Thank you Mr Chairman, Excellencies, colleagues

- I am pleased to provide you with an update on efforts by ITU, the UN specialized agency for information and communication technology, in three areas of ICT for Development.

- First, I would draw your attention to the WSIS+10 High-Level Event to be held in 2014 and co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP with the full engagement of all UN Agencies.

- The 2014 event in Egypt will be an extended version of the WSIS Forum and will review the WSIS Outcomes (2003 and 2005) as they relate to the WSIS Action Lines, with the view of developing proposals for a vision beyond 2015. It will also take stock of achievements in the last 10 years based on reports of WSIS Stakeholders, including those submitted by Member States, WSIS Action Line Facilitators and other stakeholders. This process will of course take into account the decisions of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly.

- The preparatory process of the WSIS+10 High-level Event has been designed as an open and inclusive six phase process that will result in a WSIS+10 Statement on the Implementation of WSIS Outcomes.

- The preparatory process consists of three physical meetings (October, December, February), with the first one held earlier this month in Geneva.

- That meeting agreed on the principles for developing the outcome documents. In order to ensure that there is no duplication of efforts it was agreed to avoid prejudging the decision of the 68th Session of the UNGA on the modalities of the overall review.

- As noted, the preparation of the zero drafts of the WSIS+10 Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015 has been a collaborative effort and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the UN Regional Commissions and all the countries that have hosted (or are about to host) the regional
development forums: Moldova, Cambodia, Uruguay, Ghana, Serbia and Bahrain.

• Thus far, many of the inputs from Member States, civil society and the private sector have strongly recommended the need to create synergy between the WSIS+10 followup and the post 2015 sustainable development agenda.

• In this regard, the United Nations Group on the Information Society, UNGIS, which represents all UN entities with an interest or responsibility for WSIS follow-up issued a joint statement earlier this year calling for the WSIS review output to serve as input to the post-2015 process.

• It was also broadly agreed, that the potential of information and communication technologies as a catalyst to achieve all three pillars of sustainable development needs to be more broadly recognized in the UN development agenda.

• ICT networks are increasingly the medium in which strategies for economic prosperity, social inclusion and environmental sustainability are germinated, born and raised.

• We look forward to your continued engagement in the WSIS Review Process and your commitment to ensuring that all of the world’s citizens, especially the 70% in the developing world who remain offline, have affordable access to our global cyber utility.

• Please let me take this opportunity to invite all of you to the WSIS+10 High-Level Event to be held in April 2014.

Mr. Chairman

• I would also like to take this opportunity to update you on the ITU/UNESCO Broadband Commission for Digital Development.

• The Commission is seeing very positive results to its advocacy work, which is gaining momentum and growing recognition.

• The Commission just published its flagship report, “The State of Broadband 2013: Universalizing Broadband”, which tracks progress in the Commission’s Broadband Advocacy targets for 193 countries worldwide and makes policy recommendations for promoting the rollout of broadband worldwide.

• The need for broadband rollout is an essential component of ICT for Development because for every 10% penetration of broadband networks in a country – a 1.8% increase in GDP can be expected.
Providing further proof of the enabling power and potential of ICT networks for sustainable global growth.

• With regards to the Broadband Commission’s targets, the first of which is for broadband policy to be made universal is showing good progress, 139 countries now report a broadband rollout plan. The Broadband Commission report notes that just by having a plan – ICT network penetration rates start to rise as confidence and investment grows in anticipation of a private/public partnership, which so often underpins ICT network development.

• However, progress in the targets for individual and household Internet access, and affordability are slipping slightly off-track, and further efforts may be required to meet these targets. In March 2013, the Commission added a new target calling for gender equality in access to broadband by 2020. Further action is required to prevent the digital gender gap from widening, rather than narrowing.

• To address this challenge, the Broadband Commission Working Group on Gender and Broadband published the report, "Doubling Digital Opportunity: Enhancing the Inclusion of Women and Girls in the Information Society”, which identified a digital gender gap of some 200 million fewer women online than men. Women are coming online later, and more slowly than men, and missing valuable opportunities to develop valuable ICT skills and access better-paid jobs. Without further action, this digital gender gap could grow to 350 million by 2015.

• The Broadband Commission Task Force on Sustainable Development also published a clarion call report for ICTs to be a clear and important part of the post-2015 development agenda.

• In partnership with G3ict, Microsoft, UNESCO and others the Broadband Commission published a global survey and report on the potential of broadband for people with disabilities.

And finally, Mr Chairman

• There is one group which ITU thinks holds great promise in ensuring that ICTs, as a development imperative, is recognized in the post-2015 world. That group is Youth.

• Last month Costa Rica with ITU, organized the BYND 2015 Global Youth Summit. The Summit had more than 600 participants, between the ages of 18 and 24 from 68 countries, with another 8000 participants joining online from an additional 105 countries.

• The youth delegates worked together, onsite and online, to describe how they would use technology to foster empowerment and innovation on a global scale. The resulting declaration outlines a world where ICTs are used to overcome the major development challenges of our time, while creating new opportunities for young people everywhere.

• The youth delegates also recognized that the key barrier to empowering them is as a lack of universal access to ICT platforms and
devices and the underlying infrastructure, such as broadband, to support them.

- I would call your attention to the BYND 2015 Global Youth Summit Declaration which outlines specific actions for youth and ICTs in the area of economic development, human rights, environmental sustainability, cybersecurity and health.

- I would also like to extend congratulations to Costa Rica for hosting this important work with youth and for ensuring that the declaration becomes an official UN document.

Mr. Chairman

- I would like to assure you that ITU, as the UN specialized agency for information and communications technology, will continue to provide the necessary leadership to address the opportunities and challenges of a sustainable knowledge-based information society, today and beyond 2015.

- Thank you.