Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)

Ref.:   Circular BDT/DKH/RME/003   Geneva, 20 February 2023

- Administrations of ITU Member States
- Palestine (Resolution 99 (Rev. Dubai, 2018))
- ITU-D Sector Members
- National Regulatory Authorities
- Regulatory Associations
- Regional and International Organizations
- ITU affiliated academic and research institutes
- United Nations Funds and Programs, Specialized Agencies, and IAEA

Subject: Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR-23), 5-8 June 2023, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to invite you to participate in the 2023 Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR-23) under the theme: ***Regulation for a sustainable digital future***. GSR-23 will be organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in collaboration with the Government of Egypt. The event will be held from 5-8 June 2023 at the Torino Lamborghini International Convention Center, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt and be chaired by Eng. Hossam El Gamal, Executive President of the National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority of Egypt (NTRA).

Built around interactive high-level panels on topical and cutting-edge policy and regulatory issues, GSR-23 provides regulators and policy makers from around the world with a unique platform for discussions among peers and other digital stakeholders. As part of GSR-23, we will hold the Executive Heads of Regulators' Roundtable (upon invitation only), the Regional Regulatory Associations Meeting (RA) and the Industry Advisory Group on Development Issues and Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers' (IAGDI-CRO) meeting on 5 June 2023 just before the main sessions of GSR.

The proposed topics for the discussions consider suggestions by the membership following GSR-21. They include novel regulatory approaches for digital transformation, trustworthy and resilient digital infrastructure, spectrum for tomorrow, online child and youth safety, digital accessibility, affordability of the devices a remaining access gap, emergency public early warning systems, going green with the digital transformation, and harnessing the opportunities of the metaverse. Further information is available at: www.itu.int/gsr23.

In addition, and in preparation for GSR-23, I am also pleased to launch the consultation for the 2023 Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR-23) Best Practice Guidelines: "**Regulatory and economic incentives for an inclusive sustainable digital future**". This year's consultation builds on the main outcomes of previous GSR discussions as well as on the outcomes of the 9th ITU Economic Experts Roundtable that focused on "Economic

and fiscal incentives to accelerate digital transformation". The objective is to explore a framework of regulatory and economic incentives to promote the deployment of ICT infrastructure, equal affordable access to digital technologies, that does not hamper capital spending and network deployment and reduces asymmetries across the digital ecosystem, while ensuring that Governments receive the financial resources needed to deliver public services.In this regard, you are invited to provide your ideas, views and experiences on the following areas: **Defining regulatory and economic incentives to stimulate the deployment of sustainable digital infrastructure, especially in rural and isolated areas**, and i**dentifying the right incentives required to ensure the introduction of emerging ICT technologies and business models**. Further details on the consultation are available in annex 3.

This consultation will be coordinated by the GSR-23 Chair, and the final GSR-23 Best Practice Guidelines will be presented and adopted at the GSR-23 Heads of Regulators Executive Roundtable on 5 June 2023. Please submit **your contribution to gsr@itu.int (maximum two pages) no later than 15 March 2023**. Recalling the series of GSR Best Practice Guidelines since 2003 that capture established regulatory mechanisms and tried and tested practices, I encourage you to focus your 2023 contribution on novel, bold, and ground-breaking approaches on **regulatory and economic incentives and** tools **for an inclusive sustainable digital future**. All drafts of the Best Practice Guidelines as well as individual contributions will be posted online on the GSR-23 website.

I look forward to receiving your contributions and I take this opportunity to encourage you to register for GSR-23 as a participant, panellist, or moderator.

I hope that you will be able to participate and make a valuable contribution to a successful Global Symposium for Regulators 2023.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava
Director

Annex 1

Panel participation
In line with past procedures, there will be no formal presentations apart from those made by keynote speakers as appropriate. Active participation of executive level participants in panels is welcomed and encouraged. Further information on panel participation will be posted on the website shortly. Those wishing to participate as panellists in one of the sessions identified in the provisional programme will be requested to complete the online panellist registration form, presenting an outline of their potential contribution to the topic, and selected participants will be informed**.**

Registration
Registration to participate in GSR-23 is mandatory and is accessible here. Participants can register using their ITU user account credentials (username and password). Participants who do not hold an ITU user account can create their own user account here (by selecting "I am a new user"). For participants who already created a user account when they registered for a recent ITU meeting, their user account is still valid.

All registration requests for participation in these meetings must be validated by the Designated Focal Points (DFPs) of administrations and entities entitled to participate. The list of Designated Focal Points is available here. If your Entity does not have a Focal Point, or wishes to modify the contact details and/or change a focal point, you are kindly requested to provide details of his/her last name, first name and e-mail address and submit this information on letterhead by e-mail to BDTMeetingsRegistration@itu.int.

The participation of women and young people in delegations is encouraged.

For assistance, please contact: BDTMeetingsRegistration@itu.int.

Interpretation
Interpretation for the GSR core sessions from 5 to 8 June 2023 will be provided based on the requests from participants. At the time of registration, participants who require a language other than English must select their choice from the list on the registration form (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish). The deadline to request interpretation through the registration system is **20 April 2023** (23h59 Hours, Geneva Time).

