



19th Global Symposium for Regulators (Port Vila, 2019)

Inclusive connectivity: The future of regulation

Speeches

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Statement by Honorable Charlot Salwai TABIMASMAS(MP)

Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu

on the occasion of the Opening of ITU GSR2019

Warwick, Port Vila, Vanuatu



10 July 2019

ITU – Global Symposium for Regulators 2019, Warwick, Port Vila, Vanuatu

Your Excellencies,
Hon. Ministers of ITU Member States,
Secretary General of ITU, Mr. Houlin Zhao,
Director of Telecommunications Development Bureau, Mrs. Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Elected Officials of the ITU,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen....

1. It is indeed with great and warm pleasure, and honor to WELCOME YOU ALL to our Beautiful Un-Touch Paradise, the land of laughter and friendly Smile! Welcome! BienVenu! Welkam!
2. Ten Years ago, the Government of Vanuatu gave up its Shares with the Incumbent Telecommunications Service Provider to WELCOME market competition into its shores!
3. Ten Years later, the Government on behalf of its Valued Citizens is hosting you all global Experts of the ICT in our beautiful Country!
4. With a population of almost 300,000 across the archipelago, our people live and operate a lifestyle of inclusivity since the time and days of our ancestors. This year's theme **"Inclusive Connectivity"** has blend in very well with our traditional living, upbringing and importantly traditional values through celebrations, sharing of gifts during ceremonial activities and more other types of activities.

Excellencies and Distinguish Delegates!

5. **"Leaving No One Behind"** is one of the 2030 SDG agenda and commitment made by many of the member states of the United Nation, of whom many of you are representing today. A commitment that pushes all members of the International Telecommunications Union, National Government and other key players through ICT to collaborate, and have inclusive dialogues to find effective and workable ways or solutions to address the matter; and is one reason why you are here today.
6. Vanuatu through key players invested a lot of their time and effort to bring Vanuatu to the level, where the citizens are now enjoying an

improved coverage of both voice and data in all provinces across the country and an excellent geographical coverage of satellite broadband. These improvements could not have happened without the commitment from Telecom Service Providers mandated through the Government Universal Access Policy, which promotes a “Play” or “Pay” approach and other commitment pledged towards the roll out of networks.

7. Additionally, the Computer Laboratory Internet Community Centres built in 22 main areas of Vanuatu, has also immensely contributed to bridging the divide in respective areas and promotes inclusiveness to big events happening in respective islands of Vanuatu.
8. The current trend of connectivity has also contributed to improve, access to relevant and efficient market information to farmers, tourism operators and business operators, students performances, enhance teaching efficiency and teachers' turnover, improve government administration efficiencies especially in the health centres and provincial education offices, and importantly include the rural offices into the e-Government system where all officers employed in rural offices enjoys the same benefit of ICT Access and Services.
9. The quality of service in the past months continue to improve thus, saw increased number of data users each year and especially in social media across the nation.

Excellencies and Distinguish Guests!

10. As we positively progressed forward for a better, smart and connected society, we acknowledge and accept the fact that Vanuatu is prone to be Number 1 in Natural Disaster; the difficulties experienced such as high cost of logistics; technical operations hiccups; digital literacy gaps; inconsistent power supply are some of the common issues faced today by key players especially by the operators not only in Vanuatu but around the Pacific region. Government contribution to the telecommunication sector must be treated the same way as other infrastructures to overcome these difficulties and challenges attributed to the archipelagic nature of the country with all populated islands separated by water
11. The archipelagic nature of the country also signals the need of having backup gateways through satellite links thus our stand for 2.6MHz

spectrum is for the spectrum range to be shared between Satellite providers and the International Mobile Telecommunications. It is my wish that this Global Symposium of Regulators 2019 bring to your attention the common issues faced by Pacific Island countries in deploying their telecommunication infrastructure over vast ocean which is different from other countries with vast land space.

