

# World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-14)

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## Summary

The *Connect the World* initiative was launched in 2005 to help mobilize partners and resources needed to implement WSIS outcomes. To this end, a series of regional Summits has been organized over the past number of years to bring together committed stakeholders to strengthen existing and launch new partnership initiatives for ICT investment. The most recent event was the *Connect Asia-Pacific Summit*, held on 18th November 2013 in Thailand, in conjunction with TELECOM WORLD 2013.

## References

Documents: [C14/18](#), [C13/18](#), [C13/INF/7](#), [C12/34](#), [Resolution 1281](#)

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Recognizing the need for a multi-stakeholder approach to successfully turn commitments into action, the ITU launched the *Connect the World* initiative in 2005 to help mobilize the financial, human and technical resources needed to implement outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

As part of this effort, ITU has been organizing high-level events known as [Connect Summits](#) in each region where Members have expressed an interest. These summits have brought together like-minded stakeholders to work together on concrete projects to expand information and communication technology (ICT) networks and access as a means of spurring investment, employment and broader social and economic development.

Five *Connect* summits have been organized in collaboration with regional and global partners. Each summit was preceded by an intensive and inclusive preparatory process to take into account the views of all relevant stakeholders.

A follow-up mechanism has been implemented by ITU regional offices in collaboration with regional telecommunication organizations and other relevant stakeholders with the aim of identifying gaps and avoiding overlap as well as tracking progress on the implementation of the Summit outcomes.

### ***Connect Africa Summit***

First in the series, the [Connect Africa Summit](#) took place in Kigali, Rwanda, 29–30 October 2007. It was organized by the International Telecommunication Union, the African Union, the World Bank Group and the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development, in partnership with the African Development Bank, the African Telecommunication Union, the UN Economic Commission for Africa and the Global Digital Solidarity Fund.

The Summit gathered some 1036 participants from 54 countries, including six Heads of State and Government. Forty-three countries in Africa were represented, including 23 at the Ministerial level. Some 20 industrial leading companies also participated, along with development banks, international organizations and other stakeholders.

The Summit programme was framed around the challenges and opportunities in Africa to reinforce the need to accelerate the implementation of the WSIS targets. To help achieve the [Connect Africa Summit Goals](#), many participants announced major commitments totaling some USD 55 billion). Details of implementation can be found at: <http://www.itu.int/council/C2013/pd/018link1.docx>.

- As follow-ups of the Connect Africa, the following actions have been implemented: e.g., the landing of submarine cables has reduced communication cost and the expansion of the regional fiber networks, and national backbones has impact through increased mobile broadband services penetration. The GSM industry invested more than USD 20 billion despite the global financial difficulties since the Connect Africa Summit in Kigali. The ITU implemented a USD 6 million [project](#) on the Harmonization of ICT policies in Sub Saharan Africa (HIPSSA) jointly funded by the EU and ITU that provided support to RECs and their respective Regulators' Associations and built human capacity. Further Analog-to-Digital TV Broadcasting migration Guidelines and National Roadmaps have been undertaken for Angola, DRC, Ethiopia and Mali with support from KCC, R.O. Korea, and MIC, Japan. The ITU in partnership with respective governments and institutions have implemented Multipurpose Community Centre projects in rural areas and is connecting villages in partnership with Nokia Siemens Networks. Connect a School Connect a Community projects in partnership with the government of France is underway and over 60 schools have been equipped with ICTs and internet connectivity. ITU and UNECA jointly implemented an e-employment project in Congo, while a similar project has been implemented in Gabon and planned for 10 other African

countries. The ITU funded the establishment of an African Centre of Excellence Network to build human capacity including Spanish and Portuguese CoEs in Mozambique and Angola. In 2013, a cooperation agreement establishing a Regional Cybersecurity Center in Abuja was signed between ITU and Nigeria.

- The Government of the Republic of Rwanda and the ITU co-hosted the [Transform Africa Summit](#) aimed at evaluating the implementation of Connect Africa goals and leveraging its achievements.
- The principle outcome of the summit was Smart Africa, an innovative approach designed to ensure that Africa makes the most of broadband and ICT opportunities. The Summit endorsed the [Smart Africa Manifesto](#), which embodies the 5 principles and implementation framework of the Smart Africa initiative.

### ***Connect CIS Summit***

As the second regional event in the series, ITU organized the [Connect CIS Summit](#) on 25-27 November 2009 in Minsk, Belarus.