Practical information
Please note that participants shall cover their own travel and accommodation expenses. Practical information on accommodation, including logistical details, will soon be available on the GSR-23 website.

Due to visa requirements, and in order to ensure that your visa is processed in time for the meeting, I encourage you to follow the visa instructions available on the GSR-23 website. The Regulatory and Market Environment Division (e-mail: gsr@itu.int or tel. : +41 22 730 6256/5443) is at the disposal of participants who require assistance.

Annex 2

ITU GSR
SHARM EL-SHEIKH 2023

REGULATION FOR A DIGITAL FUTURE

GSR-23 draft agenda

5 June 2023 - GSR Pre-events

Morning Sessions

09h30-11h00: Regulatory Associations Meeting

09h30-11h00: IAGDI/CRO Meeting

***11h00-11h30: Coffee and Photo Session* for both sessions**

Lunch

Afternoon sessions

14h30-16h30: Heads of Regulators' Executive Roundtable
Sustainable Digital Transformation: Economic Incentives for an Inclusive Digital Economy
From contributions to the GSR-22 Best Practice Guidelines and universal service financing efficiency toolkit

***16h30-17h00: Coffee and Photo Session* for Roundtable**

6-8 June 2023 - GSR Core sessions

6 JUNE

Morning sessions

09h30-10h00: Opening ceremony

- Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary-General, ITU
- Mr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau
- Eng. Hossam El-Gamal, President, National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA), Egypt and GSR Chair

10h00-10h30: Coffee and Photo Session

10h30-12h00: Session 1: How can regulatory innovation drive universal and meaningful connectivity and sustainable digital transformation?

This session will examine policy and regulatory innovation with a focus on new governance structures, policy and regulatory frameworks and financing mechanisms to foster the digital transformation process, investment in connectivity and access, and the adoption of digital services for an inclusive digital society.

- Drivers of digital transformation for access, adoption, and value creation - persons/users, data and technologies
- Where to next - Connecting the Unconnected: Revisiting Universal Service Financing for universal and meaningful connectivity
- Are policies up to the digital investment challenge from an environmental, social and governance perspective? How can government, technology companies and operators achieve a new level of collaboration in terms of environmental sustainability of digital and ESG?
- Are today's regulators and regulatory frameworks fit for purpose to lead digital transformation for the future? Introducing regulatory flexibility with regulatory sandboxes, what are the challenges and opportunities?
- How to include and empower end-users in digital regulation?

12h00-12h30: Spotlight on G5 Collaborative Regulation: Country Reviews – RME with Egypt, and others from other regions

Lunch

<u>*Afternoon sessions*</u>

14h30-15h30: Session 2: Trustworthy Digital Infrastructure: how to bridge the gap?

This session will discuss how to ensure resilience of infrastructure while preparing better for online threats, strengthen online security and safety, and build confidence as digitalization of all sectors and services is accelerating across economies.

- What approach should be considered in developing and implementing cybersecurity strategies, from the multistakeholder perspective?
- What can regulators do with the industry to help consumers be safer online and prepare to mitigate risks? What works what doesn't work, lessons learned
- Multistakeholder engagement: Is a co-creating approach the answer for greater security, resilience and online safety?
- What role for industry players, regulators and consumers in ensuring resilience and building confidence in the use of new technologies, digital applications and services?
- How to improve cybersecurity skills to better prepare for incident response?

Coffee Break

16h00-17h30: Session 3: Spectrum for tomorrow

This session will explore the impact of fast evolving technologies, high speed low latency network requirements, changing consumer behaviors and new market realities on spectrum needs and spectrum management options.

- Managing spectrum for social and economic imperatives: from universal affordable connectivity to tomorrow's data intensive fully digital 5G/6G world
- Evolving wireless technologies (terrestrial, satellite and HAPS/HIBS) and traditional services: how to balance spectrum needs, innovation and competitiveness?
- Spectrum management options: To share or not to share? Licensed or unlicensed spectrum?
- Spectrum efficient use across industries and services: the role of the regulator(s) and cooperation across sectors, local controlled versus public networks
- A spotlight on space Sustainability (BR)

Keynote: Mr Mario Maniewicz, Director, ITU Radiocommunication Bureau (BR)

7 JUNE

<u>*Morning sessions*</u>

08h00-09h15 Network of Women (NoW) Breakfast
09h30-10h30: Session 4: How to protect children and youth online?

This session will discuss concrete examples of policy, regulatory and technical approaches stakeholders can take to ensure child and youth online safety.
- What areas and challenges could be best tackled by regulation?
- What are the other solutions and alternatives to bridge the gaps, mitigate risks and avoid harm?
- Co-creating national strategies with children and youth
- Who is responsible and who are the stakeholders?