12. Technically, the existing infrastructure embraces convergence, Internet of Things, over the top Services and other Digital activities. However, the existing Regulatory regime and mechanism may limit such business upgrades and improvements, thus, the need at an executive level to collaborate with all existing sectors and consider the next level of regulatory regime, a regime that will stimulate cross sectorial uptake of ICT services.
13. Artificial Intelligence may be a considerable option to address many of the common challenges and issues we are experiencing today. However, it is an area that the Government must carefully understand its benefits and the side effects it will bring into the country before promoting its use within the country.
14. Although OTT services are beneficial for consumers at all levels, the Government through the Office of the Regulator is taking further steps in addressing the need of having an appropriate mechanism in place to ensure there is always **competition, fairness, justice, and equity** in mobile services across Vanuatu.
15. The proliferation of ICT and the pervasive use of social media in our lives has generated calls for greater people involvement in decisions, and greater accountability on the part of governments; but it also represents an opportunity for us to engage our citizens, residents and businesses in innovative and meaningful ways. Whilst Vanuatu appreciate the greater benefits that social media can bring to us, our policies, regulations and legislations have to be shaped in ways and manners that protect our traditional values and principles.
16. The cost of international and national bandwidth is still an issue that the Government through the Office of the Regulator is looking at options of approaches that is not only beneficial to the consumers and the Retail Service Providers but importantly to the privately invested submarine cable. Thus, the slow internet speed continues to arise.

Excellencies and Distinguish Delegates

17. As technology is fast evolving, the use of internet is not safe at all times, the pace of Regulatory mechanism and Policy development is slow across the region, we must be mindful on our approach on inclusive connectivity. An approach which will bring, maintain and promote harmony within our respective societies, and that will positively impact human lives.
18. Building Consumer Confidence and trust in the data driven economy is first and foremost the most important duty to perform by all business and service providers. The **INTERNET OF EVERYTHING** is becoming complicated and difficult to understand by the very targeted users of some technological evolution.
19. Considering the importance of internet Governance, particularly focusing on the inclusion of citizens who have very minimal knowledge on the use of data/internet and more so other technological products. It may well please you for me to announce that Vanuatu has established a homegrown platform known as the Vanuatu National Internet Governance Forum Secretariat. A secretariat that will serve as a first hand avenue or channel that the Ni-Vanuatu can use to obtain expert guidance on the governance of internet activities and at the same time be educated on benefits and disadvantages of using technology such as the Internet.
20. The Government Institutions and some private organizations such as the National Bank of Vanuatu, Vanuatu National Provident Fund, the Regulator's Office and more others are promoting use of mobile app. This is to address situations which users find difficulties in finding appropriate information they require; thus, the mobile app technology will take them straight to the required and or needed information.
21. Mobile Roaming across the region and across borders has been an issue in the last five years and is still an issue today. Although, there are OTT services that can be used to substitute the service, the OTT services are still unreliable across majority of the countries that I visited so far. Therefore, this is still a need for the Service Providers and the Regulators including Policy makers collaborate and come up with a solution that is much more appropriate and affordable for the consumers.

Excellencies and Distinguish Delegates

ITU – Global Symposium for Regulators 2019, Warwick, Port Vila, Vanuatu

22. May I take this opportunity to thank the ITU secretariat for choosing Vanuatu as the first Pacific Island state to host a Global Symposium of Regulators and their support and commitment put into the organization of the successful GSR2019 symposium.
23. I also acknowledged the support of the Government of Vanuatu through the Office of Regulator, Office of Government Chief Information Officer, and the members of the Task Force for their excellent work.
24. This event couldn't be realized without greater support of all our sponsors and I want to take this opportunity to express our utmost appreciation to them for their generous funding assistance to GSR 2019 symposium.
25. Last but not the least I want to thank you all for taking up your time, and travelled all the way from your far and near countries to this part of the world, and wish you express my deep appreciation to the ITU and the local organizations of this event, and wish you all the best in the next coming hours and days of the meeting.
26. I also invite you to take some time to visit some parts of our unique and beautiful scenery outside Port Vila when you have time and enjoy the Vanuatu hospitality.

Thank you!

19th Global Symposium for Regulators – Opening Ceremony

ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao

Port Vila, Vanuatu – 10 July 2019

His Excellency Honorable Charlot Salwai Tabimasma, Prime Minister,
Excellencies,
BDT Director, BR Director,
Mr. Chair,
Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The first thing that strikes us when we set foot on Vanuatu is the beauty of this South Pacific Ocean nation. But what stays with us is the warmth of its people. So allow me to start by thanking the Government and the people of Vanuatu for their extraordinary hospitality and for hosting the 19th Global Symposium for Regulators.

