

October 8, 2014

TO: Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Dr. Hamadoun Touré  
CC: Deputy Secretary-General of the ITU, Mr. Houlin Zhao

Dear Secretary-General Touré,

We write to you as a group of civil society organisations who are keen to engage with the important work of the ITU and its upcoming Plenipotentiary Conference.

At various ITU meetings in the recent past, positive steps have been taken to facilitate and encourage the engagement of stakeholders in the work of the ITU and to increase transparency of the organization and its processes. Efforts were made at the World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT), the World Telecommunication Policy Forum (WTPF) and the WSIS+10 Multistakeholder Preparatory Platform (MPP), all of which helped to further increase recognition within the ITU of the importance of opening up its processes more generally.

These moves towards greater openness and inclusivity were also lauded in your speech at the WSIS+10 High Level Event in June 2014: “As the ITU Secretary-General, I’m nonetheless very proud that these two documents have been developed by a bottom up and all inclusive approach, exercising true multistakeholderism with the highest level of openness.”

The undersigned organizations have been encouraged by this evolution and believe that it is now time – at the ITU Plenipotentiary in Busan and as the ITU nears its 150th birthday – for the organization to do more to demonstrate its commitment to openness and to welcome greater and more diverse participation in its processes from across all stakeholder groups.

We understand that the ITU will be webcasting some of the proceedings of the Plenipotentiary including Plenary Sessions, Plenary Working Group, Committee 5 and Committee 6. We welcome these commitments and encourage the ITU to webcast all Committee proceedings.

In addition, we encourage the ITU to:

- Open the Plenipotentiary Plenary and Committee Sessions to on-site observers, regardless of their participation status. This would provide an opportunity for public interest groups and other interested organizations to participate at the Plenipotentiary without the constraints imposed by participation through national delegations.
- Organize regular briefings for civil society at the Conference. We understand that the ITU is already considering holding briefings with civil society representatives, and welcome this. We encourage the ITU to facilitate such briefings and to use them as an opportunity to share information on the progress of the discussions and negotiations, as well as to solicit civil society feedback on the proceedings.
- Create an online public contribution platform (as there was at the WCIT) and register such contributions as official Information Documents. Delegations and participants should be encouraged to take such contributions into account during their deliberations.
- Highlight the benefits of openness and transparency in an effort to formalize greater public access to ITU processes and documentation.

We believe that wider participation and greater openness are critical to enable all stakeholders to deepen their understanding of the ITU's mandate and role and constructively engage with the important work the ITU does. We urge the ITU to seize the opportunity presented by the Plenipotentiary to take the next steps towards true inclusion and collaboration. We also urge the ITU to continue and strengthen its involvement in global and regional multi-stakeholder forums such as IGFs.

We remain available and committed to collaboration with the ITU Secretary General, the ITU Secretariat, and all other relevant individuals and bodies within the ITU to work towards a more inclusive, transparent and accountable ITU.

Signed (as of October 9, 2014)<sup>1</sup>:

AccessNow, Global

Article19, Global

Asociacion Colombiana de Usuarios de Internet (ACUI), Colombia

Association for Progressive Communications (APC), Global

Association for Proper Internet Governance, Switzerland

Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication, Bangladesh

Bytes for All, Pakistan

CELE - Center for Studies on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information, Palermo University, Argentina

Center for Democracy & Technology, USA

Center for Technology and Society of FGV Law School, Brazil

Global Partners Digital (GPD), UK

ICT Watch – Indonesia, Indonesia

Instituto Nupef, Brazil

Internet & Digital Ecosystem Alliance (IDEA), Switzerland

Internet Democracy Project, India

ISOC Paraguay, Paraguay

IT for Change, India

Just Net Coalition, International

Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTANet), Kenya

Korean Progressive Network Jinbonet, Korea

Media Foundation for West Africa, Ghana

Media Rights Agenda, Nigeria

ONG Derechos Digitales, Chile

ONG TEDIC, Paraguay

OpenMedia.Org, Canada

Public Knowledge, USA

Software Freedom Law Centre, India

The Open Technology Institute, USA

World Wide Web Foundation, Global

Adam Peake, Japan

Izumi Aizu, Japan

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<sup>1</sup> This is a living document. List of endorsing organisations is being updated [here](#).