT) strategy, public policy and regulation, Tomas Lamanauskas has led teams through major transformations in highly multicultural environments.*

*Along with international executive and board-level leadership experience, Lamanauskas has served as Head, Deputy Head, and a Board Member with several national regulatory authorities in Europe, the Middle East and the Caribbean, and as a Senior Government Advisor in the Pacific region.*

*He has led corporate strategy at ITU as well as public policy for VEON, a multinational technology and communications company.*

*He has contributed to reports and studies by the ITU/UNESCO Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, the World Economic Forum, and other international organizations and research groups.*

# Mario Maniewicz

## Uruguay

## Re-elected Director of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau

" *The most important thing for our relevance is to keep our expertise.* "



Mario Maniewicz received 174 votes, with 181 Member States present and voting and with a required majority of 88.

## Mario Maniewicz continues spearheading radiocommunications

"Connectivity today means also getting people into the digital economy, and getting societies integrated through communications applications," explains Mario Maniewicz, Director of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau, during a video interview after his re-election at the Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) in Bucharest.

ITU, through its Radiocommunication Sector (ITU–R) and associated Radiocommunication Bureau (BR), is the global agency responsible for management of the radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbit resources.

As BR Director for another four-year term, Maniewicz will continue to spearhead work in stewarding the Radio Regulations, the internationally agreed treaty on the use of radio spectrum and satellite orbits. "My first priority is to make sure the World Radiocommunication Conference to be held next year is successful," says Maniewicz.

ITU's work in radiocommunications contributes not only to building resilient infrastructure but to almost all the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations for 2030.

> *My first priority is to make sure the World Radio Communication Conference to be held next year is successful.*

> *Everything today runs through ICT networks, and more and more wirelessly.*

For more insights, watch the full video interview.

ITU–R helps in numerous ways to create a better world for everyone, from bringing connectivity to rural areas, advancing agricultural services, and promoting Internet-of-Things applications that enhance education, health and government services, to disaster mitigation and climate monitoring through Earth observation.

"Everything today runs through ICT networks, and more and more wirelessly," says Maniewicz, noting the use of radio waves, satellites and radiocommunication devices around the world.

"A priority since I was first elected in 2018 is that everybody takes part in our activities and everybody feels ownership about what we develop all together," he replied, when asked how to ensure ITU–R stays effective and relevant to countries and radio services worldwide. International cooperation to advance information and communication technologies (ICTs) and boosting connectivity are simultaneously important aims.

Developing countries "are more and more integrated into our work," Maniewicz added, noting growth in their participation in ITU–R. Further strengthening this upward trend will be a priority for him during his second term as Director, he says.

He has gained valuable insights from the last four years, with his experience in his first term shaping his view of radiocommunication technologies around the globe.

The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a shift to online platforms for negotiation and international cooperation processes. Despite constraints, radiocommunication communities have endured and progressed well in their preparatory discussions for the next World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-23), says Maniewicz.

WRC-23 will take place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, between 20 November and 15 December 2023.

The Radio Regulations treaty – maintained by ITU and continually updated through the quadrennial ITU–R conference – is vital to avoid harmful interference in all sorts of radiocommunications. The only way it works is if everyone lives by it. The essential treaty, Maniewicz points out, "is 116 years old – and has never been abandoned".

## Career path | *Mario Maniewicz*

*Mario Maniewicz was elected at the last ITU Plenipotentiary in 2018 to the position of Director of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau and has nearly completed his first four-year term in that position.*

*Maniewicz served from 2014 to 2018 as Deputy Director of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau (BR), where he supported the Director and the membership in the vital function of global management of the radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbits.*

*Previously, he held a variety of management positions at the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) as well as in ITU Regional Offices, where he worked closely with governments, regulators and operators to develop strategic policies and regulations to enable the modernization of the telecommunication sector in Latin American countries.*

*Prior to joining ITU, Maniewicz worked for Uruguay's main telecommunications operator and as an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Engineering of Uruguay's leading university.*

# Seizo Onoe

## Japan

## Elected Director of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

> *ITU standardization needs to contribute to people's lives and society, where it leads to social and economic development.*

Seizo Onoe received 93 votes, with 181 Member States present and voting and with a required majority of 90.

# Seizo Onoe's priorities for ITU standardization work

"ITU standardization needs to contribute to people's lives and society, where it leads to social and economic development," says Seizo Onoe during a video interview at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) in Bucharest.

While recognizing the key role of ITU's Standardization Sector (ITU–T) in making information and communication technologies (ICTs) and telecommunication systems interoperable worldwide, Onoe says "the dissemination and implementation of standards are even more important."

Onoe, newly elected as the next Director of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) highlights the importance of cooperation between ITU and the technology industry.

In his new role as TSB Director, Onoe – sometimes described as the "father of LTE" (Long-Term Evolution, a wireless broadband standard for mobile devices and data terminals) – intends to prioritize global outreach for technical standards to connect the 2.7 billion people in today's world who still lack Internet access.

*We need industry to implement standards.*

*Telecom standards only become meaningful when they are widely spread.*

For more insights, watch the full video interview.

This can be achieved through a new collaboration framework, he says, adding: "We need industry to implement standards."

According to Onoe, the involvement of the telecom and technology industry in shaping and implementing key standards can serve to spread the benefits of new technologies and help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations.

"More involvement from industry will help with the dissemination of new technologies," he says. "Telecom standards only become meaningful when they are widely spread."

As ITU's next standardization chief, he aims to create a "sustainable standards cycle" in which "economies of scale and the competition principle lead to cost reduction, making services and products affordable."

Seizo Onoe outlines a vision of an inclusive, sustainable society founded on reliable networks. Achieving this vision will hinge on the spread of technology standards for meaningful and affordable broadband connections all over the world.

Organizational management will be another key priority for the incoming director, who emphasizes the need for open and inclusive, efficient and effective, transparent management to fulfil ITU's crucial standardization role.

The "Onoe commitment", as he describes it, means establishing:

- An **open and inclusive programme** to enhance standardization processes and programmes for digital technologies to address global issues.

- A **new ecosystem** that is responsive to technology evolution and strengthens cooperation and collaboration in telecommunication standardization inside and outside ITU.

- **Global outreach** to bridge standardization gaps, speedily deliver the benefits of technology, and ensure meaningful and affordable broadband access for everyone.

- **Efficient and effective management** of resources to effectively achieve outcomes in a transparent manner.

