

Emergency Telecommunications Guidelines Launch Event
Closing remarks
Stephen Bereaux
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Bureau
15:00, Room A

Distinguished colleagues and remote participants.

Thank you all for participating this afternoon.

Today we have seen the importance and the critical role that digital technologies play in times of crisis. This launch event has been successful because of them. As a telecommunications regulator in The Bahamas during the passage of several Hurricanes, most recently Hurricane Dorian, I saw first hand the impact that effective implementation and use of digital technologies can play during an emergency.

We have learned that this new tool, the Guidelines, can be used to develop tailored National Emergency Telecommunication Plans, focusing on different aspects of emergencies such as the ones caused by epidemics and by natural hazards. This is an essential tool in the armory that countries can now use to build their national strategies and approaches.

We have seen the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach. More can be done when working together, government, private sector, civil society, including all national authorities and stakeholders, all for a common goal... using technologies to

save lives.

Mobile networks are fundamental and provide us with daily connectivity, crucial for our lives, but they need to be resilient to continue operations when emergencies and disasters strike.

Satellite technologies provide fast and reliable connectivity in times of crisis, but spectrum and national regulations need to be in place. We can have the most up to date technologies, but with no national policies that support its use, nothing can be done.

Dear participants

Testing our plans and procedures, roles and responsibilities is key to provide a good and fast response. The table top simulations provide this possibility through a multi-stakeholder approach. All national authorities and parties responsible for responding to disasters and emergencies can benefit from them. Today we have a great tool for becoming more prepared and resilient to disasters.

Finally, partnerships are key. We can't do things alone. WE have to gather all our effort for a common goal, use digital technologies to save lives, especially in times of crisis.

Once again, I invite all organizations – big or small, public or private – to partner with ITU and with the broader UN family, to improve resilience of nations and communities through the use of ICTs.