The Summit was organized by ITU in partnership with the Regional Commonwealth in the Field of Communications, the Commonwealth of Independent States Executive Committee, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, and the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development.

The Summit gathered 353 participants from 18 Member States (10 from the CIS Region), including five Heads of State and Government. Some 40 leading ICT companies, development banks, international organizations and other stakeholders participated in the Summit.

Priority topics that emerged from the Summit included expanding broadband networks needed to support advanced applications and services, transitioning from analogue to digital broadcasting, capacity-building, cyber-security and policy and regulatory reform to stimulate ICT investment. Details of implementation can be found at <http://www.itu.int/council/C2013/pd/018link2.docx>.

- As follow-ups of the Connect CIS, the following actions have been implemented: e.g., joint projects were implemented between the ITU and the Republic of Moldova (exceeding USD 250 000), the Republic of Belarus (around USD 200 000), the Kyrgyz Republic with "Alippe TV" company (around USD 1 200 000) on creation of public Internet access points in the rural areas of the countries and on creation of Interactive Multimedia Digital Broadcasting for education purposes have been completed. The ITU and the Kyrgyz Republic, within the framework of "Connect Schools" Initiative, conducted a series of upgrade-qualification trainings for village informatics teachers of Kyrgyzstan. The private sector of the Kyrgyz Republic has supported ITU "Build on Broadband" initiative at estimated project costs of more than USD 250,000. Majority of CIS countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Uzbekistan and Ukraine) have developed and are implementing target state programs, on comprehensive national ICT development.

### ***Connect Arab Summit***

As the third regional event in the series, the ITU organized the [Connect Arab Summit](#) on 5-7 March 2012 in Doha (Qatar).

The Summit was organized in close partnership with the League of Arab States and the Qatari administration.

The Summit welcomed some 540 participants from 26 countries, including seven Heads of State and Heads of Government or their representatives, 26 Ministers, 18 international and regional organizations and 99 private sector companies and other stakeholders.

All stakeholders, including governments, private sector, civil society and regional and international organizations, committed to work together towards the achievement of the Summit goals in the following areas by 2015: access and infrastructure, digital content, cybersecurity and innovation.

On the occasion of the Summit, a number of [projects](#), valued at a total of USD 46.6 billion, were proposed by stakeholders, including projects for the least developed countries in the Arab region. In addition, a number of partners made [announcements](#) during the Summit as part of their commitment to the region.

- As follow-ups of the Connect Arab, the following actions have been implemented, while details can be found at: <http://www.itu.int/council/C2013/pd/018link3.docx>: e.g., ITU had worked with the League of Arab States (LAS) and had provided USD 380,000 for the submission of an application for the dot ARAB domain name both in the Latin and Arabic strings. A Regional Centre on Cyber Security was established by ITA Oman and the ITU/IMPACT partnership in March 2013 through a joint project totaling over USD 2 million to provide assistance to countries in the region to set up their CIRTs and for technical support. ITU worked with Sudan on a project for the establishment of a Digital Forensic Lab and had conducted project to carry out CIRT assessment for Comoros, Djibouti, Lebanon and Mauritania to discuss the requirements, including financing. While assistance to Palestine is in progress, the ITU is working on securing the needed fund to assist Lebanon. ITU, with the assistance of experts from the region started a project on the establishment of a regional working group to develop guidelines for legal framework related to Child Online Protection (COP) for the Arab region to be shared with the countries and to be endorsed by the LAS.
- ITU in collaboration with the LAS held a Connect Arab Summit Follow up meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 2013 in Hammamet, Tunisia.

### ***Connect Americas Summit***

The Connect Americas Summit (CAS), the fourth in a series of ITU-led Connect Summits, was held in Panama City, from 17 to 19 July 2012.

The Summit included some 654 participants from 36 countries, including 7 Heads of State or Government, 12 Ministers, 48 international and regional organizations and 158 private sector companies and other stakeholders.

This Summit succeeded in its goal of helping to mobilize the human, financial and technical resources needed to connect the unconnected and to strengthen the role of ICT as the engine of economic prosperity and sustainable development, as well as poverty reduction in the Americas region.

In line with WTDC regional initiatives, key themes at the *Connect Americas Summit* included emergency communications, digital broadcasting, broadband access and uptake in urban and rural areas, reduction of Internet access costs, and human capacity building.

During this Summit, a [number of projects](#) valued at USD 53.4 billion were proposed by stakeholders and ITU-BDT with the aim of achieving these goals.