## Career path | *Seizo Onoe*

*For the past year, Seizo Onoe has been Chief Standardization Strategy Officer of Japan's NTT Corporation and a Fellow of NTT DOCOMO. Previously, he was President of DOCOMO Technology and Chief Technology Architect of NTT DOCOMO, Japan's leading mobile phone operator and largest telecommunications company.*

*Between 2012 and 2017, he served as NTT DOCOMO's Chief Technology Officer and Executive Vice President, a Member of the Board of Directors, and Managing Director of the Research and Development (R&D) Center, which became the company's R&D Innovation Division.*

*Earlier, he had served as Senior Vice President and Managing Director of NTT DOCOMO's R&D Strategy Department and Managing Director of the company's Radio Network Development Department.*

*Onoe first joined NTT Public Corporation in 1982 and was transferred to NTT DOCOMO when the mobile operator was established in 1992.*

# Cosmas Zavazava
## Zimbabwe

## Elected Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau

> *Technology is at the centre of everything we do.*
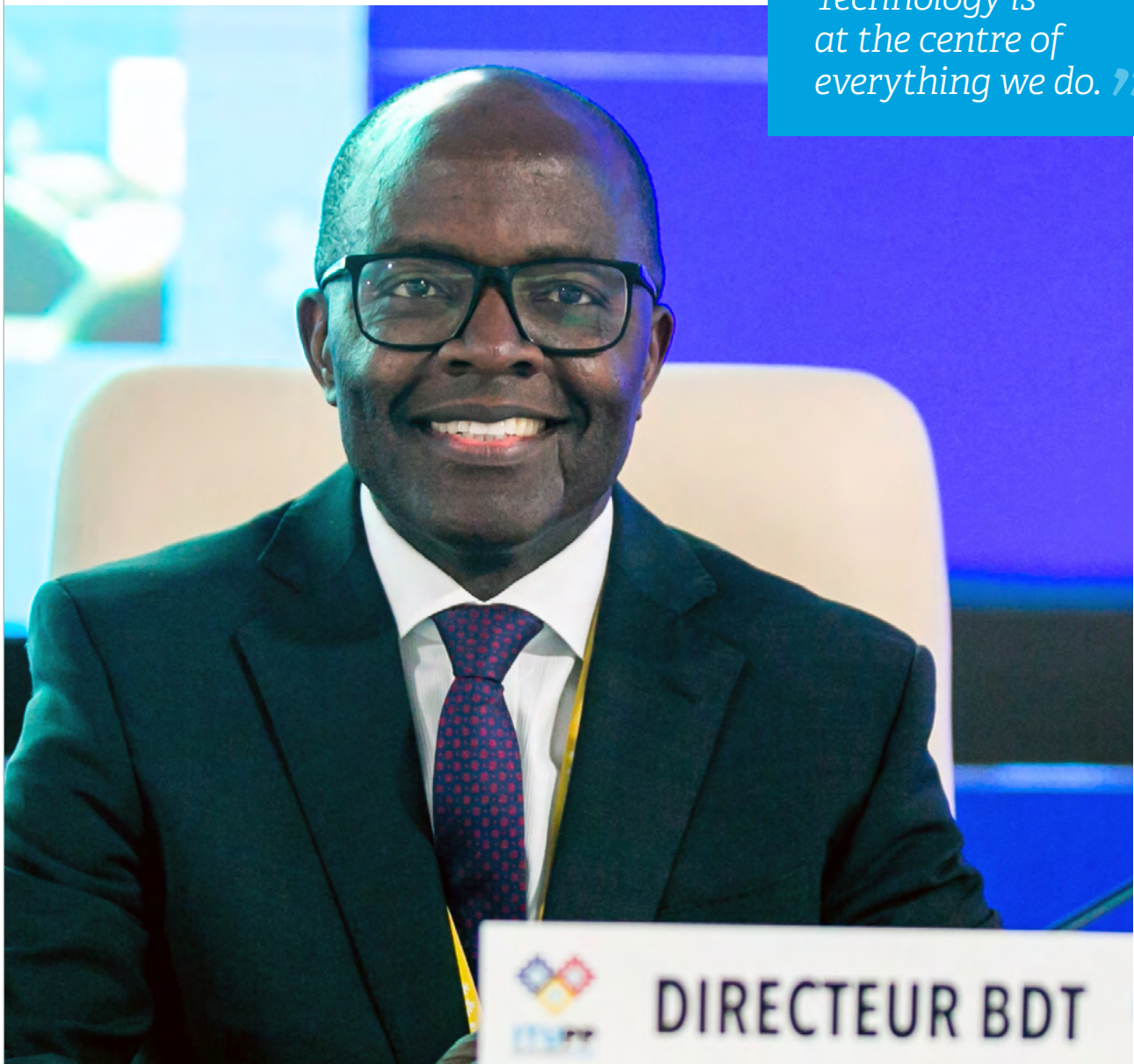
Cosmas Zavazava received 101 votes, with 165 Member States present and voting and with a required majority of 83.

## Cosmas Zavazava's plan to spur global tech development

ITU is at the centre of action in countries that are making an effort towards attainment of the 2030 development agenda, says Cosmas Zavazava, highlighting the deepening linkages between new and emerging technologies and the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals set out by the United Nations for 2030.

"Technology is at the centre of everything we do," he asserts.

Zavazava, the next Director of ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), explains ITU's critical global role following his election victory at the organization's recent Plenipotentiary Conference in Bucharest, Romania.

"It is leading in terms of information and communication technology deployment, development of standards, allocating spectrum, and also executing projects across the globe, which can change the entire game of socio-economic development," he says, adding that ITU will continue to play an important role and help other sectors to succeed.

*We should be working towards closing the digital gap as well as the skills gap.*

*Each one of us has the right to meaningful information and communication technology access.*

For more insights, watch the full video interview.

Internet access is increasingly recognized as a key development indicator. Yet still today, one third of humanity remains unconnected. Those 2.7 billion people who are still offline today need affordable meaningful access, which would in turn enable them to participate in economic activities and dialogue, says Zavazava.

But the reality is more complex, especially in many developing countries.

"There is just no interest and no appetite to get connected – firstly, because some governments don't have the capacity to roll out government digital services to the people, which in turn stimulates demand; and secondly, there is an issue of affordability, which needs addressing." Just as importantly, he adds: "There is a skills gap" at the local community level.

