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Message from the Secretary-General of ITU

12th World Telecommunication Day

People living in rural areas throughout the world are experiencing, more than anyone else, the vital need to communicate. Hence, on this 12th World Telecommunication Day, we feel it essential to stress the importance of telecommunications for the social and economic development and well-being of rural populations.

The advent of the space age and the advances in many fields achieved largely through the miniaturization of electronic components have, over the past two decades, made it possible to develop technical facilities of exceptional potential in telecommunications.

For instance, we can look forward to the day when even the most remote rural areas will be in constant communication with the outside world.

- Telecommunication at the service of rural populations means education and continuous vocational training through radio and television.
- Telecommunication at the service of rural populations means meteorological information, so essential to agriculture, received daily at home with, in the case of regions suddenly threatened, the possibility of preparing for natural disasters.
- Telecommunication at the service of rural populations also means swift appeals for medical assistance or other forms of aid to protect persons and property.
- Lastly, telecommunication at the service of rural populations means the priceless advantage of being able to telephone anywhere in the world, thus bringing together all the members of the human family.

Many policy-makers have already taken specific measures to this effect. Thanks to their decisive action and to the international co-operation which exists between the 154 Member countries of ITU, the time has come when this telecommunications potential is to be harnessed for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

M. MILI