As with previous Connect events, the Summit in Panama was used by participants as a platform to announce new partnerships: <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/connect/americas/display.asp?QID=10856&Language=en>.

Efforts are now underway by partners to implement these various initiatives. *Details of implementation can be found at: <http://www.itu.int/council/C2013/pd/018link4.docx>.*

- As follow-ups of the Connect Americas Summit, the following actions have been under way e.g., ITU has completed the implementation of the HIPCAR project on “Enhancing Competitiveness in the Caribbean through the Harmonization of ICT Policies, Legislation and Regulatory Procedures” funded by the European Union (EU). ITU is working with regional institutions such as CTU, CDEMA, CBU and CANTO on broadband initiatives, spectrum management, transition from analogue to digital, cyber security and disaster management. ITU in partnership with the CTU and one regional government hosted a follow-up Connect Americas for the Caribbean meeting in August 2013 in Trinidad. The CANTO in partnership with the IDB launched their “Broadband Infrastructure Inventory and Public Awareness Project” and the ITU was invited to be part of the technical team. One of the highest priorities for COMTELCA countries presented to the Connect Americas is the project “Complementary Infrastructure for the Mesoamerican Information Highway”. COMTELCA has started implementing RG-T2242 broadband project, financed by the IDB, which has been supported by the ITU through knowledge resources and expertise. ITU has also been working with COMTELCA on Communications during Emergencies. MoUs / Cooperation Agreements have been signed with the government of Haiti for the development of telecommunication sector, with Research and Development Center (CPqD) in Brazil for non-exclusive collaboration in the area of conformance and interoperability and with the CAF for transition from Analogue to Digital Broadcasting in the Americas Region.

#### **Connect Asia-Pacific Summit**

The [Connect Asia-Pacific Summit](#), the fifth in a series of ITU-led Connect Summits was held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2013 jointly with the Government of Kingdom of Thailand, the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) of Thailand in particular, and in partnership with regional organizations and UN agencies such as APT, ABU, UNESCAP, WHO and many others. The Summit was organized in conjunction with ITU TELECOM World (19-22 November, 2013), Bangkok, Thailand.

The Summit attracted some 625 participants from 37 ITU Asia-Pacific Member States, including 7 Heads of State or Government, 30 Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers, Deputy Ministers, and Ambassadors, 13 Observers from ITU Member States outside the Asia-Pacific region, 1 Observer (Res. 99), international and regional organizations, Recognized Operating Agencies, Scientific and Industrial Organizations, Academia and other stakeholders.

During the Summit in Bangkok, Leaders affirmed their common [Leaders’ Vision](#) of an inclusive and development-centered as well as creative Asia-Pacific: Smartly DIGITAL by 2020. The Summit also adopted a [Communiqué](#), which is an action plan to achieve the Leaders’ Vision for the Asia-Pacific Region.

During the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Meeting, a number of projects and partnerships, valued at USD 53 billion, were identified as [market opportunities](#) by the ITU, relevant partners and stakeholders.

- As a concrete example of fostering partnership, the following projects have been developed and signed during/after the Summit, e.g., ITU and the MCMC developed and launched a project with aggregated budget USD 80,000 on *Promoting the transformational power of broadband - [connecting at the roots](#)* that raised awareness about the importance of broadband and demonstrated how it can be harnessed to transform lives and society. Contest and award ceremony were conducted during the Summit. ITU and the NBTC, Thailand developed and signed a project (USD 466,273) aimed at smooth transitioning from analogue to digital TV broadcasting in

Thailand. ITU and the Department of Communications of Australia (Comms) developed and signed a project (CHF 591,000) to implement the priorities identified from the Summit and the Asia-Pacific Regional Initiatives. ITU and the Ministry of ICT, Science and Future Planning (MISP), Republic of Korea, developed and signed a project with amount of USD 135,000 to develop “Master Plans for Spectrum Management” and build human capacity.

Following the successful outcome of the Connect Asia-Pacific Summit and the launch of ITU and Asian Development Bank (ADB) joint initiative on ICT for Development for the Asia-Pacific Region, the ITU and the ADB plans to convene a follow-up meeting at the end of April 2014, Manila, Philippines.

The **Connect Summits** have proven to be *effective platforms for multi-stakeholder partnerships* by attracting government leaders and executives from the private sector, regional telecommunication organizations, financial institutions and civil society. At each summit, a series of new partnerships have been announced to the benefit of the respective region. More importantly, beyond these partnerships announced, the **Connect Summits** have gathered Heads of State and Government around Telecom/ICT for development after the WSIS.