Closing the digital divide and the digital skills gap, making digital technologies and services affordable, and enabling governments to roll out those technologies and services are crucial global development challenges – and top priorities for Zavazava over the next four years.

"Each one of us has the right to meaningful information and communication technology access," he says. "We want to close the skills divide and accelerate digital transformation and to make an impact on the ground."

ITU, through its deep engagement with industry and the private sector, is uniquely positioned to create an enabling environment, mobilize infrastructure investments and help expand connectivity, Zavazava notes.

"Inclusiveness is a critical element," he adds. "We have to make sure that we address those that are offline today and those that are marginalized – whether in urban or rural areas, girls or boys, women or men, the disabled, and elderly people."

Cosmas Zavazava would like to help close all the world's digital divides.

After taking up his mandate on 1 January 2023, he aims to "implement impactful projects across the globe" to connect the remaining 2.7 billion people.

"I think my job is clear cut," he concludes.

## Career path | *Cosmas Zavazava*

*Cosmas Zavazava's experience spans over 30 years in telecommunications and over 20 years in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector.*

*As Chief of ITU's Partnerships for Digital Development Department since 2019, he has been responsible for negotiating partnerships, mobilizing resources for projects, engaging with industry and private sector, and managing ITU's project portfolio. He previously headed the Projects and Knowledge Management Department and the Projects and Initiatives Department in the Telecommunication Development Bureau, where he was responsible for managing projects and regional initiatives, statistics, emergency telecommunications, capacity building, promotion of gender equality, child online protection, accessibility for people with disabilities, and designing strategies for bringing access to people living in under-served areas including those in the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing states.*

*Before joining ITU, Zavazava headed the Government Telecommunications Agency of Zimbabwe and then served as a senior diplomat for his country at Minister Counsellor level.*

# Radio Regulations Board and ITU Council

ITU Member States elected the ITU Council and Radio Regulations Board during the 21st Plenipotentiary Conference.

## Radio Regulations Board

ITU, through its Radiocommunication Sector (ITU–R) and Radiocommunication Bureau, is the global authority responsible for the management of the radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbit resources. With the relentless expansion of wireless services worldwide, there are competing demands for a share of the radio-frequency spectrum to support new applications. The importance and relevance of ITU-R's work is, therefore, increasing every day.

The Radio Regulations Board comprises 12 members representing ITU's five regions (The Americas, Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Northern Asia, Africa, and Asia/Australasia).

This body approves the Rules of Procedure in application of the Radio Regulations, including those related to the assignment and use of radio frequencies and the use of satellite orbits. It also serves as an appeal board in case of disputes and provides advice to world and regional radiocommunication conferences.

### Election results for the ITU Radio Regulations Board 2023–2026:

- **Region A – The Americas (2 seats)**
  Chantal Beaumier (Canada)
  Agostinho Linhares De Souza Filho (Brazil)

- **Region B – Western Europe (2 seats)**
  Yvon Henri (France)
  Mauro Di Crescenzo (Italy)

- **Region C – Eastern Europe and Northern Asia (2 seats)**
  Sahiba Hasanova (Azerbaijan)
  Rizat Nurshabekov (Kazakhstan)

- **Region D – Africa (3 seats)**
  El-Sayed Azzouz (Egypt)
  Hassan Talib (Morocco)
  Edmund Yirenkyi Fianko (Ghana)

- **Region E – Asia and Australasia (3 seats)**
  Revathi Mannepalli (India)
  Majed Alkahtani (Saudi Arabia)
  Jianjun Cheng (China)

## ITU Council

The ITU is governed by the Plenipotentiary Conference which is the supreme organ of the Union. The ITU Council meets once a year and serves as the governing body of ITU between Plenipotentiary Conferences, which take place every four years. The ITU Council ensures the oversight of the Union's activities, policies and strategies, manages Working Groups on specific topics set up by Plenipotentiary Conferences or by the Council itself, and prepares the draft ITU strategic and financial plans for presentation to the Plenipotentiary Conference.

**ITU Council Member States elected for 2023–2026:**

- **Region A – The Americas (9 seats)**
  Argentina
  Bahamas
  Brazil
  Canada
  Cuba
  El Salvador
  Mexico
  Paraguay
  United States

- **Region B – Western Europe (8 seats)**
  France
  Germany
  Italy
  Spain
  Sweden
  Switzerland
  Türkiye
  United Kingdom

■ **Region C – Eastern Europe and Northern Asia (5 seats)**
Azerbaijan
Bulgaria
Czech Republic
Poland
Romania

■ **Region D – Africa (13 seats)**
Algeria
Egypt
Ghana
Kenya
Mauritius
Morocco
Nigeria
Rwanda
Senegal
South Africa
Tanzania
Tunisia
Uganda

■ **Region E – Asia and Australasia (13 seats)**
Australia
Bahrain
China
India
Indonesia
Japan
Korea (Rep. of)
Kuwait
Malaysia
Philippines
Saudi Arabia
Thailand
United Arab Emirates

Read more about the elections and the results.

*stock.adobe.com*

# ITU charts path to a connected and united digital future

> *In the near future, digitalization has the capacity to offer solutions to the challenges that humanity is facing.*
>
> —————
> Nicolae Ciucă
> Prime Minister of Romania

ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) closed on 14 October with Member States reaching consensus on actions to ensure that digital technology reaches and benefits people across the world.

The United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs) concluded its work in Bucharest, Romania, with agreements on how to harness the advantages of some of the world's most promising technologies.

The meeting also adopted ITU's strategic and budget plans for 2024–2027. ITU's four-year strategy highlights key priorities for radiocommunication, standardization and development work aimed at connecting the world, driving an inclusive global digital transformation, and helping achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030.

"In the near future, digitalization has the capacity to offer solutions to the challenges that humanity is facing, for instance by creating workplaces, promoting education, or fighting climate change and facilitating the green transition," Romanian Prime Minister Nicolae Ciucă told delegates in a video message during the quadrennial conference. "Digital transformation and telecommunication development," he said, "are anchors of the economy of the future."

ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao, in his last conference at the helm of the organization, said he had "witnessed first-hand how ICT innovations have changed the world — and how important ITU has been in advancing this digital transformation."

Reflecting on his 36 years at the organization, including nearly two-and-a-half decades as an elected official, Zhao said: "We need to seize this moment and build on the decisions taken at this global conference to accelerate digital transformation, including for the 2.7 billion people worldwide who are still unconnected."

