



13th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (Hiroshima, 2015)

Speeches

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13th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS-15)

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Speech by ITU Secretary-General, Houlin Zhao

World 13th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS-15) Opening Ceremony : Opening Speech

30 November 2015, Hiroshima, Japan

Your Excellency, Ms Sanae Takaichi, Minister for Internal Affairs and Communication,
Mr Yasua Sakamoto, Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication,
Mr Kiyoshi Mori, Director-General for International Affairs, Global ICT Strategy Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication and
Chair of WTIS-15,
Mr Brahima Sanou, Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau,
Honourable Ministers,
Director-Generals,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be here with you today to welcome you to the 13th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium.

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Government of Japan for hosting this important event. Japan has made every effort to make this event a success. Our host country is famous for its hospitality, which I have learnt is referred to as "Omotenashi". Omotenashi does not have a literal translation but it could be described as the *spirit of hospitality*. There is no better way to start this week, and this Symposium.

Japan has made and continues to make immense contribution to the work of the Union and is famous for a robust, innovative and forward looking ICT industry. Our host has also continuously provided financial and expert contribution to projects that we are implementing across the globe. This of course includes the technical know-how provided by Japanese experts participating in the various Study Groups of the three Sectors.

Now, I would like to welcome all the Ministers, Director Generals, VIPs, speakers and delegates from ITU Members who are here with us and who will share their vision, expertise and ideas.

Just over one month ago, the United Nations, at the UN Sustainable Development Summit, adopted the new *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

In the Summit outcome document, the international community recognized the important role of ICTs by highlighting that (and here I quote), *"The spread of information and communications technology and global interconnectedness has great potential to accelerate human progress, to bridge the digital divide and to develop knowledge societies."*

ICTs will be crucial for achieving the SDGs. In my opinion, no development debate can be credible without considering the role of ICTs.

One example is climate change, a pressing global challenge that we are facing. As I speak, the 2015 UN Climate Change Conference (or, COP 21) is about to begin, to discuss a universal agreement on climate. ICTs are helping to monitor climate change, to mitigate and to adapt to its effects.

Let me also emphasize that there is increased recognition of the importance of data-driven policy making. The new sustainable development agenda includes 17 goals and 169 targets. It clearly states that more timely and reliable data are needed.

Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

This week's WTIS will address some of these challenges, highlight opportunities, and provide guidance. At the same time, it will also show that our work is far from done. Still today, more than half the world's population is not using the Internet.

Furthermore, some of the new technologies and trends, for example in the area of big data and Internet of Things, are actually opening the door for new divides and bigger challenges. To remain relevant, and inform policy makers worldwide, ITU must continuously review its indicators. We recognize that this work cannot be done without you, and without WTIS.

At this point, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Ministers, Director Generals, VIPs, Speakers, and delegates from ITU Members who are here with us and who will share their vision, expertise and ideas.

Indeed, there is great demand for ITU's statistics and your work is crucial and relevant to other ongoing debates in the area of ICT for development. I have met and discussed with many Member States that appreciate the value of our statistics. I encourage you to continue to contribute to our work leading to the production of these highly reputable indicators in order for us to continue to make our statistics more powerful and more popular.

In two weeks, the United Nations General Assembly will meet in New York for the High-level meeting on the WSIS+10 Review. At that meeting, the international community will review the progress made in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes and agree on the way forward. An essential element to this is data gathering and dissemination, to be able to monitor progress and provide policy makers with sound evidence.

Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

2015 is a special year for ITU because we are celebrating the Union's 150th anniversary. WTIS-15 is actually the last major ITU event of the year marking the celebration of this important anniversary. I know that our host has planned a special event for us tonight - the 150th Memorial Soirée.

Anniversaries allow us to reflect upon the past and look forward to the future. I believe that over 150 years, ITU has managed to deal with an incredibly fast pace of change. It has adapted to, and taken advantage of, rapidly evolving technologies and industries.

We have had to modernize, innovate and re-invent ourselves to remain relevant. The support and the diversity of our membership, including from the private sector, has made this possible.

To fully exploit the potential of innovation and to adapt to the new reality of the ICT ecosystem, more importance will have to be given to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). SMEs represent a growing and increasingly important part of the economy. They are important drivers of progress and development. I am pleased to see that the WTIS includes a number of special sessions to learn from the Japanese private sector.

For the future, we will continue to learn, to adapt, and to innovate. What better place to start to do so than Japan, a country that, besides its hospitality, is a world leader in ICTs and innovation.

I look forward to the debates this week, to learn about how far we have come and how much more there remains to be done.

Thank you.



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World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium 2015

Opening Ceremony

Monday 30 November 2015

Hiroshima, Japan

Opening Speech

Brahima Sanou

Director,

ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau

Your Excellency, Ms Sanae Takaichi, Minister for Internal Affairs and Communication, Japan,

Yasua Sakamoto San, Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination, MIC Japan,

Kiyoshi Mori San, Director-General for International Affairs, Global ICT Strategy Bureau, MIC Japan and Chair of WTIS-15,

Honourable Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers

Mr Houlin Zhao, ITU Secretary-General

Secretary Generals of APT and ATU

Director-Generals, CEOs,

Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to welcome you to the **2015 World Telecommunication and ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS)** here in Hiroshima.

I would like to add my voice to that of the Secretary General of ITU in thanking the Government of Japan for hosting this Symposium and for the kind and warm hospitality extended to all of us.

Japan is a showcase when it comes to information and communication technologies. ICTs have driven Japan's economic growth for the last few decades and Japan has become an important hub of ICT innovation, and a global ICT industry leader. It is therefore a particular honor to be welcomed here in Japan and to be able to leverage on the country's ICT expertise.