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**ANNEX 1****Connect Africa Summit Goals**

To reinforce the need to accelerate the implementation of the WSIS targets, the Summit programme was framed around five goals, which reflect the challenges and opportunities in the Africa region. These goals were endorsed earlier by Ministers and experts from African administrations:

- **Goal 1:** Interconnect all African capitals and major cities with ICT broadband infrastructure and strengthen connectivity to the rest of the world by 2012.
- **Goal 2:** Connect African villages to broadband ICT services by 2015 and implement shared access initiatives such as community telecentres and village phones.
- **Goal 3:** Adopt key regulatory measures that promote affordable, widespread access to a full range of broadband ICT services, including technology and service neutral licensing / authorization practices, allocating spectrum for multiple, competitive broadband wireless service providers, creating national Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) and implementing competition in the provision of international Internet connectivity.
- **Goal 4:** Support the development of a critical mass of ICT skills required by the knowledge economy, notably through the establishment of a network of ICT Centres of Excellence in each subregion of Africa and ICT capacity-building and training centres in each country, with the aim of achieving a broad network of inter-linked physical and virtual centres, while ensuring coordination between academia and industry by 2015.
- **Goal 5:** Adopt a national e-strategy, including a cybersecurity framework, and deploy at least one flagship e-government service as well as e-education, e-commerce and e-health services using accessible technologies in each country in Africa by 2012, with the aim of making multiple e-government and other e-services widely available by 2015.

**ANNEX 2****Connect CIS Summit Declaration****"Towards a Digital Future"**

We, the leaders of the peoples of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), assembled in Belarus from 26-27 November 2009 for the Connect CIS Summit, have come together to forge a common future of prosperity for our region by leveraging the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

We reiterate our common desire to build an inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, where people can achieve their full potential and improve their quality of life.

We recognize the important contribution of ICTs in stimulating economic growth, employment and broader sustainable development in the region, and in turn, their potential to help achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

We further recognize the essential role of governments in devising national e-strategies and establishing an enabling policy and regulatory framework to foster ICT investment.

We reaffirm our commitment to achieving the internationally agreed vision and goals of the World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva 2003; Tunis 2005).

We note the key proposals and initiatives brought to the attention of the Connect CIS Summit by the International Telecommunication Union and various partners.

We reach out to partners including those from the telecommunication/ICT sector, development banks and financial institutions, international and regional organizations and civil society to mobilize human, financial and technical resources for these and other initiatives, which help achieve the vision and goals of the World Summit on the Information Society in the CIS region.



## ANNEX 3

### Connect Arab States Summit Goals

In order to realize the priorities set by the Summit, all stakeholders, including governments, private sector, civil society and regional and international organizations, will work together towards the achievement of the following goals by 2015:

#### **Goal 1: Access and infrastructure**

Establish and modernize infrastructure, achieve universal access and improve the quality of services as a long-term target, promote rapid deployment of broadband networks in urban and rural areas in all Arab countries, increase the availability and affordability of ICT services throughout the Arab region, build workforce skills to prepare for broadband-enabled economies, further promote the use of ICTs to respond to the special needs of various segments of society, including persons with disabilities, establish Internet exchange points (IXPs) in all the Arab States, increase the connectivity among these States to help to reduce the international cost of the Internet, increase the security of telecommunications and information, avoid the use of international networks from outside the Arab region to connect the Arab States, and help in spreading Arabic digital content.

#### **Goal 2: Digital content**

Focus efforts to increase Arabic digital content on Internet sites by initiating national and regional programmes to develop content and promote innovation and incubators in order to encourage scientific research in processing the Arabic language, lower the cost of accessing digital content, and develop strategies to boost the consumption of digital content by Arab users so as to help in bridging the digital and ICT divide in the Arab region.

#### **Goal 3: Cybersecurity**

Improve regional cooperation and strengthen it through common or similar policies, strategies and legislations needed to effectively address the growing threat posed by cyberattacks and cybercrime, with a view to harmonizing policies, strategies and legislation, and also to establishing a regional legal framework on cybersecurity and cybercrime for all the Arab States. Make efforts to increase levels of protection against the risks posed by illegal use of ICTs, with specific attention to children and young people as well as the safe use of the Internet.

