

Budapest Call for Action

Accelerating innovation for social impact: mobilizing global entrepreneurship to implement the Connect 2020 Agenda

Recalling our vision

We, the Ministers and representatives of the Governments of **Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Croatia, Djibouti, Gabon, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Japan, Lebanon, Myanmar, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sudan, the United Arab Emirates, Zimbabwe** gathered in Budapest, Hungary, on 13 October 2015 for the 'ITU Telecom World '15 – Budapest Ministerial Meeting' to discuss "*accelerating innovation for social impact: mobilizing global entrepreneurship to implement the Connect 2020 Agenda*",

1. **Recall** our common vision for "*an information society, empowered by the interconnected world, where telecommunication/information and communication technologies enable and accelerate social, economic and environmentally sustainable growth and development for everyone*", adopted under the 'Connect 2020 Agenda for global telecommunication/ICTs development' at the 2014 ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, in Busan, Korea;
2. **Recognize** the importance of ICT-based innovation and the benefits it can bring to the sustainable development agenda;
3. **Commit** to work together towards mobilizing global entrepreneurship to accelerate innovation for social impact and **address** this Call for Action to all relevant stakeholders;

Recognizing our key priorities: Connect 2020, global connectivity/broadband, innovation

4. **Reaffirm** the importance of implementing the 'Connect 2020 Agenda' goals and targets for the *growth of access, inclusiveness, sustainability and innovation and partnerships* in ICTs, materializing our common vision for an interconnected world;
5. **Reiterate** our belief in the vital role of broadband in transforming our economies and our society and in being a key infrastructure enabler in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals;
6. **Reiterate** the need to foster an innovative ecosystem and adapt to the changing environment. In this rapidly evolving environment, our aim is to contribute to the development of an environment that is sufficiently conducive to innovation, where advances in new technologies become a key driver to promote the sustainable development agenda;
7. **Recognize** the need to expand access to digital opportunities in an equitable manner and foster the development of the innovative solutions and technologies, such as

international connectivity, the Internet of Things, big data and cloud computing, which can accelerate progress;

8. **Reaffirm** the importance of accelerating digital transformation by integrating digital markets and leveraging the opportunities provided by technological innovation;

9. **Reiterate** the need to manage the challenges around building confidence and security in the use of innovative solutions and technologies, including big data;

10. **Recognize** the global need to continuously adapt frameworks and practices, since technological innovation is transforming the telecommunication/ICT ecosystem;

11. **Emphasize** the role of ICT-based innovation in addressing key socio-economic and environmental sustainability challenges, such as those addressed by the Sustainable Development Goals and other national and regional frameworks;

12. **Welcome** the launch of the Emerge Partnership¹ aimed to establish a rich ICT innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem, with an emphasis on emerging economies, built through close collaboration between public, private and civil society actors;

Emphasizing the importance to foster entrepreneurship and the role of SMEs

13. **Recognize** that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) represent an essential source of economic growth and jobs in developing and developed countries;

14. **Recognize** that ICT-based SMEs and entrepreneurs play a crucial role in digital transformation leading to entirely interdependent ecosystems with new players, new industries, and new business models;

15. **Recognize** that developing countries, in particular, face a number of challenges in creating an enabling environment for the growth of SMEs, such as lack of capacity, need to improve knowledge sharing processes, affordability of connectivity costs and access to finance and markets;

16. **Recognize** that by using products created by SMEs countries could get both social and financial benefits;

17. **Understand** the role of governments in creating an optimum enabling environment for entrepreneurship and small firms, and ensuring availability of infrastructure, access to public open data and other services;

18. **Understand** that as the digital transformation continues to bring unprecedented potential for socio-economic growth, it is important to ensure that the digital divide

¹ The Emerge Partnership will consist of a network of non-governmental organizations who are supporting digital entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems at global and regional levels. The initiative launched during ITU Telecom World 2015 will gather best practices, map available resources for governments and SMEs and promote collaboration between partner organizations.

between the connected and the unconnected will not deepen. Therefore, **we reaffirm** that establishing basic connectivity and services in many rural and remote regions of emerging economies remains a priority;

19. **Understand** that special focus should be made on bridging the divide between ICT users and producers through encouraging ICT users to actively participate and contribute to ICT development and innovation;

Turning vision into action

20. **Invite governments** to review and enhance legal, policy and regulatory frameworks to properly serve the new entirely interdependent ecosystem;

21. **Urge** stakeholders to support the global roll-out of broadband infrastructure and broadband-enabled applications and services to grow the digital economy and empower societies around the world;

22. **Agree** to promote small, young and innovative firms in the ICT, technology and internet sectors, their contribution to advancing connectivity solutions, and their role in pioneering innovative applications which are driving demand for increased connectivity;

23. **Invite stakeholders** to consider using innovations and products developed by small firms to the possible extent;

24. **Especially call upon** the international community to take all required measures to strengthen trust-based collaboration between consumers, industry and government, as well as across the industry ecosystem;

25. **Invite** stakeholders to implement innovative solutions, technologies and partnerships aimed to bridge the digital divide and to ensure global connectivity for all;

26. **Consider** setting up a global platform to promote information sharing and business matching for SMEs and entrepreneurs, especially from developing countries, small island developing states, land-locked countries and economies in transition;

27. **Promote** open innovation and further cooperation among governments, private sector, academia and civil society.