As the matter of fact, WTIS-15 will provide a number of special networking opportunities, particularly during the 'Meet the Industry' sessions, which will provide an excellent opportunity for the participants to meet and interact with Japanese business leaders.

Honorable Ministers, ladies and gentlemen

Better data means better policy making and better decision taking. This is why WTIS brings together policy makers, regulators, statisticians, private sector International Organizations and academia.

I take this opportunity to thank all the Member States, Sector Members, International Organizations, industry, and experts that support the work of ITU in this area.

In particular, I would like to highlight the important work carried out by our two statistical expert groups in terms of improving methodologies, defining new indicators and reviewing existing ones.

Indeed, the Expert Group on Telecommunication and ICT indicators (EGTI) and the Expert Group on ICT Household Indicators (EGH) have become the main technical forums worldwide to debate ICT statistics.

Among the key topics that this Symposium will address is the role of big data, Internet of Things and ICT innovation for sustainable development.

There is no doubt that big data can make a difference in the lives of many people. I am pleased to inform you that ITU has embarked on the use of big data to help fight epidemics, like Ebola.

I have launched a new project that uses big data to help humanitarian agencies track the outbreak of the disease while safeguarding individual privacy. This project is co-financed by ITU and the Government of Japan. Mme Minister, Thank you very much for your support.

Big data can help complement existing statistics and indicators while providing new insights into key development issues.

Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

This afternoon, we will launch the **Measuring the Information Society Report 2015** known as MIS report. The MIS report has become one of the most authoritative sources for ICT data and for monitoring the development of the global information society.

We will also announce the results of the latest **ICT Development Index**, known as I.D.I.

The IDI is a key component of measuring the information society. However, I would like to highlight that the IDI is not about competition; the IDI is about benchmarking. The IDI is meant to help us achieve three main objectives.

First, The IDI is a powerful tool that each country can use to track its own progress of ICT development year after year through the prism of an international agreed methodology.

Second, the IDI allows each country to benchmark with countries of similar socio-economic and geographic conditions and identify areas of improvement.

Third, the IDI is a very good opportunity to learn from one another, share experiences in order to implement best practices.

We are constantly working on the improvement of the index. This is why I have requested an independent external assessment of the IDI methodology. The results of this assessment are published in the 2015 MIS report to be launched today and I am pleased to announce that they confirm the soundness of the IDI methodology and its indicators.

Honorable Minsters, Distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen

Above all, as Director of BDT I see real human stories behind all these numbers and statistics. I see the stories of people whose lives have improved thanks to ICTs.

Let me conclude by inviting all of you to share your experiences, expertise, and ideas over the next three days.

Our mission is to bring the power of ICTs into the hands of ordinary people, wherever they live.

It is a noble mission. Let us not miss the opportunity.

I thank you.

Arigato Gozai mass

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World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium 2015

Closing Ceremony

Wednesday 2 December 2015

Hiroshima, Japan

Closing Speech

Brahima Sanou

Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau

H.E. Mr. Yasuo Sakamoto, Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication, Japan

Kiyoshi Mori San, Director-General for International Affairs, Global ICT Strategy Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication and Chair of WTIS-15,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

This successful edition of WTIS-15 has come to an end.

I would like to thank all of you for coming to this event and I would like to extend, on behalf of all of you, our deepest appreciation to the Government of Japan for hosting the Symposium this year.

This week, we have welcomed a record number of more than 600 participants from 88 countries, including Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers, Vice-Ministers, Director-Generals. This reflects the importance and relevance of this gathering. I thank you all.

During the past three days, we spoke a lot about the crucial role that ICTs play in achieving the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals.

As we also heard this week, the emergence of the Internet of Things and big data will lead to an ever increasing amount of data which could be explored to address pressing development needs and overcome the current lack of information.

The presentations and discussions during the three days have shown how the process of deciding the indicators is open and dynamic but more importantly contribution driven.

Let me repeat again and echo the appeal of the chairmen of the Expert groups that you are all invited to participate in these groups in order to strengthen your **ownership** of the indicators the methodology and the IDI.

The UN has called for a consolidated effort to mobilize the data revolution for sustainable development, including by fostering and promoting innovation.

At ITU, we are taking concrete steps to respond to this call by creating a multi-stakeholder partnership for big data and

Internet of Things data.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to the Government of Kuwait for its support through financial contribution.

I would like to invite other countries and partners to follow the good step of Kuwait in order to support our common effort to continue strengthening the international agreed framework for data collection and processing to support the Sustainable Developments Goals.

Ladies and gentlemen:

As we are about to close WTIS-15, I would like to extend my appreciation to the Expert Group on Telecommunication/ICT Indicators and the Expert Group on ICT Household Indicators and their Chairmen for the work done before and during 2015.

I would also like to thank all participants, panelists and moderators for their inspiring contributions.

To the interpreters, our friends from the ITU-Association of Japan - thank you for your patience and hard work. I thank also all those who worked behind the scenes (day and night), to make this event possible.

Allow me to thank all the ITU staff, those present here in Hiroshima and those in Geneva, who have worked tirelessly to make this event a success.

Dear Kiyoshi Mori San,

We all raise our hands to say that you are a true leader. You led us over the three days with a smile. This contributed to the great success of this Symposium. We really **enjoyed** your chairmanship. Thank you

In conclusion, Let me reiterate again that we have been very privileged to be hosted by the Government of Japan and be provided with such excellent facilities and support.

Thank you Sakamoto San, Thank you authorities of Hiroshima, Thank you the Government and the people of Japan.

Let me thank Botswana on behalf of all of us for graciously offering to host WTIS-16.

I wish you all Safe travels home and see you in Botswana at WTIS-16!

I thank you.

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