

AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY
APRIL MEETING 2011
ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA, USA
SESSION J6, SUNDAY 1 MAY 2011
THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: A GLOBAL VIEW
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Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

- What a great pleasure it is to be here with you in California this afternoon.
- I would like to thank you for this opportunity to say a few words about a subject which is very close to my heart: Telecommunications for Development.
- Information and communication technologies – ICTs – have the power to shape the world and to transform the lives of everyone on the planet.
- It is therefore an honour for me to be representing ITU, which is the specialized agency of the United Nations which is dedicated to ICT development.
- As some of you may know, ITU was created in 1865, and as such it is the world's oldest intergovernmental organization.
- We manage vital shared ICT resources – such as the international phone numbering system, the global allocation of radio frequency spectrum and satellite orbital resources.
- We also manage the international standardization of communication technologies, so that all the world's ICT systems – such as the Internet, for example – can interconnect and talk to one another.
- Our third role – and one which affects the lives of so many people across the world – is to facilitate ICT development globally, particularly in the developing world.
- Last October, we held the ITU's most important quadrennial event, the Plenipotentiary Conference, in Guadalajara, Mexico. The Plenipotentiary is crucial to our work, as it is the event at which ITU Member States

decide on the future role of our organization, and thereby determine our ability to influence and affect the development of ICTs worldwide.

- Let me therefore take this opportunity to give you a very brief update of some of the key achievements of the Conference:
 - Many important resolutions were agreed, including: Accessibility; ICTs and climate change; Measures to help prevent the illicit use and abuse of telecommunication networks; e-Health, Conformance and interoperability; Emergency communications and humanitarian assistance; Electronic meetings; and many more.
 - Member States also opened up the way for the participation of academia in the Union's work, and made it easier for Sector Members from developing countries to participate. The Conference also agreed to give free online access to all ITU Recommendations to members of the public – as well as to ITU members of course.
 - I was also particularly pleased to see last minute compromises being brokered on a number of key Resolutions on Internet issues, from IPV6 to Internet governance. This strengthens and underlines our commitment to work with the Internet community in extending the benefits of the Internet to all global citizens.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- We have seen the most extraordinary progress in ICT development in the past decade, especially in mobile communications.
- At the end of the 1990s, there were fewer than 500 million mobile cellular subscriptions globally. As we go into 2011, there are more than five billion. Even in rural areas of developing countries, we are now seeing household mobile penetration rates of over 50%.
- So we have achieved our primary aim – of bringing all the world's people within reach of communications technology.
- The challenge now is to replicate the mobile miracle for the Internet, and especially for broadband.
- I am often asked whether broadband is really that important – when you consider such basic pressing issues as the lack of safe drinking water, or rising food prices, which affect billions of people worldwide.
- And I answer that yes, I do firmly believe that broadband is the most extraordinary enabler, and will transform the lives of everybody. This is especially true in the developing world, in particular in countries with large rural and remote populations.
- Let me give you just a few examples:
 - With broadband networks, health services can be delivered far more effectively to ageing or isolated populations. To give just one

example, remote monitoring of patients is far more effective than bringing people in to clinics or hospitals.

- With broadband networks, we can better educate the next generations of children, wherever they live. With wireless and mobile networks we can reach out to them, wherever they are.
- With broadband networks, traffic networks can be streamlined, government services can be delivered more efficiently, and energy supplies can be properly monitored, managed and conserved.
- With broadband networks, we can create the right environment for applications like mobile banking, which are already in the process of improving the lives of millions of people around the world.
- With broadband networks we can help to ensure environmental sustainability, and help to manage and mitigate climate change.
- And with broadband networks, progress can be rapidly accelerated towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Distinguished colleagues,

- Tremendous progress has been made in recent years, and we now have over two billion people online. The number of fixed broadband subscriptions and mobile broadband subscribers continues to grow in all markets.
- But we still live in a world where most people do not have access to the Internet, and where the huge majority of people in the developing world do not have broadband access.
- Two things need to happen, if we are going to succeed in changing this.
- **Firstly**, governments need to raise broadband to the top of the development agenda, so that rollout is accelerated and the benefits are brought to as many people as possible.
- This is why ITU, in conjunction with UNESCO, launched in 2010 the Broadband Commission for Digital Development– to encourage governments to implement national broadband plans and increase access to broadband applications and services.
- The Commission is co-chaired by President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Carlos Slim, Honorary Lifetime Chairman of Grupo Carso. We also have over 50 Commissioners from the highest walks of life across the public and private sectors.
- We have already been very successful in raising broadband as a vital issue of global concern at the highest political levels – including at the 2010 MDG Summit, which was held in New York in September.
- And we are planning a Global Broadband Summit to be held in Geneva in October this year, in conjunction with ITU Telecom World 2011.

