

Mr. Chairman,  
Your Excellencies, Ministers,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you for giving me a chance to address this very important gathering

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Government of Malawi and on behalf of my delegation, I wish to express deep gratitude to the King and the people of the Kingdom of Morocco for the warm welcome and hospitality that we continue to enjoy in this beautiful and historic city of Marrakesh in Morocco.

Allow me also to join others in congratulating you Mr. Chairman for being given the difficult but important task of leading and directing this conference.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, and Distinguished delegates, Malawi has made notable strides in the reform of the telecommunications and information sector. We have liberalized the sector. We have an independent regulator, we are in the process of privatizing the incumbent fixed operator and have just issued a licence to a third mobile GSM operator.

Mr. Chairman, Malawi recognizes that we are in the information age, as such ICTs are very central to the development and success of all spheres of our national endeavors, be it economic,

social or political. In this respect, we are finalising the policy on universal access and universal service, with particular emphasis on making information facilities and services accessible to the most remote parts of our country.

We have also started drafting a national ICT policy which is attracting contributions from all stakeholders in the economy including the civil society.

Over the past few years Malawi has experienced the benefits of the positive partnership with ITU and its sector bodies, particularly ITU-D and its bureau the BDT.

With the positive energy and momentum in the ITU and its organs, the restructuring that this conference shall do, must aim at refining the structures in order to institutionalise efficiency and effectiveness. We must consolidate the achievements made since Minneapolis Plenpot, and put in structures that will ensure achievement of the digital and information society aspirations expressed by the Secretary General.

Once again on behalf of the Government of Malawi and on my own behalf we thank King Mohamed the 6<sup>th</sup> and the people of the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting this conference and the hospitality that we are enjoying in this beautiful city of Marrakech.

I thank, Mr. Chairman