Digital networks and technologies have empowered billions of people worldwide. Yet after a surge due to COVID-19, Internet uptake has slowed over the past year, leaving one-third of the world's population still unconnected.

The international guidance emerging from the conference "will help build a global economy and society that is more sustainable, more prosperous, and more connected," added Zhao.

Sabin Sărmaș, conference chair and head of host country Romania's parliamentary Information Technology and Communications Commission, said: "The consensus-based resolutions, built through negotiations and compromise, come as a rare example of accord these days among countries worldwide on issues of mutual concern for the future of humanity and the planet."

## Consensus on our global future

The conference between 26 September and 14 October brought together over 3000 delegates, including government ministers or officials from 183 of ITU's 193 Member States, as well as international and regional organizations, academia, and private-sector representatives.

> *We need to seize this moment and build on the decisions taken at this global conference to accelerate digital transformation, including for the 2.7 billion people worldwide who are still unconnected.*

Houlin Zhao
ITU Secretary-General

> *The consensus-based resolutions, built through negotiations and compromise, come as a rare example of accord these days among countries worldwide on issues of mutual concern for the future of humanity and the planet.*

Sabin Sărmaș

Head of Romania's parliamentary Information Technology and Communications Commission and Chairman of PP-22

The Final Acts bringing together all the resolutions adopted at the Plenipotentiary, was signed by 157 Member States.

Key decisions agreed at the conference included resolutions on:

- Applying artificial intelligence (AI) technologies for good
- Confidence-building and sustainable development in outer space
- Empowering women and girls through digital transformation
- Frequency assignments by military radio installations for national defence services
- How new technologies can mitigate, rather than exacerbate, the climate crisis
- How technologies can protect against global pandemics
- The Internet of Things (IoT) for smart and sustainable cities and communities

## Strengthening women's participation

Romanian organizers envisaged ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference – known as PP-22 – as a model for greener, more gender-responsive, more inclusive international meetings.

A total of 33 per cent of the delegates to the conference in Bucharest were women, compared to 29 per cent at ITU's last Plenipotentiary, held in Dubai in 2018.

"Our objective was to go beyond the traditional approach and make sure that women would have an equal opportunity to engage on substantial matters for the future of ITU and for digital technology and policy evolution," said Cristiana Flutur, International Affairs Director at Romania's National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications (ANCOM), who helped coordinate the conference. "Bringing more female representatives into policy-making circles should encourage more women to take on leadership roles and voice their opinions."



Women ICT leaders connect and unite at PP-22 networking breakfast.

Learn more.

" *Our objective was to go beyond the traditional approach and make sure that women would have an equal opportunity to engage on substantial matters for the future of ITU and for digital technology and policy evolution.* "

_____
Cristiana Flutur

Director of International Affairs, National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications (ANCOM), Romania

Salient elected officials received medals of recognition for their service and contributions to the development of global telecommunications

## Parting insights

Three elected officials are set to step down at year-end after reaching the two-term limit in their respective posts.

Current Secretary-General Houlin Zhao, reflecting on his 36 years at the organization, including nearly two-and-a-half decades as an elected official, said: "We need to seize this moment and build on the decisions taken at this global conference to accelerate digital transformation, including for the 2.7 billion people worldwide who are still unconnected."

Current Deputy Secretary-General Malcolm Johnson, recalling his 40 years of participation in ITU, first as a delegate and later as an elected official, encouraged ITU to maintain its tradition of working by consensus and to concentrate on its specific competencies, and wished ITU every success for the future.

Chaesub Lee, current Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau, underlined the value of ITU's diverse expertise, saying: "We have to consider the business aspect, market aspect, even the political aspect of our work as an organization, all based on that technological knowledge, with a technical sense."

See more PP-22 highlights.
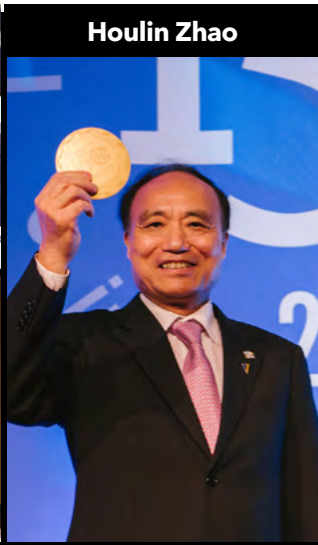
**Houlin Zhao**

Houlin Zhao's PP-22 closing speech

Photo slideshow

**Malcolm Johnson**

Malcolm Johnson's PP-22 closing speech

Photo slideshow

**Chaesub Lee**

Chaesub Lee's PP-22 closing speech

Photo slideshow

# ITU's strategic goals and targets

## ITU Strategic Plan 2024–2027
## Strategic framework

**Vision**

**Mission**

**2030 TARGETS**

**Strategic goals**

| Universal connectivity | Sustainable digital transformation |
|---|---|

**2027 OUTCOMES**

**Thematic priorities**

| Spectrum use for space and terrestrial services | International telecommunication numbering resources | Inclusive and secure telecommunications/ICTs infrastructure and services |
|---|---|---|

| Digital applications | Enabling environment |
|---|---|

**Product and service offerings**

| Preparing and applying ITU Administrative Regulations | Allocation and management of resources | International standards development | Guidance on policy frameworks and knowledge products |
|---|---|---|---|
| Provision of data and statistics | Capacity development | Provision of technical assistance | Convening platforms |

**OUTPUTS**

**ITU Operational Plans**

| Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) | Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) | Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) | General Secretariat |
|---|---|---|---|

**Enablers**

- Membership-driven priorities
- Regional presence
- Diversity and inclusion
- Commitment to environmental sustainability
- Partnerships and international cooperation
- Resource mobilization
- Excellence in human resources and organizational innovation

*ICTs = Information and communication technologies*

# ITU vision:

→ An information society, empowered by the interconnected world, where telecommunications/ information and communication technologies enable and accelerate social, economic and environmentally sustainable growth and development for everyone.

# ITU mission:

→ Promote, facilitate and foster affordable and universal access to telecommunication/ information and communication technology networks, services and applications and their use for social, economic and environmentally sustainable growth and development.

