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To: All WSIS Stakeholders

- Governments
- Private Sector
- Civil Society
- Academia/ Technical Community
- International Organizations

**Invitation to the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2018
(ITU Headquarters, Geneva, 19-23 March 2018)**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as the co-organizers, are pleased to invite you to the WSIS Forum 2018, which the ITU will host in Geneva (Switzerland) from 19-23 March 2018. The overall theme for WSIS Forum 2018 is “Leveraging ICTs to Build Information and Knowledge Societies for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”.

The WSIS Forum represents the world's largest annual gathering of the ‘ICT for development’ multi-stakeholder community and is a global multi-stakeholder platform facilitating the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines for advancing sustainable development.

The WSIS Forum builds upon the outcomes of the UN General Assembly Overall Review of the implementation of the WSIS outcomes (UNGA Resolution 70/125) that recognized the necessity of holding this Forum on an annual basis and called for close alignment between WSIS and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this context, the WSIS Forum will leverage the WSIS-SDG Matrix and serve as a platform for discussing the role of ICTs as a means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, with due regard to the global mechanism for follow up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (UNGA Resolution A/70/1).

The WSIS Forum is organized with the engagement of other United Nations Agencies, including, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Labour Organization, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Universal Postal Union, the World Meteorological Organization, the World Health Organization, the World Food Programme, United Nations Women, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the United Nations Regional Commissions.

Its format, agenda, and thematic focus are the result of an open consultation process with the involvement of all WSIS Stakeholders. The Forum will build upon two tracks, the High-Level Track, consisting of policy statements, interactive high-level dialogues, a WSIS prize ceremony, a ministerial round table, and the Forum Track, which will offer participants a series of Action Line facilitation meetings, country workshops, thematic workshops, a Hackathon (Hack against hunger), an experience of Virtual Reality for Development, a component on social entrepreneurship and knowledge cafés, as well as an exhibition addressing issues that are critical to WSIS implementation and follow-up in multi-stakeholder settings.

To ensure gender balance at the WSIS Forum 2018, we encourage all WSIS Stakeholders to plan gender balanced delegations and nominate women speakers for sessions and workshops, in particular the high-level segment.

Relevant documentation, the agenda and registration can be accessed at: www.wsis.org/forum. We look forward to welcoming you to the WSIS Forum 2018.

Yours faithfully,

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Mr. Houlin Zhao
Secretary-General, ITU

Ms Audrey Azoulay
Director-General, UNESCO

Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General, UNCTAD

Mr. Achim Steiner
Administrator, UNDP