We are honored by the presence of the Honorable Charlot Salwai Tabimasma, Prime Minister of Vanuatu, who was already with us for Telecom World 2016 in Bangkok and for our Plenipotentiary Conference last November in Dubai. Honorable Prime Minister, you are now the only Prime Minister to have spoken at three of our major events. We at ITU are grateful for your support. And we are proud of what Vanuatu has accomplished in the field of ICT in recent years.

It is wonderful to be here with all the participants and delegates who, in many cases, have traveled a long way to share their views and their experiences – welcome to GSR-19!

Our host this year is a symbol of resilience, a country on the forefront of the fight against climate change. It's also a country with forward-looking ICT initiatives, like the National Digital Governance Roadmap. There is a lot we can learn from Vanuatu. And that's why we are all here today – to build on each other's knowledge and experience to develop clear and robust regulatory frameworks.

The Pacific region is faced with unique challenges: a very large sea area, small land masses and populations isolated from each other, and relatively low economic development and ICT connectivity. The ocean connects but also separates people, making transportation difficult and communication critical.

We don't hear views from the region often enough. GSR-19 presents us with a golden opportunity to hear directly from those who live and work right here in the Pacific region. Our last Plenipotentiary Conference. PP-18 approved, among others, a revised resolution supporting Small Island Developing States and Landlocked Developing Countries. We are pleased to come to the region to discuss connectivity strategies.

In today's digital economy, the line between the ICT sector and other industries is increasingly blurry. Relationships between institutions, market players, and people are changing. And emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, the Internet of Things, and 5G are putting regulatory paradigms to the test.

Accordingly, national regulators are faced with new technologies as well as new business and investment models. From agriculture and transportation to banking and health, no sector of the economy is immune to digital transformation. As a result, collaborative regulation has been steadily gaining momentum.

Delegates, colleagues,

ITU has developed the key concepts of "collaborative regulation" and "fifth-generation regulation" to describe the need for ICT policy and regulatory frameworks to be inclusive, up-to-date, flexible, incentive-based, evidence-based, decision-oriented and market-driven. At stake is the regulators' ability to unlock investment to support growth, jobs, innovation, and digital transformation across sectors and regions.

Moving towards a more open, collaborative and cross-sectoral regulation is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and delivering on the promise of the digital economy – not just for the benefit of consumers and businesses, but to all those who are still unconnected around the world. ITU's latest statistics remind us that 3.7 billion people are still waiting to reap the benefits of the digital economy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Over the next three days, I encourage you to strengthen our dialogue and continue to learn from each other. Let us build tomorrow's regulatory frameworks – frameworks that will overcome the hurdles to investment that can often stifle progress. Let us be open to new regulatory tools and solutions. Let's act now.

I look forward to our discussions here and to this year's GSR Best Practice Guidelines.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the sponsors at GSR-2019 and once again to thank the Honorable Prime Minister for his valuable support and to the Vanuatu Government and its people to invite GSR-2019.

I wish you all a successful and productive GSR-19!

Thank you.



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BDT Director's Speeches



Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR-19)

Port Vila, Vanuatu 10 July 2019

**Global Symposium for Regulators
Opening remarks
Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau
Wednesday July 10, 9:00am**

Honorable Charlot Salwai Tabimasmass, Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu

Mr Brian Winji, Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulator and Chair of GSR-19

Mr Houlin Zhao, Secretary-General of ITU

Mr Gerard Metsan, Chief Information Officer, Office of the Government of Vanuatu

Mr Mario Maniewicz, Director of ITU Radiocommunication Bureau,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

What a great pleasure it is to join you all here in the beautiful Pacific island of Vanuatu, and to welcome you to the 2019 edition of the Global Symposium for Regulators.

I would like to extend an extra-special thank you to the Government of Vanuatu for so generously offering to host us, and for making us all so welcome.

A few days ago, I had the pleasure to grab some vacation days with my family to discover beautiful Vanuatu. We have been marvelled by your beautiful country, the underwater sea life and, most importantly, the kindness and cheerfulness of its people.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Brian Winji, the newly-appointed Regulator of Vanuatu. I look forward to working with you and to embarking on the GSR-19 adventure together. Thank you for accepting to be the Chair of this edition of GSR.

Distinguished GSR-19 delegates,

Since the first edition of the GSR back in the year 2000, ICTs have been driving transformational change at an ever-more rapid pace. In just a few short years technology has become the fundamental cornerstone of each and every economic sector.