**Goal 1**

## Universal connectivity – by 2030

*Enable and foster universal access to affordable, high-quality and secure telecommunications/ICTs*

**Targets:**

| 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Universal broadband coverage | Broadband services to be affordable for all | Broadband access to every household | Ownership and access to Internet-enabled devices |

| 1.5 | 1.6 | 1.7 |
|---|---|---|
| Access to the Internet for all schools | Improved cybersecurity preparedness of countries (with key capabilities: presence of strategy, national computer incident/emergency response teams and legislation) | Universal access to the Internet by all individuals |

**Goal 2**

## Sustainable digital transformation – by 2030

*Foster equitable and inclusive use of telecommunications/ICTs to empower people and societies for sustainable development*

**Targets:**

| 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.4 | 2.5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All digital gaps to be bridged (in particular gender, age and urban/rural) | Majority of individuals to have digital skills | Universal usage of Internet services by businesses | Majority of individuals accessing government services online | Significant improvement of ICTs' contribution to climate and environment action |

*ICTs = Information and communication technologies*

# Consensus-driven outcomes

Participants of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 worked hard in a spirit of collaboration throughout three intense weeks in Bucharest, Romania, to debate and develop the policies of the Union on a wide range of information and communication technology (ICT)-related issues impacting the global community.

A major outcome was the adoption of a new Strategic Plan (see infographic). The plan sets the vision and shared goals and targets of the Union for 2024–2027, enhancing ITU's universal connectivity goal with targets for ensuring Internet access for all. It also bolsters ITU's environmental priorities as part of sustainable digital transformation.

The plan's targets for inclusive and secure infrastructure aim to enhance fixed and broadband connectivity and access, radiocommunications use, and digital skills and literacy worldwide, as well as upgrading knowledge and capacities among ITU members. The plan also promotes technology-centric innovation and entrepreneurship, along with innovative regulation to help developing countries advance digital inclusion.

Noting the world's persistent digital divide, the Strategic Plan reaffirms ITU's role in expanding connectivity worldwide and promotes technologies as a key driver for sustainable post-COVID development.

The plan also suggests enhancing the role of ITU's regional offices, incorporating the gender perspective and mainstreaming diversity across ITU's work, and continuing to implement the United Nations (UN)'s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The latest plan clarifies key areas of ITU's work, provides a clear focus for the next four years, encourages strong coordination among ITU's radiocommunication, standardization, and development sectors, and strengthens the framework for results-based management. It also paves the way for strengthening international cooperation and partnerships; updating human capacity, processes, procedures, and tools; and ensuring integration and harmonization with other UN organizations.

Below are examples of some other resolutions adopted at PP-22.

# New resolutions adopted at PP-22

**Artificial intelligence technologies and telecommunications/ information and communication technologies**

## Res. 214

This new resolution notes work already underway across ITU, including but not limited to the AI for Good platform, convened in partnership with more than 40 United Nations (UN) partner agencies, and its AI repository. AI for Good seeks to identify practical applications of AI to advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ongoing work takes place in several study groups, focus groups and capacity building activities examining the intersection between AI, telecommunications, and information and communication technologies (ICTs) to facilitate sustainable development.

Delegates resolved that ITU should continue its work on AI related to telecommunication and ICTs within its mandate and core competencies, including studies, information sharing, and capacity building.

The resolution also calls for ITU to foster a telecommunication/ICT ecosystem for the deployment of AI technologies, while noting how the full realization of AI technologies in this context will bring both opportunities and challenges and will require bridging digital divides.

With developing countries in mind, the new resolution instructs the ITU Secretary-General, in consultation with ITU's three Bureaux Directors, to foster information-sharing and build understanding about the challenges and opportunities of deploying AI technologies in support of telecommunications and ICTs.

The high-level resolution also instructs the ITU Secretary-General, in consultation with ITU's three Bureaux Directors, to identify collaboration opportunities with other relevant organizations and stakeholders. It is important to note that ITU co-chairs, with UNESCO, the United Nations interagency working group on AI activities.

ITU Member States, Sector Members, and Academia Members are invited to promote a common understanding of how a strong telecommunication/ICT ecosystem can support AI technologies, considering the many AI use cases that contribute to sustainable development.

The resolution also invites ITU members to share experiences and contribute to international multistakeholder discussions, capacity building, and studies on AI applications aimed at helping to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in line with ITU's mandate.

AI comprises a broad set of methods and disciplines, including computer vision, natural language processing, decision making, problem solving, robotics and other applications that enable machines to learn. While AI has the potential to advance economic development and drive progress across all SDGs, its use also entails extensive socioeconomic and ethical implications. Many governments and organizations are preparing for the widespread adoption and use of AI technologies with these opportunities and challenges in mind.

## Role of telecommunications/information and communication technologies in mitigating global pandemics

COVID-19 and its associated disruptions to public life have made affordable information and communication technologies (ICTs) and connectivity vital for countries worldwide. This new resolution focuses on the role of telecommunications/ICTs in mitigating global pandemics.

UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/74/270 on global solidarity to fight COVID-19 urges UN agencies "to mobilize a coordinated global response to the pandemic and its adverse social, economic and financial impact on all societies."

### AI for Good

The aim of AI for Good is to identify practical applications of AI to advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals and scale solutions for global impact.

Learn more.

# Res. 215

ITU's new resolution calls for cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other UN organizations and stakeholders to promote existing, new, and emerging telecommunications/ICTs to address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also asks Member States to consider how to reduce the severity and number of emergency situations caused by COVID.

The latest World Telecommunication/ICT Policy Forum (WTPF-21) noted how technologies could strengthen future pandemic and epidemic preparedness and response. As COVID-19 has demonstrated, access to relevant information is crucial for public safety. Providing connectivity and informing communities in local languages, for example, can help save lives. Along with expanding affordable technology access and connectivity, the new resolution underlines the need for digital inclusion and skills to mitigate the effects of both COVID-19 and future pandemics.

Noting the ongoing ITU-WHO-UNICEF initiative to provide updated COVID-19 information, the resolution encourages international cooperation to raise awareness, build capacity, and share best practices and lessons in using existing, new, and emerging telecommunications/ICTs to respond to pandemics. It also invites engagement with telecom/ICT providers and others to support jobs, especially among small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and to continue education in the face of a pandemic.

## Use of frequency assignments by military radio installations for national defence services

# Res. 216

ITU Member States at PP-22 agreed on how to address cases of possible misuses of Article 48 of the ITU Constitution, which addresses military radio installations for national defence services.

This new resolution considers the current lack of specific provisions or procedures in the Radio Regulations related to the invocation of Article 48 when processing, recording and maintaining in the Master International Frequency Register frequency assignments to stations that are part of military radio installations.

