Ref.:   Circular BDT/DIR/105   Geneva, 6 September 2021

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

**Subject: INVITATION LETTER - Road to Addis: Partner2Connect Meeting.
20 September 2021, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. EST.**

Dear Sir/Madam,

With reference to my previous letter, I am pleased to invite you to join us at the **Road to Addis: Partner2Connect Meeting**, which will be held as a side event of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly. The event will take place on **September 20**, **from 8:30-11:30 a.m. EST**. Please note that the duration of the event has been extended, and due to the evolving situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be held in a **virtual** format.

This event will highlight the outcomes of the ITU Road to Addis Digital Development series, which started in 2020 as part of the preparatory process for the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC, 6-15 June 2022). In coordination with the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology, and in line with the UN Secretary-General's Envoy Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, this event will also launch the **Partner2Connect Digital Coalition**, and feature the *LDCs State of Connectivity Report*, a joint publication by ITU and UNOHRLLS, the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

With almost half of the world's population still unconnected, the digital divide continues to be a challenge particularly for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. It is now time to join forces and to work together to extend universal access to digital connectivity, not only for socio-economic progress, but also for the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

After almost a year of productive and engaging discussions around the six enablers of connectivity for sustainable development, we will continue our journey towards WTDC and the Partner2Connect Digital Development Summit at WTDC, by presenting the key takeaways of the Road to Addis Digital Development Series, and by launching the second part of this effort. The discussions for this second part of the Road to Addis series will evolve around the four Focus Areas of the **Partner2Connect Digital Coalition**:

1. **Connecting People Everywhere**

2. **Empowering Communities**

3. **Building Digital Ecosystems**
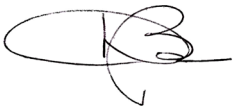
4. **Incentivizing Investments**

The Partner2Connect Digital Coalition is a multi-stakeholder alliance to foster meaningful connectivity and digital transformation in hardest-to-connect communities, including those in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. The Coalition will serve as a leadership platform to mobilize new resources, partnerships, and commitments to drive the implementation of meaningful connectivity and digital transformation projects across the four Focus Areas mentioned above.

Attached with this letter you will find the preliminary program with the list of considered speakers. In order to register for the event, please click **here**.

In the coming days all information related to this meeting will be updated in the event page itself, and the website of the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition. In the meantime, should you have any questions, please contact my colleague Ana Sepulveda at Partner2Connect@itu.int.

I look forward to your participation, and to your support in joining ITU and other partners win the SDG race and bridge the digital divide by 2030.

Yours faithfully,

Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Director