

Emerging Trends | ICT4SDG | Infrastructure

March 21, 2018

Top Contributors: Why Russia supports ITU

By ITU News

This interview with H.E. Mr. Ismailov Rashid, Deputy Minister of Telecom and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation, is part of an occasional series about why ITU's [Top Contributors](#) support ITU.

1. Why do you support ITU?

The Russian Federation supports the activities of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), with the assistance of which governments and the private sector coordinate telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) networks and services, both globally and nationally. The ITU is an organization that promotes the development and productive operation of telecommunication/ICT equipment in order to improve efficiency of telecommunication services and their availability to the public. The ITU also promotes provision of technical assistance to developing countries in the field of telecommunications/ICTs, and the mobilization of the human and financial resources needed for the development of telecommunications/ICTs.

By promoting expansion of access to the benefits of new technologies, ITU plays a critical role in the globally interconnected information world, since telecommunications/ICTs are recognized as a major contributor to social, economic and environmentally sustainable development from which all peoples of the world, without exception, could benefit. Dissemination of information and communication technologies, scientific and technological innovations in various fields of activity offer great opportunities for accelerating human progress, bridging the digital divide and building a knowledge-based society, as well as for its development.

All these together undoubtedly contribute and will contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) identified in the UNGA Resolution "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

2. How does the work of ITU help your strategic ICT initiatives?

Since ITU acts as a consolidating and centralized structure to solve problems of harmonized development of telecommunications/ICTs at the global level, the activities of ITU, one of the first founders and members of which is the Russian Federation, contribute to the higher level of development of telecommunication/ICT industry and national infocommunication infrastructure, have a positive impact on the processes of building a single information space and the Digital Economy in Russia, which, in turn, enhance its competitiveness and investment attractiveness.

In addition, the main strategic initiatives of Russia, focused on the development of telecommunications/ICTs, contribute to the overall sustainable social and economic development of the Russian Federation.

The ITU activities allow the Russian Federation to use best practices in the field of telecommunications/ICTs, formulate priority directions for its development and implement key strategic initiatives.

3. What specific benefits do you see from your work with ITU? And/or which ITU activities are most relevant to you?

The ICT industry plays a special role in the Russian economy. It has the potential to boost global competitiveness and is one of the most important enablers for the Russian economy growth. As a result of its work with ITU, the Russian Federation has the opportunities:

- to implement equitable and efficient allocation of radio spectrum, allotment of radio frequencies and registration of frequency assignments and associated orbital positions in the geostationary-satellite orbit in order to avoid harmful interference between radio stations of different countries;
- to use international telecommunication standardisation with necessary quality of service;
- to participate in providing technical assistance to developing countries which are the members of Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC), in order to design, develop and update telecommunication equipment and networks of RCC countries by every means at its disposal, including through its participation in the relevant ITU programmes;
- to coordinate efforts aimed at securing harmonious development of telecommunication/ICT equipment, notably those using space techniques, with a view to a full advantage being taken of their possibilities;
- to collaborate with all stakeholders in the telecommunication/ICT environment with a view to the establishment of rates at levels as low as possible, consistent with high-quality services;
- to promote the adoption of measures for ensuring the safety of life through shared use of telecommunication services;
- to undertake studies, approve different Programmes and Strategies, establish rules, prepare recommendations, collect and publish statistics on telecommunication/ICT issues.

4. Can you provide some examples of how ICTs are helping drive sustainable development in your country?

E-government. In constituent entities of the Russian Federation, systematic and planned introduction of modern information and communication technologies is implemented; e-government instruments are in higher demand among citizens. The practices, such as obtaining information on the functionality of public authorities, electronic document flow maintenance, receiving online public and municipal services are becoming ubiquitous. Along with the Unified Public Services Portal, regional websites of public and municipal services are becoming increasingly popular.

Mass media. Thanks to the development of telecommunication systems, access to media environment, scientific knowledge and cultural valuables have become ubiquitous. TV broadcasting channels are received practically in any location of our country. Residents of the most remote and low-populated Russian territories enjoy the opportunity to receive high-quality content, and this has a positive effect on the dynamics of country's development.

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Telecommunications/ICTs. The development of telecommunications, penetration of broadband Internet in regions and increased level of telecommunication services throughout the Russian Federation give reasons to believe that, in the near future, high-quality modern communications will be available in all settlements that have a population of more than 500 residents.

The development of ICTs in Russian regions, high development rates of the domestic IT industry in recent years, and innovative activity of the industry's enterprises encourage the growth of popularity of occupations in the field of informatics and computer engineering and the growth of IT companies in constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

International contests. Russian projects have become finalists of the international World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prize contest in 2018. Among 90 finalists, Russian projects were presented in seven nominations from 18. The WSIS Prize 2018 is the sign of highest international recognition of outstanding contribution in the implementation of WSIS outcomes and, in particular, in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines, ensuring achievement of SDGs.

5. What do you see as the main ICT industry trends in your country?

The most prospective trend in the development of the Russian ICT industry is the development of high-tech, competitive scientific and engineering production with high potential for commercialization and, first of all, world market-oriented.

The most important trends for the Russian Federation as well as for the entire global industry are:

- Digital economy;
- Big data processing;
- Artificial Intelligence;
- Machine learning;
- Man-machine interaction;
- Robotics;
- Quantum and optical technologies;
- Security in the Information Society.

6. Which priority issues should ITU address in the coming years?

- Maintenance of general concept and system approach to the implementation of a balanced ITU Strategic Plan, achievement of ITU goals and objectives for 2020-2023 in order to complete the goals that were not fully achieved in the previous plan period, on the one hand, and to take into account new realities both in the ICT sphere and in other spheres of human activity, which are identified, *inter alia*, in the WSIS Action Lines and the UN Agenda, on the other hand;
- Participation in sustainable development processes: ITU shall seek provision of equitable access to telecommunications/ICT services, further development of communication networks, expanding and increasing telecommunications/ICT usage for ubiquitous improvement of life quality in urban and rural areas, in developed and developing countries;
- Promoting social, economic and ecologically sustainable development, and working to provide equitable, requirements-based access to telecommunications/ICTs for men and women, especially in developing countries and small island states, to expand it and increase telecommunications/ICT usage as high-quality, sustainable and resilient infrastructure (including cross-border infrastructure);
- Facilitating measures to ensure proper functioning of communication services markets, including in the interests of education, healthcare, environment, and the promotion of welfare for everybody;
- Promoting activity aimed at bridging the digital divide, and also the growth of the digital economy.

7. How should ITU evolve to meet the changing needs of the ICT industry?

The Union will develop if it works collaboratively with the full range of other organizations and entities around the world committed to advancing the use of telecommunications/ICTs.

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