In case a Member State invokes Article 48 in relation to frequency assignments for space or terrestrial services, the new resolution says:

- The Member State undertakes obligations to use such frequency assignments for military radio installations.

- All relevant provisions of the Radio Regulations still apply for non-military radio installations.

- The Member State undertakes obligations to revoke the invocation of Article 48 if the frequency assignment is no longer used for military radio installations.

Moreover, if the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau receives information about a possible misuse of radio frequency assignments under Article 48, the Bureau should seek clarification from the Member State invoking Article 48.

Member States agreed on a mechanism to address persisting disagreements about a Radiocommunication Bureau assessment. In such cases, the matter shall be referred to the Radio Regulations Board (RRB) together with the Member State's basis for the disagreement. If the Member State disagrees with the RRB decision, it may appeal to the next World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC), and the RRB decision will remain on hold until the WRC decides on the matter.

## ITU's role in the implementation of the "Space2030" Agenda: Space as a driver of sustainable development, and its follow-up and review process

Member States approved a new resolution on ITU's role in implementing the Space2030 Agenda, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 October 2021, on space as a driver of sustainable development.

Space technology and applications, as well as data derived from space, contribute to a range of sustainable development activities, from environmental protection to disaster risk reduction and emergency response, energy infrastructure to agriculture and food security, and more.

According to this new resolution, ITU should support the implementation of the Space2030 Agenda, especially the parts related to space services, given the organization's unique role in facilitating access to radio spectrum and associated satellite orbits per Article 44 of the ITU Constitution.

At the same time, the resolution notes how national frequency assignments and allotments, especially those of developing countries, have been severely degraded over time, making it difficult for those countries to use them.

The upcoming World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-23) and subsequent WRCs are therefore instructed to continue prioritizing equitable access to satellites orbits with the special needs of developing countries in mind.

Learn more about the Space2030 Agenda.

# Res. 218
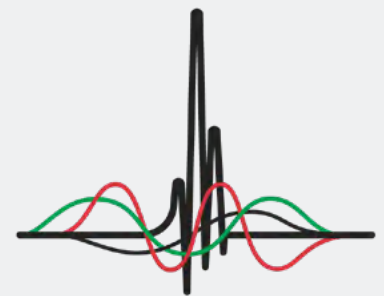
ITU WRC
DUBAI 2023

# Res. 219

**Sustainability of the radio-frequency spectrum and associated satellite orbit resources used by space services**

This new resolution underscores the urgent need to review technologies used in satellite networks in the geostationary satellite orbit (GSO), as well as the increased numbers of satellites within non-GSO satellite systems, with a view to addressing them in the Radio Regulations, if necessary, and in the processing of frequency assignments by the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau (BR).

The resolution also notes the urgency of addressing issues associated with non-GSO satellite systems before they are launched and operational.

As such, Member States instruct the Radiocommunication Assembly (RA) to urgently perform the necessary studies through ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU–R) study groups to address the increasing use of radio-frequency spectrum and associated orbit resources in non-GSO orbits and the long-term sustainability of these resources. The resolution also instructs the RA to have ITU–R study groups investigate equitable access to, and rational and compatible use of, GSO and non-GSO orbit and spectrum resources in line with Article 44 of the ITU Constitution.

## New resolutions

| Res. 214 | Artificial intelligence technologies and telecommunications/ information and communication technologies |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Res. 215 | Role of telecommunications/information and communication technologies in mitigating global pandemics |
| Res. 216 | Use of frequency assignments by military radio installations for National Defence Services |
| Res. 217 | ITU's business continuity management for 2023-2026 |
| Res. 218 | ITU's role in the implementation of the "Space2030" Agenda: space as a driver of sustainable development, and its follow-up and review process |
| Res. 219 | Sustainability of the radio-frequency spectrum and associated satellite orbit resources used by space services |

# Revised decisions and resolutions

| | |
|---|---|
| Decision 5 | Revenue and expenses for the Union for the period 2024-2027 |
| Decision 11 | Creation and management of Council working groups |
| Res. 2 | World telecommunication/information and communication technology policy forum |
| Res. 21 | Measures concerning alternative calling procedures on international telecommunication networks |
| Res. 25 | Strengthening the ITU regional presence |
| Res. 30 | Special measures for the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition |
| Res. 48 | Human resources management and development |
| Res. 64 | Non-discriminatory access to telecommunication/ information and communication technology facilities, services and applications, including applied research and transfer of technology, and e-meetings, on mutually agreed terms |
| Res. 66 | Documents and publications of the Union |
| Res. 70 | Mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through telecommunications/information and communication technologies |
| Res. 71 | Strategic plan for the Union for 2024-2027 |
| Res. 77 | Scheduling and duration of conferences, forums, assemblies and Council sessions of the Union (2023-2027) |
| Res. 94 | Auditing of the accounts of the Union |
| Res. 101 | Internet Protocol-based networks |
| Res. 102 | ITU's role with regard to international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet and the management of Internet resources, including domain names and addresses |
| Res. 119 | Methods to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Radio Regulations Board |
| Res. 123 | Bridging the standardization gap between developing and developed countries |
| Res. 125 | Assistance and support to Palestine for infrastructure development and capacity building in the telecommunication and information technology sector |

| Res. 130 | Strengthening the role of ITU in building confidence and security in the use of information and communication technologies |
| Res. 131 | Measuring information and communication technologies to build an integrating and inclusive information society |
| Res. 133 | Role of administrations of Member States in the management of internationalized (multilingual) domain names |
| Res. 135 | ITU's role in the durable and sustainable development of telecommunications/information and communication technologies, in providing technical assistance and advice to developing countries and in implementing relevant national, regional and interregional projects |
| Res. 136 | The use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies for humanitarian assistance and for monitoring and management in emergency and disaster situations, including health-related emergencies, for early warning, prevention, mitigation and relief |
| Res. 137 | Deployment of future networks in developing countries |
| Res. 138 | The Global Symposium for Regulators |
| Res. 139 | Use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies to bridge the digital divide and build an inclusive information society |
| Res. 140 | ITU's role in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as in their follow-up and review processes |
| Res. 146 | Periodic review of the International Telecommunication Regulations |
| Res. 148 | Tasks and functions of the Deputy Secretary-General |
| Res. 150 | Approval of the accounts of the Union for the years 2018-2021 |
| Res. 151 | Improvement of results-based management in ITU |
| Res. 154 | Use of the six official languages of the Union on an equal footing |
| Res. 157 | Strengthening of the project execution and project monitoring functions in ITU |
| Res. 162 | Independent management advisory committee |
| Res. 167 | Strengthening and developing ITU capabilities for fully virtual meetings and physical meetings with remote participation, and the electronic means to advance the work of the Union |