With ICTs now critical to every country's economic prosperity, ITU believes all regulators – from the largest markets, to the smallest – benefit from international dialogue and exchange.

As Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau, and a member of the team that pioneered this event almost 20 years ago, I am extremely proud of the role ITU plays as a catalyst in promoting regulatory best practice and 'digital access for all', and dialogue.

At the heart of ITU's Global Symposium for Regulators is helping countries leverage the huge opportunities that connectivity brings.

GSR delegates might not spend their days laying cables or installing base stations. But make no mistake: our work this week will be just as vital to efforts to achieve truly 'inclusive connectivity'.

We all know, getting the ICT policy frameworks right is what ultimately creates the essential enabling environment for growth and development of communications services.

It is those services that now underpin the future of every economy.

We also know what a vital role ICTs can play in helping countries implement early warning, humanitarian response and disaster mitigation strategies.

This is an issue of enormous relevance to Vanuatu and other Small Island Developing States of the Pacific Rim.

Vanuatu is now ranked Number One as the country most at risk from catastrophic weather events, and we all know that the impact of such events can levy an extremely heavy toll on vulnerable nations, in both human and economic terms.

I had the pleasure to visit the Vanuatu National Disaster Management Office and learn how technologies are being used here for disaster preparedness, early warning and response. The country is a great example for climate action.

I am sure you will all remember that, in 2015, Vanuatu was hit by Cyclone Pam, a category 5 tropical storm.

The impact of that devastation can still be seen today. At that time, ITU deployed ICT equipment to support national relief efforts. Our cooperation with Vanuatu has strengthened since then, and today we are working together to prepare the national emergency telecommunication plan to promote communication and information sharing across all levels of government, within communities at risk, and between public and private organizations.

I am particularly pleased that this year's GSR programme will feature an emergency telecoms simulation exercise aimed at showcasing the potential of technology, as well as at highlighting the regulatory issues we need to address if we are to fully leverage that potential.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The release of the report of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation last month leaves us in no doubt whatsoever that ICTs will play a pivotal role in helping each and every country attain the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

At the end of last year, ITU announced to the world that we had passed the milestone of 50% global connectivity.

That gave us great cause to celebrate. But it must also give us pause.

Half the world connected also means half the world NOT connected.

And we know that connecting that remaining 50% isn't going to be quite so simple.

For tomorrow's digital opportunities to fully materialize, innovative approaches to policy and regulation are more urgently required than ever.

Achieving our goal of 'connectivity for all' means finding new ways of reaching out to remote and isolated communities.

It means reaching places where other basic infrastructure – like reliable electricity – may not always be a given.

It means reaching out to people who may struggle with literacy and numeracy; who may be surviving on very low incomes; or who may live with a range of disabilities caused by lack of basic healthcare.

It means finding ways of connecting people who, right now, lack the digital skills to fully leverage the power of ICTs to improve their lives.

The theme of this year's GSR, '*Inclusive Connectivity: The Future of Regulation*', focuses on what we call '5th generation regulation'.

What does that mean? If I had to sum up the concept in one word, it would be this: COLLABORATION.

Regulation has entered a new age. As mobile phones become the portals to an ever-growing array of online services, you, as regulators, are having to grapple with a host of new challenges – from digital identity to data protection and privacy, blockchain, the implications of artificial intelligence, and much more.

Distinguished colleagues,

Business as usual, where stable, transparent regulatory frameworks were almost all that was required to ensure the market did the work of actually connecting people, isn't going to work in this new era.

But with ICTs so critical to economic growth, we know that getting the right regulatory frameworks in place is vitally important to every country's future.

ICTs are no longer just about communicating. Today's regulators have a crucial role to play in sustainable and inclusive social and economic development. In short, in creating a fairer, more equitable world where everyone gets his or her chance to shine.

Things have changed a lot since ITU launched this event back in the year 2000.

In the year 2000, there were 398 million Internet users; 6.6% of the world was connected.

738 million mobile cellular subscribers.

Broadband hardly existed.

Today, 51.2% of the world population is online. There are 8.2 billion mobile cellular subscribers, 1.1 billion fixed lines, and 5.3 billion mobile broadband subscribers.

We have to make sure this growth continues.

