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**Author:** Kofi A. Annan

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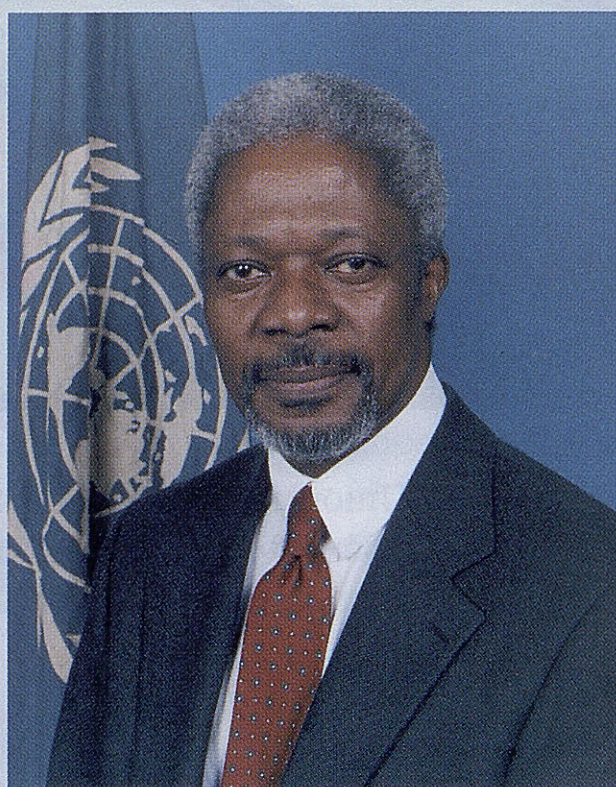
(ITU) للاتصالات الدولي الاتحاد في والمحفوظات المكتبة قسم أجراه الضوئي بالمسح تصوير نتاج (PDF) الإلكترونية النسخة هذه والمحفوظات المكتبة قسم في المتوفرة الوثائق ضمن أصلية ورقية وثيقة من نقلاً.

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## Message from the UN Secretary-General



**T**he theme of this year's observance of World Telecommunication Day is "ICT for all: empowering people to cross the Digital Divide".

The digital revolution holds great promise for prosperity and progress. Access to information and communication technologies can catapult small and medium-sized firms directly into the heart of regional, national and global markets. Telemedicine can provide access to up-to-date health and medical information to even the most remote communities. Information and communication technologies can facilitate low-cost distance learning. And they can empower civil society, strengthen democratic institutions and make governments more transparent and accountable.

Unfortunately, those countries and communities that most need the boost that information and communication technologies can provide are least able to take advantage of it. Low levels of literacy and education have contributed to an "access gap" within the digital divide.

The role of women is particularly crucial. Women make up 60 per cent of the world's poor. Experience has shown that when women are empowered, the benefits are felt in entire families and communities. It is essential to promote access and use of information and communication technologies among women. We must also encourage more women, in both developed and developing countries, to join the ranks of ICT creators, designers and decision-makers.

On World Telecommunication Day, let us resolve to bridge the digital divide between countries, between rural and urban areas, between rich and poor, between educated and illiterate populations, and between men and women. And let us act urgently so that all the world's people can benefit from the potential of the ICT revolution.

**Kofi A. Annan**  
Secretary-General  
United Nations