| Res. 169 | Admission of academia to participate in the work of the Union |
|---|---|
| Res. 170 | Admission of Sector Members from developing countries to participate in the work of the ITU Radiocommunication Sector and the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector |
| Res. 175 | Telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs |
| Res. 176 | Measurement and assessment concerns related to human exposure to electromagnetic fields |
| Res. 177 | Conformance and interoperability |
| Res. 179 | ITU's role in child online protection |
| Res. 180 | Promoting deployment of Internet Protocol version 6 |
| Res. 182 | The role of telecommunications/information and communication technologies in regard to climate change and the protection of the environment |
| Res. 184 | Facilitating digital inclusion initiatives for indigenous peoples |
| Res. 186 | Strengthening the role of ITU with regard to transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities |
| Res. 188 | Combating counterfeit and tampered telecommunication/information and communication technology devices |
| Res. 189 | Assisting Member States to combat and deter mobile device theft |
| Res. 191 | Strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three Sectors of the Union |
| Res. 193 | Support and assistance for Iraq to continue rebuilding and developing its telecommunication/information and communication technology sector |
| Res. 196 | Protecting telecommunication service users/consumers |
| Res. 197 | Facilitating the Internet of Things and smart sustainable cities and communities |
| Res. 198 | Empowerment of youth through telecommunication/information and communication technology |
| Res. 200 | Connect 2030 Agenda for global telecommunication/information and communication technology, including broadband, for sustainable development |
| Res. 203 | Connectivity to broadband networks |

| Res. 204 | Use of information and communication technologies to bridge the financial inclusion gap |
| Res. 205 | ITU's role in fostering telecommunication/information and communication technology-centric innovation to support the digital economy and society |
| Res. 208 | Appointment and maximum term of office for chairmen and vice-chairmen of Sector advisory groups, study groups and other groups |
| Res. 209 | Encouraging the participation of small and medium enterprises in the work of the Union |
| Res. 212 | The Union's future headquarters premises |

## Future conferences

In December 2023, ITU members will meet at the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-23) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to update the Radio Regulations, the sole international treaty governing the use of the radio frequency spectrum, including for geostationary and non-geostationary satellite orbits.



ITU's next Plenipotentiary Conference will take place in Doha, Qatar, in 2026.





Download the Final Acts to see all PP-22 outcome documents here.

# Setting sights on gender parity

The day after the first woman was elected as Secretary-General of ITU, women at the Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) gathered for a networking breakfast and high-level panel.

The women's breakfast was jointly organized by ITU, host country Romania, and Australia, which provided financial support and training for 100 women delegates to take on leadership roles at the conference.

## A new era

ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao noted the "wonderful result" of Doreen Bogdan-Martin's election as the next Secretary-General of the 157-year-old organization. "Now we have a new era," Zhao said, congratulating the women gathered in the Unirii Room of Bucharest's Palace of Parliament. "You are a good example of how women can show their talent and contribution to ICT development and to ITU activities. Without your active participation in our meetings, or your efforts to improve gender balance, we could not be here today."

> *Now we have a new era.*
>
> ———
>
> Houlin Zhao
> ITU Secretary-General

ITU Secretary-General elect Doreen Bogdan-Martin was next to greet the breakfast audience. "Looking out at all of you fills me with hope – there are so many competent women here," she said.

But women's participation at PP-22 still only amounts to 33 per cent. "We have to do better," Bogdan-Martin said, echoing Apple CEO Tim Cook's observation that "there are no good excuses for not having more women in technology. We have to do more."

She encouraged women delegates to keep up the momentum of recent years, with more girls and women taking an interest in traditionally male-dominated technology careers, along with associated policy processes.

"I hope we can count on each of you to take an action: mentor other women, support them. Now the real work begins," added Bogdan-Martin. "Let's aim at the next Plenipot to have 50 per cent or more women leaders."

PP-22 Chairman Sabin Sărmaș, who also heads Romania's parliamentary commission for technologies, congratulated the Secretary-General elect on her historic win. "You are living proof that women belong and deserve to be at the table of ICTs," he said.

ITU Deputy-Secretary General Malcolm Johnson also added his support. "Over my 40 years in ITU as a delegate and elected official, I have seen many changes," Johnson said. "But nothing more than the increased prominence of women in ITU, including in delegations." Greater numbers of women at the ministerial level at PP-22, he added, shows things are "changing for the better."

Read the full article.

" Let's aim at the next Plenipot to have 50 per cent or more women leaders. "

Doreen Bogdan-Martin
ITU Secretary-General elect

# Youth inclusion

Youth initiatives ensured the involvement of young participants at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22).

## Generation Connect

Youth Envoys from Generation Connect spent a week in Bucharest engaging in line with ITU's Youth Strategy. Their participation included Generation Connect Intergenerational Dialogues and a Meaningful Youth Engagement Workshop.

ITU Secretary-General elect Doreen Bogdan-Martin addressed the young people gathered at the first of three events.

"We need you: you are the drivers of change in our world," she said in her opening remarks.

A panel that included Generation Connect Youth Envoys as well as experts from the telecommunications industry discussed the topics at hand: education, future jobs, and digital skills. Another session addressed the gender digital divide.

> *We need you: you are the drivers of change in our world.*
>
> Doreen Bogdan-Martin
> ITU Secretary-General elect

John Omo, Secretary-General of the African Telecommunication Union (ATU), pointed out the lack of structured digital skills development programmes in much of the developing world. "Governments need to develop a digital skills master plan for each and every country that brings the youth on board in terms of their needs," he suggested.

## Social media content creators

Six young social media creators, one from each world region, were selected to promote green, gender-responsive, and inclusive themes during the conference.

Chosen from more than 80 nominees, they spent a week in Bucharest and were able to attend plenary sessions, interview delegates, and report on what was happening at PP-22 in their languages and to their own audiences.

The initiative aimed to enable these young people to bring unique insights from a high-level United Nations conference to their online followers.

Read more.

**Twitter space**

A Youth Connect and Unite twitter space took place at PP-22.

