Ref.: Circular BDT/DIR/078	Geneva, 3 March 2021

- ITU Member States
- ITU-D Sector Members
- Academia
- Regional/International Organisations
- UN Agencies

Subject: The Road to Addis: Connect2Include.Include2Connect – 18 March 2021, 13h00-14h30 CET

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have the pleasure to invite you to participate in the third virtual event of The Road to Addis series to be held on 18 March, from 13:00 to 14:30 CET. The session will bring attention to the importance of developing appropriate digital inclusion policies, strategies and actions to build inclusive digital societies. Given the focus on the session, I encourage you to extend this invitation to other government leaders, or companies and academia in your networks who work to address the specific needs of women and young girls, young people, older people, children, persons with disabilities, rural populations and indigenous peoples, among others.

The Road to Addis, a series of events hosted by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), was launched in November 2020 to build momentum towards the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) 2021, strengthen partnerships and engagement, and help shape, with key stakeholders, the connectivity agenda.

Hosted by the Government of Ethiopia from 8 to 19 November 2021, WTDC-21 will be preceded by a Youth Summit. For the first time, WTDC will take place in Africa. As we know, the vital role of connectivity in building Africa's future prosperity cannot be overstated, and more and more governments across this huge and diverse region are prioritizing digital development as their springboard to sustainable growth and future resiliency.

WTDC-21 represents the best chance we have had in decades to mobilize the global community around digital transformation and reshape Africa's connectivity agenda and the agenda of all developing countries.

I hope that the event planned on 18 March will motivate participants to propose concrete actions in regard to connectivity and digital accessibility and discuss the types of partnerships and global cooperation efforts that must be developed for people with specific needs to be included in the universal connectivity agenda.

WTDC is not only an ITU conference, but it is the global digital development conference of 2021. It is very important to work together to make digital development a reality for all. I look forward to welcoming you to this special session on 18 March.

The session, with interpretation in the six UN languages, international sign language and real-time captioning, will be on Zoom.

To participate please register here. For further information, please visit the event web page.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Director