#### **Goal 4: Innovation**

Integrate ICT innovation as a key component of government policy and develop national strategy in coherence with public development goals, with clearly expressed political support; and design and coordinate an Arab regional approach to ICT innovation. This will help Arab countries to collaborate efficiently and promote regional integration in the field of research and innovation; empower Arab citizens to innovate through a new educational approach, allowing for a wider range of skills needed for innovation; and provide appropriate financing for ICT innovation, and enable the competitiveness of the products of this sector in the world markets.

**ANNEX 4****Connect Americas Summit Goals**

Leaders of the Americas Region committed to furthering telecommunication development in line with the regional priorities of the Americas agreed at the World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2010, and including intensifying efforts in the coming years to achieve results in the following priority areas:

1. Promote the use of ICT as a tool for development by creating human and institutional capacities, particularly, in rural and under-served urban areas, and with special emphasis on indigenous peoples, afro-american descendants and persons with disabilities.
2. Develop telecommunication and information technology infrastructure, covering a complete range of access levels according to national needs and priorities: from basic telecommunication to broadband access and uptake in urban and rural areas;
3. Adopt national regulatory frameworks which help close existing gaps in ICT development, while addressing evolving needs, including those brought about by an increasingly converged environment;
4. Establish effective and practical emergency communication plans at the national and international level;
5. Plan for and implement a smooth transitioning to digital broadcasting to take advantage of the digital dividend;
6. Develop Internet Exchange Points at the local, national and regional level to reduce internet access costs, as well as to enable the provision of new services.

The leaders also agreed that other priority areas could be included:

- Development of local content and applications recognizing the role played by research and educational bodies;
- Development of small and medium-sized enterprises including e-commerce;
- Child online protection.

**ANNEX 5****Connect Asia-Pacific Summit****Leaders' Vision: Asia-Pacific 2020-Smartly DIGITAL****Leaders' Vision for the Asia-Pacific Region**

During the Summit in Bangkok, Leaders affirmed their common Vision of an inclusive and development-centered as well as creative Asia-Pacific: Smartly DIGITAL (Digital Inclusive Green Innovative Transformative Affordable Living) by 2020, where everyone can access, use, create, and share information and knowledge to empower individuals, communities, industries and countries to achieve inclusive sustainable development goals and improving their quality of life, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration of World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). The Leaders acknowledged the promising ICT development in the Asia-Pacific region, where the ICT growth has surpassed global ICT growth rates in all key indicators and where significant investments have been committed in 2011-2015 to roll out broadband infrastructure and applications including innovative public-private partnership.

The Summit yet recognized the challenges faced by countries in the Asia-Pacific region having two thirds of the world's population which, with its unique geographic and demographic circumstances and diversity, has a stark contrast between the region's high-income and highly advanced countries on the one hand, and the LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDSs on the other hand. These challenges also offer opportunity of harnessing the immense potential for developing innovative ICT infrastructure and creative ICT applications in order to positively transform lives of people as we move towards reaching the Vision of Asia-Pacific 2020: Smartly DIGITAL. Thus, the focus should be on continued sustainable and inclusive growth in ICT - broadband inter alia - through policy leadership and recognition that ICT/broadband is a national priority for the overall socio-economic development as well as a powerful tool or enabler for achieving MDGs, the post-2015 Development Agenda and the WSIS Declaration and Actions. In doing so, Leaders highlighted in particular, the contribution of the MICT, Thailand, the ITU as the leading UN agency for ICT, in partnership with the APT, the ABU, ESCAP, UN agencies, development and funding institutes, and other relevant stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific and beyond for joining hands in this historic Connect Asia-Pacific Summit.

**Priority Areas for Action**

In determining priority-actions for the Asia-Pacific Region, Leaders renewed their commitment to promote specific measures of solidarity and assistance for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the region, with emphasis on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), the Small Island Developing States (SIDSs) and those countries facing great challenges in realizing the spirit of being Smartly DIGITAL that we aspire for. Leaders also agreed to furthering ICT development in accordance with the regional priorities of the Asia-Pacific, taking into account cultural diversity in the region, and intensifying efforts to achieve Asia-Pacific 2020: Smartly DIGITAL.

In order to achieve the Leaders' Vision for the Asia-Pacific Region the Summit identified following priority areas for action to be carried out in partnership with all relevant stakeholders 1) Investing in ICT Infrastructure, 2) Stimulating Innovation and Creative Use of ICT, 3) Encouraging Innovative Public-Private Partnership, 4) Promoting Sustainable development through ICT, 5) Fostering Digital Inclusion and 6) Achieving digital literacy and building human and institutional capacity.