



Committed to connecting the world

Connect Asia Pacific 2013



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Welcome Remarks by ITU Secretary-General, Dr Hamadoun I. Touré

Excellency Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand,
His Excellency Mr. Emanuel Mori of Micronesia
His Excellency Mr. Baron Divavesi Waqa of Nauru
His Excellency Mr. John Key of New Zealand
His Excellency Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan
His Excellency Mr. Lord Tu'ivakano of Tonga
His Excellency Mr. Moana Carcasses Kalosil of Vanuatu
Excellency Group Captain Anudith Nakornthap, Minister of Information and Communication Technology,
Excellencies, Ministers,
Distinguished delegates,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen;

It is a great honour and a real pleasure to be with you this morning at the Grand Opening of the ITU Connect Asia-Pacific Summit – and let me take this opportunity to give you all a very warm welcome.

I would like to thank the Kingdom of Thailand for hosting this important Summit, and notably Her Excellency Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra for her patronage and personal support; I cannot fully express how much we appreciate this. To the Government and people of this great Kingdom, I want to express my deepest condolences for the death of Supreme Patriarch Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara. Even in the face of this loss, the hospitality has been outpouring and most humbling.

Allow me to extend my profound condolences to the Government and people of the Philippines in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan. Many lives have been lost, thousands of people were maimed, and hundreds of thousands of others were displaced. I would like to re-assure the Government of the Philippines that ITU and the entire Membership stand behind you. ITU has since deployed over 150 broadband satellite terminals and a CDMA base station. We pay for both the transportation and use of that equipment. We are also supporting the operations of other humanitarian organizations with the latest being WHO to whom we have given 30 satellite terminals and we also pay for the airtime. I have also deployed my team who are on the ground now to support the government. This continues to be a commitment of ITU and its management guided by the spirit of the founding fathers who stated clearly that we should protect life on land, at sea, and in the air using telecommunications.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with pleasure that I see leaders here from all the different stakeholders – including governments, the private sector, industry, development partners and communities.

You are all unquestionably crucial players, gathered here to set the vision for Asia-Pacific 2020: Smartly DIGITAL, which is the acronym for **Digital – Inclusive – Green – Innovative – Transformative – Affordable Living**.

However, for this vision to add value to the lives of ordinary citizens, we have to move from Plan to Action and to Walk the Talk. We should forge partnerships based on sound win-win financial arrangements, build bankable projects that will result in sustainable development of communities and countries. Ladies and gentlemen,

Distinguished guests,

We have all come a long way. The ITU Connect Asia-Pacific Summit is part of a series of ITU Connect Summits that we have organized in each region of the world, starting with the ITU Connect Africa Summit back in 2007, Connect CIS in 2009, Connect Arab and Connect Americas Summits in 2012. What we have observed is that in all those regions where we brought together stakeholders, ICT growth has been recorded. Let me illustrate this, in 2013, there are almost as many mobile-subscriptions as people in the world. Today, mobile cellular penetration rates stand at 96% globally; 128% in developed countries; and 89% in developing countries. This was just a 'pie in the sky' a decade ago because in the year 2000, mobile cellular penetration was just under 40% in the world's richest countries, and mobile penetration in this region was just 6.4%. But look at the figures today: a total of 3.5 billion (89%) out of the global 6.8 billion subscriptions are from this region. Here in Thailand, mobile cellular penetration is approaching 130%.

This Summit gives us an opportunity to put **our feet on the accelerator** in the quest to embrace broadband. This should be quite possible because uptake of high-speed broadband (at least 10Mbit/s) is highest in some Asian economies. Out of the 25 top performers in the ICT Development Index, recently published in the ITU's 'Measuring the Information Society 2013' report, 7 are from the Asia-Pacific region. On this note, I re-invite all the Ministers to the upcoming World Telecommunication Indicators Symposium that we will hold in Mexico from 4 to 6 December 2013. This is an important event where you can influence how we rank countries. As we are at connect, I want to add that the Mexican Government has also created a special day during this meeting to lead Ministers to some of their success ICT projects as a way of sharing experiences. I will be there and hope most of you will come.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

This is a momentous event that opens doors to better, broader and bigger opportunities for governments to deliver on their commitment to the Millennium Development Goals and World Summit on the Information Society targets arising from increased investment in the ICT Sector. The vast market opportunities will be demonstrated this afternoon at the Multi-stakeholder meeting. All of you are invited.

This land, this water, this air, this planet – this is our legacy to future generations. But you are adding to that: **Information and Communication Technologies** – that is a legacy you will leave for future generations.

Distinguished guests,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Let me share with you my dreams:

By 2015, we must connect the remaining almost two thirds of the world's people – some 4.3 billion people – who are still offline. In this region, that would be the around 68% people yet to have Internet access;

By 2015, this region should aim to have connected the remaining 78% to mobile broadband to improve the current 22% penetration;

You may ask, **why broadband?** Broadband: because it will revolutionize the lives of everyone, everywhere. It will help deliver radical improvements in healthcare, education, transportation, utility suppliers and government services – in fact, everything, all the

time and everywhere!

That the world takes advantage of the BIG DATA reality around us and ensures that it does not manage us, but that we **manage it** – manage it to our advantage. Big data should be a knowledge-asset that can push productivity, create competitiveness, and stretch our imagination beyond the horizon!

With that said, it is reality that challenges in dealing with big data abound: large untamed volumes of data, complexity of data, storage of such data, privacy, security, access, and deployment; to name but a few.

By 2020, that every kindergarten or crèche should have ICT in its curricular in order to ensure that we are bringing up a digital savvy generation. This again, in a secure environment. Reality is: ICT is now the game-changer!

By 2015, every country in this region would have put in place a broadband plan and doing everything possible to connect the fibre to every community urban or rural, and to every home.

Excellencies,

You have already demonstrated that you have the political will, stamina, and commitment to connect your people and unleash the benefits that come with the modern tools of ICT . This is why you are here. ITU stands side-by-side with you all the way. We dream sub-consciously, but when we wake up we should make sure that we transform that dream into reality. Otherwise, why dream and lose sleep if we are going to do any thing with it – I ask?

Let us dream together, and also implement together. I have seen a very impressive list of projects that represent market opportunities in this region. A total of 88 projects with a market value of over \$53 billion dollars. Industry, this is an opportunity for you to grab. The countries have made great effort to do research for you. This is my challenge to you today. Please stand up and be counted!

Ladies and gentlemen,

In closing, let me express my sincere thanks to all the Heads of State, Heads of Government, and Ministers, CEOs and all development partners from the UN family, international and regional organizations, development banks, and industry for your presence and support. My special thanks again go to the Government of Thailand, and in particular let me mention the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their full support and cooperation in ensuring the success of this Summit.

Let me end where I started:

Let this Connect Summit be remembered for putting a corner-stone to a future in which Information and Communications Technology plays a catalytic role not just in accelerating local economies but in meeting key development goals from education to health, because that must be the value proposition for ICTs in any country: **that, it cuts transaction costs, improves access, expands services, improves government efficiency and makes development possible.**

I thank you.

The Conference

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