

Mario Maniewicz

Uruguay

Candidate
for the post of
**Director of the
ITU Radiocommunication
Bureau**

What is your view on the role of digital technologies in a rapidly changing world?

Digital technologies including high-speed connectivity, the Internet of things and cloud computing are transforming our world. It is my firm belief that digital technologies – no matter how innovative or futuristic they may be – have three important roles:

Firstly, to **improve people's lives**. Everyone, wherever they live, and whatever their means, should have access to affordable connectivity. Wireless technologies can make public services more accessible, enhance financial inclusion, increase learning opportunities, and support health care.

Secondly, to **protect life on the planet**. Satellite technologies support the collection of invaluable data that can then be used to monitor our natural resources, improve food production, and mitigate the effects of natural disasters.

Thirdly, to **increase prosperity**. Radiocommunication technologies are at the centre of the so-called fourth industrial revolution. Digital technologies connect sensors and machines, helping industries, transport systems, utilities and enterprises become more efficient, sustainable and reliable.



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How should the work of ITU's Radiocommunication Sector evolve to maintain relevance in today's world?

The telecommunications ecosystem has changed considerably from what it used to be. The number of players in the radiocommunication sector has expanded tremendously, and so have the services and applications that they provide.

The satellite segment has gained a plethora of actors, ranging from big companies launching mega satellite constellations, start-ups launching small satellites, and academia focused on space research and Earth exploration.

Industries and verticals are deploying their own networks, local operators are providing services to underserved areas, and digital companies now realize the essential role of spectrum resources and spectrum management.

In this context of increasing demand for spectrum and satellite orbital resources, the work of ITU's Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) to ensure the rational, equitable, efficient, and economical use of the radio-frequency spectrum by all radiocommunication services remains vital.

For ITU-R to maintain and increase its relevance in today's world, we need to ensure that all developed and developing countries, as well as all players big or small, participate in ITU-R's work and benefit from the remarkable platform for collaboration that ITU provides.

If elected, what are your top three priorities and how do you plan to achieve them?

My primary task is to pave the way for a successful World Radiocommunication Conference in 2023. WRC-23 will consider important topics such as the expansion of mobile, aeronautical, and science services, the communication of ships and planes with satellites, and communication between satellites, to name a few.

Once the conference is over, the priority of the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) is to apply the procedures of the Radio Regulations in a fair and transparent manner, as we have done in the past.

Another important part of our core mandate is the elaboration of globally harmonized standards. A priority for me is bringing to the table all relevant players to take part in the development of up-to-date international standards for radiocommunication services.

In addition, we also aim to speed up worldwide implementation of international regulations and standards and thus accelerate progress on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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How can the ITU Radiocommunication Sector contribute to progress on the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

ITU's strategic goals are directly linked to SDG 9 on building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation. Thanks to the encompassing benefits of information and communication technology (ICT) services and applications, the work of ITU-R extrapolates from SDG 9 and contributes to progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in all its dimensions: social, environmental and economic.

Examples include terrestrial and satellite services to improve agricultural productivity (SDG 2), increasing access to health care (SDG 3), inclusive and equitable education (SDG 4), disaster mitigation (SDG 11), tackling climate change and its impacts (SDG 13), protecting marine ecosystems (SDG 14), monitoring deforestation (SDG 15) – and the list goes on.

ITU-R also strives to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (SDG 5).

Furthermore, in line with SDG 17, the Radiocommunication Bureau maintains close cooperation with international organizations, standards bodies, regional organizations and sector-specific organizations dealing with the use of spectrum resources.

Tell us about your achievements in leadership and building consensus.

World Radiocommunication Conference 2019 was an excellent example of building consensus and a very important achievement.

After four weeks of lengthy discussions and negotiations among our Member States, we managed to lead the Conference to a very successful outcome.

As Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau, I was deeply involved together with the Chairman of the Conference in bringing together representatives of administrations and regional organizations, and creating a space of trust, where participants could resolve their differences and ultimately compromise on solutions.

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Regarding leadership achievements, I would highlight two aspects:

1. **Membership support.** I coordinated ITU-R's preparatory work, supporting our members to debate and carry out studies. I created both formal and informal mechanisms to resolve contentious issues and help advance the work.
2. **Bureau management.** I have inspired the principles of efficiency, teamwork, and service to the membership, which has prevailed despite difficulties such as those brought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leading in these challenging times has meant dealing with uncertainty and concerns. It has meant adapting and being flexible. Despite the challenges, we have seamlessly continued to provide a service to our constituents while complying with regulatory deadlines. Moreover, our meetings and events have been attended by a record number of participants – with increased numbers of women delegates and representatives from developing countries.

What else would you bring to the table as the next Director of ITU's Radiocommunication Bureau?

During my first term in office as the Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau, the huge trust administrations reposed in me at the 2018 Plenipotentiary Conference was incredibly encouraging, and a great responsibility.

I was aware of the economic, social, and environmental impact of the work conducted by ITU-R in creating the conditions for harmonized development and efficient operation of existing and new radiocommunication systems.

If entrusted with another term, I will leverage my experience from 34 years of service with ITU and the additional expertise and trust I have gained during my four years leading the Radiocommunication Sector.

I intend to continue leading the Radiocommunication Bureau following the guiding principles that have driven my first mandate: efficiency, transparency and inclusiveness.

I am proud to lead the Bureau's highly technical and committed staff. I am honoured to serve the international community today, and I look forward to continuing to serve the ITU membership for the next four years.



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