More Than 2,500 ICT For Development Stakeholders Convene To Advance SDGs At World Summit On The Information Society Forum 2017

Tuesday 13 June, 2017

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More than 2,500 information and communication technology (ICT) experts and advocates from around the globe are taking part this week in the **World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2017 (**WSIS Forum 2017), where they will exchange knowledge and experiences towards achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

WSIS Forum 2017 is being held in Geneva, 12-16 June, and represents the world's largest annual multi-stakeholder gathering of the ICT for development community, and is co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP, in close collaboration with all UN agencies. The Chair-elect of this year's forum is Mr. Jean Philbert Nsengimana, Minister of Youth and ICT, Government of Rwanda.

This year's forum will focus on sustainable development trends and inclusive ICT initiatives in key SDG priority areas such as health, education, gender empowerment, the environment, infrastructure and innovation. Participants are set to include at least 500 high-level policy-makers from 150+ countries, including government ministers and experts, civil society leaders, academics, business leaders and international organizations.

'The ICT community plays a paramount role in supporting the realization of the SDGs. The rich discussions and knowledge sharing among ICT for development stakeholders set to take place here at **WSIS Forum 2017** will make great strides to leverage the power of ICTs for achievement of the SDGs,' said ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao.

WSIS Forum has become a real demonstration of how the WSIS and SDGs processes are being aligned at the implementation level, building on the WSIS-SDG Matrix developed by UN WSIS Action Line Facilitators. An interactive mapping tool is available for the WSIS Forum 2017 Agenda to emphasize the linkages between the Action Lines and the SDGs identified by WSIS stakeholders in their respective sessions and workshops.

The WSIS Forum 2017agenda features more than 200 specialized workshops covering a wide array of topics identified through a participatory process with WSIS stakeholders. This includes a Virtual Reality for SDGs special trackbringing together high-level personalities, world class virtual reality experiences, and a focus on education.

WSIS Prizes 2017 winners and champions will be announced 14:30-16:00, Tuesday, 13 June. WSIS Prizes recognize outstanding success in implementing development-oriented strategies around the globe that leverage the power of ICTs in support of the SDGs. This year, a record 1.1 million online votes were cast for 345 nominated projects.

WSIS Forum 2017 will result in several concrete outcomes that will enable stakeholders to strengthen implementation of WSIS Action Lines and the alignment of the WSIS and SDG processes.

WSIS Forum 2017 is made possible through the generous support of its strategic partner, the World's Global Telecom; activity sponsors Japan, Switzerland and IEE; contributing partners the Office of Electronic Communications of the Republic of Poland, the Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA), GeSI, ICANN, the Internet Society (ISOC), and VEON; and supporting partners, including the Philippines, IFIP, CMAI, TEMA India and Swiss Engineering.

For more information, please visit bit.ly/WSIS2017 .

Note to media:

A digital media kit for this event is available at: http://bit.ly/WSIS2017-mediakit

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