How many of you were with us at GSR in 2000?

A glance back at the agenda of that first-ever GSR reveals that the focus was on helping countries actually set up their own ICT regulatory frameworks; on the birth of the first regional regulatory associations; and on the impact of technological convergence. We even had a side-event on gender issues – an issue that is still a challenge in the ICT sector.

Since that very first GSR the number of regulators has increased by more than 60 entities to reach 168. We are pleased to have so many of them here with us today. The newest regulators are in Ethiopia – that regulatory authority was established last month – and in Somalia. Here in the region, the newest are in Nauru and in the Federated States of Micronesia. They have just been created and they are joining us for the first time.

Distinguished delegates,

Since the year 2000, the evolution of our industry has never ceased to accelerate. Every year brings major new developments, and with them, new challenges.

We live in exciting times, and I firmly believe that digital platforms represent our best opportunity EVER to close the development gap and drive global prosperity.

Let's use our week here in Vanuatu to:

- think outside the box,
- to be bold,
- to dare to dream up new ways of doing business that will create win-win-win scenarios that deliver rapid benefits to governments, industry AND, most importantly, ICT users. It is all about people.

The global spotlight is on us. Let's step up to the challenge!

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Opening Remarks by Mr. Brian Winji
The Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and
Broadcasting Regulator,
The Chairman of the Global Symposium for Regulators
on the occasion of the Opening of ITU GSR2019
Warwick, Port Vila, Vanuatu

**Your Excellencies,
The Prime Minister of Vanuatu, The Hon. Charlot S. Tabimasma,
Hon. Ministers of Vanuatu,
Hon. Ministers of ITU Member States,
Secretary General of ITU, Mr. Houlin Zhao,
Director of Telecommunications Development Bureau, Mrs. Doreen
Bogdan-Martin
Elected Officials of the ITU,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen....**

1. It is with **great honour and respect**, as the Chairman for this event, and on behalf of my fellow colleague Regulators in the Pacific Region, take this opportunity to thank you all respected delegates who have come from far, far and near to present in this very important and high level meeting.
2. I thank you all and especially your Excellencies and the Hon. Ministers of the ITU states for making up your time to travel and attend this meeting, and be part of live discussions, debates and **experience our connected lifestyle, connect with our natural beauty** and experience the level of communications development in this part of the world.
3. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the hard working staff of the ITU and the country host, the Government of Vanuatu for investing your resources to make this event a good start already!

4. And I thank the Interpreters who will make it easier for all of us throughout this week to understand each other and **promote inclusivity connectivity** at our level of discussions and presentations.

Excellencies, Honourable Ministers and Distinguish Delegates!

5. I am very honoured as a young Regulator, to take up the responsibility of Chairmanship, to have you all, distinguished personalities, ICT development Experts, Policy and Regulatory Experts, ICT Innovators, the ICT service and product suppliers to be here with us today and throughout the week to share with us your unique experiences and the global common issue which must somehow be addressed at our level.
6. This week's interactive sessions as you can see from the program are based on practical regulatory experiences which we can learn and build from to connect the remaining citizens who are still experiencing traditional modes of communications.
7. Inclusive Connectivity is a big topic that is not only setting the scene for discussions but can challenge our regulatory approach as to how we can better improve or efficiently assist with creating and promoting conducive regulatory environment that will bring in the remaining citizens.
8. There will be challenges ahead of us in connecting **"the disconnect"**, particularly on some specific consumer experiences. I would like to give you my favourite example, the connected consumers who are now disconnecting

them from practical experiences and spend more time with their favourite devices and **virtual reality**.

Excellencies, Honourable Ministers and Distinguish Guests!

9. The **Fast Technology Evolution** has “no waiting time” for the Policy Makers and the Regulators to take more time debating the issues contributing to the progression of the establishment of the Regulatory environment, but signal the need to collaborate **appropriately and transparently**. Thus the need of having such high level meeting to bring experts together to discuss workable way forward to address issues encountered at all levels.
10. I am sure the sessions throughout the week will provide all of us this incredible opportunity to share our knowledge and experiences, and learn from each other and at the same time experience the natural beauty of our islands in the Pacific, and here in Port Vila.
11. May I also take this opportunity to wish you all the best throughout this week and encourage you to let us know any experiences or issues that needed our attention on for redress and we will attend to.

Thank you!
