



## **ITU Council met from 25 May to 2 June**



ITU's governing Council reviewed progress since it met last in 2015 while charting future developments. ITU Council 2016 met from 25 May to 2 June under the chairmanship of Ms Julie Zoller, Senior Deputy Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy at the U.S. State Department.

Over 350 delegates attended Council 2016 representing 47 Member States, including several Ministers, vice-Ministers and Ambassadors.

"I am very pleased with the excellent results of the 2016 session of ITU Council which takes us forward in our collective and unwavering commitment to connect the world's people," said ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao. "ICTs have a transformative role to play in achieving the three pillars of sustainable development – economic development, social inclusion and environmental protection."

Dr David Nabarro, the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, addressed ITU Council as well. He emphasized that ICTs are cross-cutting tools which are key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and urged the representatives of government attending ITU Council to make ICTs the centre of their development agenda.

Noting that ITU is a global institution that combines regulation, standards setting and development, Nabarro said ITU can apply its expertise to bridge the digital divide to give the SDGs the momentum they need and ensure no one is left behind.

Gender equity and mainstreaming were prominent at ITU Council discussion as well. U.S. Ambassador Pamela Hamamoto and Director General of the UN Offices at Geneva Michael Møller highlighted the International Geneva Gender Champions initiative. Mr Møller observed that "ICTs are among the main factors shaping our future and everyone should have full access to their benefits." Ambassador Hamamoto noted that "technology is critical to social and economic development, and that's exactly why it is also critical that women and girls have equal access to ICTs and to opportunities to develop 21st century skills."

Source: ITU

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