**Republic of Bulgaria
for ITU Council
2023-2026**

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Region C for 2023-2026

As a member of the International Telecommunication Union since 1880, the Republic of Bulgaria has been strongly committed to the achievement of the goals of the organization focusing on the development of information technology and telecommunications ever since.

Bulgaria has been participating consistently in the activities of the ITU and its three Bureaus - Radiocommunication Bureau, Telecommunication Standardization Bureau and Telecommunication Development Bureau, including the regional ITU organization for Europe (CEPT). Among the examples of excellent cooperation is the fact that our country was among the initiators of one of the most important activities of the ITU – child online protection, and since 2008 has also hosted four consecutive times the ITU Regional Cybersecurity Forum for Europe and CIS.

Bulgaria is one of the strong supporters of the multi-stakeholder approach, and in this regard since 1999 the non-governmental sector has been part of the Bulgarian delegations during all major ITU events and so far it has become one of the successful examples of public-private partnership. Our delegations thus benefit from having some of the best experts in the field, ensuring that the Bulgarian contributions to ITU work is of benefit for the Union.

Bulgaria is among the countries in the world with the fastest broadband connections, as well as one of the countries with the highest participation of women in ICT. Our aim within the ITU is to continue the work to overcome the digital divide between regions, as well as the gender gap, to work towards safe and secure ICTs and to unleash new and emerging technologies potential in a way, which does not widen the existing differences.

The digital transition is an important key to strengthen the social and economic resilience, to achieve sustainable growth potential and job creation. In the last years we have seen the digital transformation accelerated by reinforcing the significance of digital connectivity. We will work towards strengthening digital connectivity's role as an increasingly important factor not only for the competitiveness of countries and enterprises, but most of all for social inclusion, as the digital connectivity is the base for significant increase in employment, better competitiveness and improvement of the quality of everyday life.

We believe that the access to new digital technologies has become fundamental for every person in the world. In this regard, our main goal is to work on multiple measures that would lead not only to bridging the infrastructural divide but would also allow for the practical access and use of this infrastructure and the technology by all people in the most equal way possible. As almost half of the people in the world are still unconnected they risk remain practically outside the processes of the digital transformation. Global spectrum management plays an important role in connectivity. With the development of technology, this limited natural resource becomes the basis for digital services to reach every consumer. For this reason, we will work to achieve the rational, equitable, efficient and economical use of the radio frequency spectrum of all radiocommunication services.

The implementation of the SDGs and the WSIS Action Lines within the remit of the ITU as a leading UN agency has to be aimed at improving and facilitating people's lives and we are determined to work hard for the achievement of this goal for the better of all humankind.

We firmly believe that the collaborative work within ITU towards fostering an enabling policy and regulatory environment for climate sustainability, in line with Paris Climate Agreement commitments, SDG targets, and other frameworks can be implemented so that it brings value for people, planet and economic growth. In this regard, we are committed to work to amplify the benefits and impact of ICTs in relation to climate change and environmental sustainability. Our country is ready to share its achievements and good practices in the field of ICT and relies on a traditional good partnership with the other members of the ITU.

Furthermore, we believe that ITU should put persistent efforts to introduce the emerging technologies (including their standardization) in a way, which does not widen the existing differences and hinder the connection of the unconnected. The new opportunities created by these technologies should be used to build more efficient and cost-effective digital infrastructures, services and opportunities to acquire and improve digital skills.

We are committed to keep ITU always in the forefront of ever changing and constantly developing technological sector in order to gradually build a better future for everyone.