



CLOSING CEREMONY

Mr. Houlin Zhao, Secretary-General, ITU
20 October 2017, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Mr. Chairman,

Minister Ibarra, delegates, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

After two weeks of very hard work, we are happily coming to the closing time.

It is good to see so many of you here today at the Plenary and Closing Ceremony.

It shows how much you care about our mission and the ITU family. I have noted some delegations have their members working in shift. Some joined us during the first week, some come this week. However, many of you have stayed with the Conference over the two weeks, including some Ministers and Vice Ministers, Heads of Regulatory Agencies. I appreciate your efforts to support our Conference.

Thank you to Minister of Modernization Andrés Ibarra, who honours us with his presence at this Closing Session.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Argentina and to the City of Buenos Aires for hosting WTDC-17.

Mr. Brahima Sanou, Director of BDT, has just summarized the main results. I am in agreement with him. The results have paved the base and the way forward for ITU's work on development for the next four years. Let me congratulate each of you for your marvellous contributions to this success.

It is a testament to the spirit of COOPERATION and of a family that prevailed during the Conference.

ICT has achieved a lot over the last decade.

And we still have a lot of challenges ahead of us.

I am very much grateful to UN Secretary-General António Guterres for his message that "ICT is a powerful tool to help us achieve EACH AND EVERY SINGLE Sustainable Development Goal."

This is his appreciation to ICT, as I understand it, his encouragement for us to work more, not only on our own ICT development, but to work together with all eco-systems to reach SDGs by 2030. With his work and our collective work, we will see in the future.

Infrastructure will be strengthened, Investment will be increased. Innovation will be developed, and inclusion will be fostered and the better ICT will bring a better life to all without leaving anyone behind.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me thank the Chairmen and Vice-Chairman of the Conference, of all the Committees, of the Working Group of the Plenary, the Chairs of the Ad-hoc groups for their hard work, dedication and leadership – that shaped the fruitful outcomes of this Conference.

I want to thank the BDT staff and their Director, Mr. Brahima Sanou for their efficient and productive preparations for the Conference and for their tireless work during these two weeks. I congratulate them for the success of this Conference.

I want to thank the ITU Staff who have engaged with WTDC-2017, prior to it or during these two weeks in Buenos Aires or in Geneva, every single one of them, for their work behind the scenes. I am proud of you! In particular, I wish to express my appreciation to Mr. Arnaud Guillot, ITU Legal Advisor who has been sick the whole week with a temperature and could not sleep for several days but has stayed with the Conference all the time, providing his valued advice to the meeting.

I wish to thank all local staff, including police team, security staff, protocol staff, voluntary staff and others, all have enthusiastically supported our Conference, and have demonstrated their high level of professionalism and hospitality.

The WTDC-2017 core teams of our host, including their staff from the Ministry of Modernization, the Foreign Affairs Ministry, Regulatory Agencies should be commended. We are grateful to each of them.

The last but not least, Mr. Chairman, I wish to thank you for your leadership. Your profound understanding of ICT business within the UN context, your professional management skills, your extraordinary personality, all contributed to the excellent role of Chair of the Conference with which you have been entrusted. To express our high appreciation, I wish, on behalf of ITU, to award you with the ITU Medal and my Certificate.

We thank you !

Thank you, everyone. And have a safe journey home.