Coffee Break

11h00-12h30: Session 5: **Digital accessibility - the key to an inclusive society**

This session will examine digital accessibility policies and regulatory measures that jointly with appropriate strategies and technical approaches are required to ensure that all users, regardless of age, gender, ability to use the technology can equally access and use the digital information, products and services and thus ensure that everyone is part of the digital societies and environments.
- Is digital accessibility a *must* or *nice* to have?
- Which are the policies and regulatory measures to ensure to build digitally accessible and inclusive environments?
- Why is accessibility a business opportunity for all stakeholders (including government, Industry/manufacturers, providers and consumers)?
- What are the challenges and good practices in building a digitally inclusive ecosystem?

Lunch

Afternoon sessions

14h30-15h45: Session 6: The remaining access gap – how to get affordable devices to the unconnected?

This session will discuss policy, regulatory, business and financing measures to foster inclusive access to smart devices taking into consideration approaches to devices financing, universal access and service strategies, taxes and import reduction, improvement of distribution channels while considering recycling of devices, quality standards for pre-owned devices, and partnerships creation across the value chain (five-point action plan identified by the Broadband Commission's Working Group on smartphone access, Strategies Towards Universal Smartphone Access).

- How to make devices affordable?
- What are the financing options available?
- What role for the regulator in enabling smart device adoption?
- What regulatory measures to adopt to ensure quality recycling of pre-owned devices?
- How to raise consumer confidence in using smartphones, tablets, and other devices?

Coffee Break

16h15-17h15: Session 7: Saving Lives: Emergency public early warning systems

In light of the growing opportunities of digital networks and services, and the UN's new target of ensuring that over the next 5 years every person in the world will be covered by an early warning system, this session will examine the case for regulation. An increasing number of countries are using regulation to ensure that public warnings are delivered over digital networks, including mobile networks, to deliver alerting messages to those at risk, and to mitigate the impacts, and save lives.

- Which opportunities does regulation bring to public warning systems? What is the ICT regulator's role?

- What are the different technologies and protocols involved to implement public warning systems that are digitally accessible to save everyone's life?
- Which examples are there for national and regional regulation?
- Data driven emergency responses experiences

17h15-17h30: Industry Fireside Chat (IAGDI-CRO): Partners in digital transformation

8 JUNE

Morning sessions

9h30-10h30: Session 8: *Going green with the digital transformation*

This session will discuss the role of regulation and technology innovation in national e-waste management and national GHG emissions reduction for the ICT sector.

- How can regulation and ICT regulators address the triple planetary crisis that humanity is facing in terms of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss?
- What efforts have countries made in monitoring GHG emissions from the ICT sector?
- How can we mitigate the environmental impact of digital including the increasing use of electrical and electronic equipment and growing level of e-waste?
- How to achieve digital environmental sustainability? What are the key levers and challenges?

Coffee Break

11h00-12h00: Session 9: *Harnessing the opportunities of the Metaverse*

This session will explore the challenges and opportunities of the Metaverse environment relying on connectivity, digital devices, platforms and immersive reality technologies, defining what an immersive virtual reality is, examining the technical, commercial, social and regulatory implications of this virtual digital environment.

- What is the Metaverse?
- What are the opportunities and potential bottlenecks (such as access, interoperability, digital accessibility, safety and security, child online protection, etc.) for governments, networks operators, businesses and consumers/users in this immersive virtual and augmented reality world?
- What are the policy issues raised by the Metaverse? And what regulatory approaches are needed?
- What is the role of the regulator (ICT) and stakeholders in ensuring inclusive, safe, secure and trusted immersive experiences in virtual reality?

Keynote: Mr Seizo Onoe, Director, ITU Standardization Bureau (TSB)

12h00-12:30: Closing

Presentation of outcomes – GSR BPG, IAGDI/CRO, RA and NoW meeting reports

Formal Closing

Annex 3
Draft GSR-23 Best Practice Guidelines Consultation

"**Regulatory and economic incentives for an inclusive sustainable digital future**"

The objective of this consultation is to explore a framework of regulatory and economic incentives to promote the deployment of ICT infrastructure, equal affordable access to digital technologies, that does not hamper capital spending and network deployment and reduces asymmetries across the digital ecosystem, while ensuring that Governments receive the financial resources needed to deliver public services.

As part of the GSR-23 consultation process, you are invited to provide your ideas, views, and experiences **to gsr@itu.int (maximum two pages) no later than 15 March 2023** on the following areas:

- **Defining regulatory and economic incentives to stimulate the deployment of digital infrastructure, especially in rural and isolated areas**
  What are the main regulatory and economic incentives that could accelerate a sustainable digital future? How to encourage the private sector to continue to invest in rural, isolated, and non-profitable areas? What could be new business opportunities and models to increase revenues, to enable better network coverage, affordable digital connectivity for sustainable development and accelerate digital transformation?

- **Identifying the right incentives required to ensure the introduction of emerging ICT technologies and business models**
  What are the right regulatory and economic incentives and business approaches for the different players in the value chain to promote investment and increase business activities across sectors and industries, and foster demand for and use of ICTs? What is the new role of policy makers and regulators with regard to the creation and deployment of emerging technologies? How to balance fiscal policies while fostering non-discriminatory and affordable service tariffs for users?