Listen to the recording.

> *Governments need to develop a digital skills master plan.*

_____
John Omo

Secretary-General, African Telecommunication Union
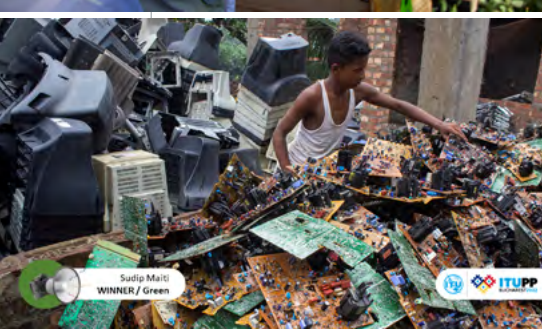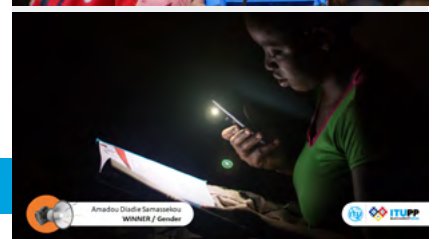
# Winning "Technology for Good" photos

A photography contest in the run-up to the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) attracted both amateur and professional contributors from around the world.

ITU invited photographers to send images showing the impact of technology, with a focus on the green, gender-responsive, and inclusive spirit of the conference.
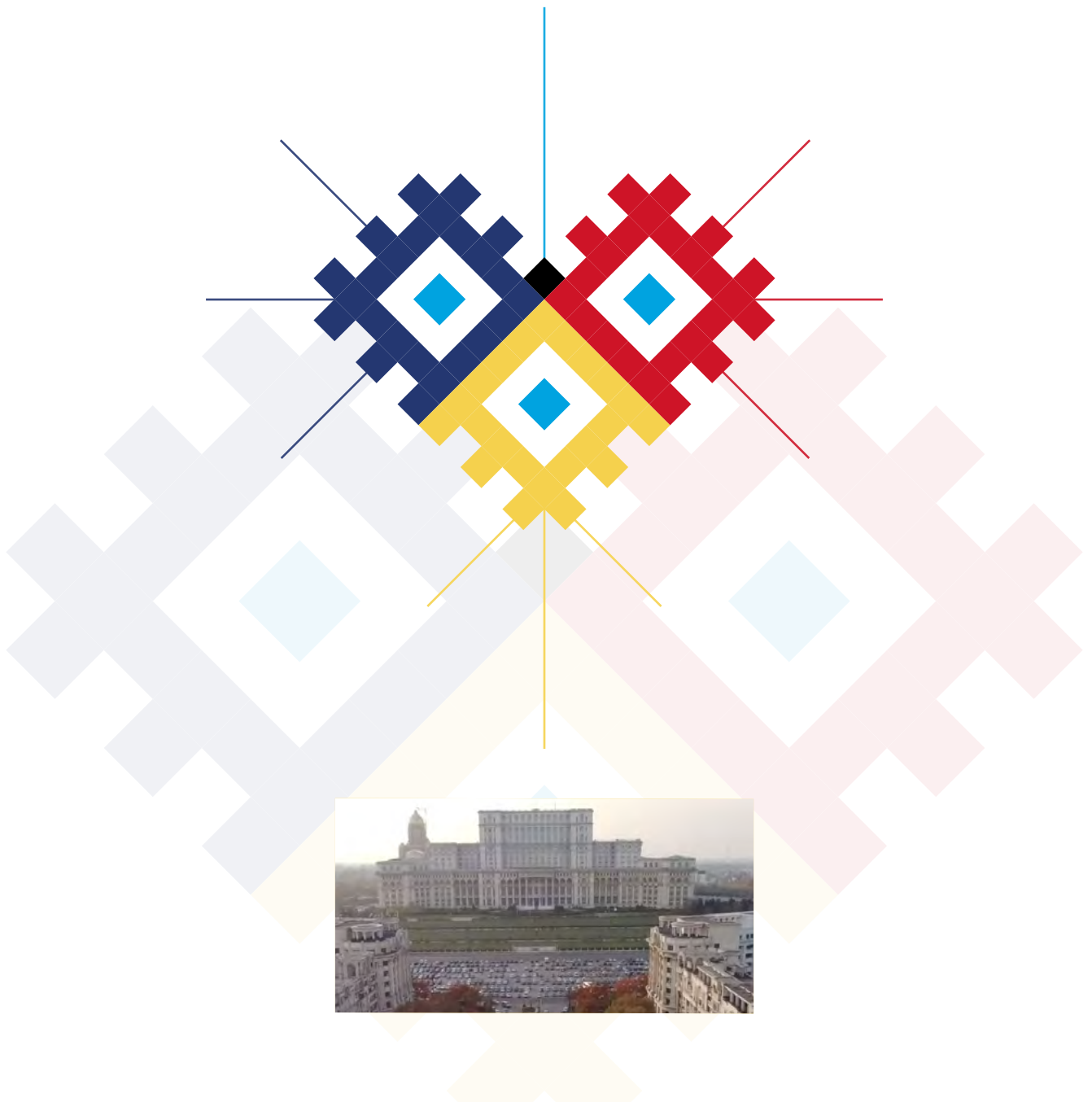
In two months, the "Technology for Good" Photo Competition attracted more than 270 contributors from 50 countries, and more than 700 photos were received.

From personal stories to projects run by governments or the United Nations, each photo opened a window into the importance of technology in someone's daily life.

Read more and meet the winners.


Hellen Vanessa de Carvalho
WINNER / Inclusion


Supriya Biswas
WINNER / Inclusion


Sukhbat Ochirbat
WINNER / Inclusion


Amadou Diadie Samassekou
WINNER / Gender


Nimai Chandra Ghosh
WINNER / Gender


Natálie Tercova
WINNER / Green


Kuntal Kumar Roy
WINNER / Gender


Sudip Maiti
WINNER / Green


M Joko Apriyo Putro
WINNER / Green

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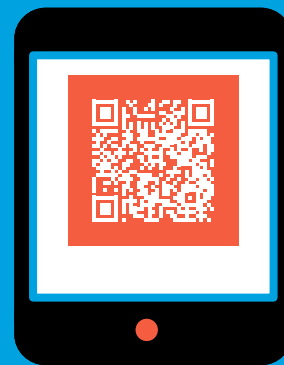
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