- **Secondly**, we need to ensure that Internet access – and especially broadband access – becomes much more affordable than it is today.
- There are quite extraordinary disparities today between the affordability of broadband access in different countries around the world.
- Let me give you some dramatic figures from ITU's 'Measuring the Information Society 2010' report.
- In the top 21 countries included in the fixed broadband Internet sub-basket, published in the report, broadband subscriptions cost less than 1% of average monthly income – and under 3% of average monthly income in a further 22 countries.
- At the other end of the scale, in the most expensive 28 countries in ITU's list – most of which are UN-designated Least Developed Countries, LDCs – a monthly broadband subscription costs over 100% of average monthly income.
- What a terrible irony that is!
- The people who can least afford access to broadband are being asked to pay the most, relative to their income.
- This is scandalous.
- But there are grounds for optimism, and broadband access is getting more affordable every year. Worldwide, broadband prices dropped by 42% in the last year, and broadband became more affordable in almost every market across the globe.
- There are many reasons for this, and I am confident that broadband will continue to get more affordable as time goes on.
- One of the most important drivers in terms of bringing down costs in both the developed and the developing world has been an ongoing increase in capacity, itself driven by a newly competitive environment.
- Progress will depend of course on effective policy and regulatory frameworks being in place. We had many interesting discussions on this very subject at the Global Symposium for Regulators, which was held in Dakar, Senegal.
- And it was very clear at the GSR that the right balance needs to be struck between creating a business-friendly environment and ensuring that consumers are properly protected and served.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- Broadband is a truly transformational technology, which will bring the world's riches within reach of all the world's people.
- But broadband also opens up new opportunities for wrong-doers, and in particular cybercriminals.

- The problem is that global ICT networks were never designed to be especially secure. They are the result of massive organic growth in what were originally just research projects run by academics.
- Today, ICT networks connect the world and many of the world's people together – without paying much attention to international borders or even international law. Cybercriminals exploit the loopholes.
- Hardly a day goes by without new cybersecurity issues hitting the headlines. Governments are attacked. Corporations are attacked. Individuals are attacked. Children are attacked. The latest viruses are even targeting infrastructure.
- By many estimates, cybercrime is now a business which exceeds a trillion dollars a year in online fraud, identity theft, and lost intellectual property. Not to mention the damage inflicted on the innocent and the vulnerable.
- This is why cybersecurity is so important.
- Given the scale of the threat – and the phenomenal harm that can be caused by even a single cyber attack – we cannot rely on ad hoc solutions or hope to survive only by strengthening our defences after attacks have occurred.
- We must work together, to ensure a coordinated response.
- This is why ITU is playing a lead role in coordinating global efforts in this area, and why we launched the Global Cybersecurity Agenda in 2007.
- The GCA is now in its operational phase, with a physical home in Malaysia at the headquarters of IMPACT – the International Multilateral Partnership Against Cyber Threats which has now become the executing arm of ITU on cybersecurity.
- 115 countries are now part of this global effort – and I strongly encourage all ITU Members to join, in order to benefit from the services and capabilities provided.
- We have made a great deal of progress in the three years since ITU launched the GCA. Indeed, since its launch, this initiative has attracted the support and recognition of leaders and cybersecurity experts around the world.
- We are also delighted to have the President of Costa Rica, Laura Chinchilla, as a new patron of the Child Online Protection initiative, which is a multi-stakeholder coalition within the framework of the GCA.
- Since the COP initiative was launched in 2008, ITU has established an international collaborative network for promoting the online protection of children worldwide. Working closely with COP partners, we created and published four sets of guidelines for policy-makers, industry, parents and educators, and children themselves.

- With our COP patron, the ITU COP Global Initiative is now working to transform the COP guidelines into concrete activities which will deliver significant national benefits, such as the development of national strategy on child online protection, establishment of national hotlines, or development of standards to protect children online.
- In particular, ITU standardization expert group is developing interoperable standards and related recommendations to protect children online. Indeed standardization is a key weapon in tackling cybersecurity. ITU international standards facilitated the rise of e-commerce with so-called public key encryption (PKI) standards; now there is a strong focus on identity management and building an international trust framework for digital identities – a fundamental building block to all cybersecurity, online commerce, and child online protection standards.

Our goal is simple: facilitate the coordination at the global level, of efforts aimed at bridging the digital divide through the provision of affordable and more secure ICT access to the world's inhabitants so as to stimulate social and economic development.

- And I am confident that working together, we shall succeed.
- I will again like to thank the American Physical Society for inviting ITU to this very important meeting.

Thank you.

Word count = 2,022