

REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING, 27 April 2017, Vilnius

Dear colleagues

Thank you very much to the Communications Regulatory Authority of the Republic of Lithuania for hosting this event and ITU-D also for co-organizing.

I also thank for inviting me to participate in this session.

I also very proud to participate at this Regional Preparatory meeting which is a key milestone to develop our positions for WTDC-17.

This Conference is a major priority for CEPT during this year.

That is a reason why we have set up a Project Team with the responsibility to prepare for the Conference. And we trusted Mr Paulius Vaina, from Lithuania, the Chairmanship of this Project Team.

He is leading our preparations for the Conference. Thank you, Mr Paulius Vaina.

In line to our tradition, Europe wants to be active, constructive and valuable in the Development Conference.

Therefore, We want to make valid proposals that are useful to ITU-D, but above all for our citizens that so often need our support in order to take the full benefit of ICTs.

During these two days we will take close consideration of texts that were submitted by the TDAG Correspondence Group, notably the draft WTDC-17 Declaration, the draft ITU-D Action Plan 2018-2021, the draft ITU-D contribution to the ITU Strategic Plan for 2020-2023.

These are essential tools that will guide the activities of the ITU Development Sector over the next 4 years.

Europe is preparing its inputs for this important task we will have in Buenos Aires.

During these two days Europe will also focus on Priority setting for Regional Initiatives. These initiatives will reflect our general goal to bridge several digital divides that still remain in their multiple forms.

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Digital divides remain, both between and within countries.

In fact, in spite all our efforts and commitment to Development issues, many developing countries still lack affordable access to information and communications technologies.

We believe that an essential element to tackle this challenge is to support an enabling environment including a regulatory framework, to foster conditions for competition, consumer choice and affordability.

In addition, we are concerned with the Digital gender divide, given the persistence lack of women's access to and use of information and communications technologies, including in education, employment and other areas of economic and social development.

Finally, we are concerned with the knowledge divide, as substantial differences in individuals' capabilities to both use and create information and communications technologies still remain.

That's why Europe is preparing inputs related to capacity building and digital literacy.

As we prepare for WTDC-17, Europe stands together in the search for an efficient public resource allocation so that ITU can effectively fulfill its mandate, recognizing the need for budgeting for all this initiatives and priorities.

For this reason, the possible duplication of efforts across ITU sectors is an issue that deserves careful attention to Europe.

European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (more known as CEPT) is comprised by 48 European Administrations many of which are here today.

Please note that the diversity of Europe is its strength and that's why Europe needs your views, to learn about your experiences and priorities and to benefit from your proposals in order to make valid contributions to WTDC-17.

I am sure that together with the contribution of ALL Members, CEPT will produce positive inputs to WTDC..

So: To make a long story short: we look forward to working together with all of you to for the benefit of our citizens!

Thank you very much for your attention.