

Mr. Chairman,

Your Excellency, Mr. Houlin Zhao, Secretary General

Hon'ble Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

A Very Good Morning and Namaste;

I wish to extend you all my warm greetings on behalf of the people and Government of Nepal and it is a great honor for me to participate in the Plenipotentiary Conference of ITU in this beautiful city of Dubai.

First of all, I would like to congratulate Mr. Chairman, on his election as the Chair of ITU PP-18 and I would like to thank the UAE Government for their warm welcome and gracious hospitality.

Mr. Chairman,

It gives me immense pleasure to express our views for the development of Telecommunication and ICTs, which has been considered as a crosscutting enabler for socio-economic development of the nation and to achieve the government's vision: "**Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali**".

The Telecommunication Sector in Nepal is rapidly growing; having the telephony service subscription of 135.5% and the broadband subscription of 50% till date. In order to connect every district headquarter and to provide reliable and affordable broadband connectivity to schools, hospitals, and local government offices, we are using the Rural Telecommunication Development Fund (USO fund) in order to build a high speed optical fiber network; the **Information Superhighway**, which is expected to be completed by 2020.

Nepal is working towards the development of ICT with the slogan, "**Digital Nepal**". Currently, we are preparing the Digital Nepal Framework: focusing on eight sectors – Agriculture, Health, Education, Urban Infrastructure, Energy, Tourism, Finance,

and Connectivity. This framework aims to guide Nepal on its journey towards becoming a **Digital Nepal**.

The Government has also formulated the Broadband Policy and the ICT Policy in 2015 in order to enhance Broadband Services, and to ultimately achieve the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. Currently, the government is planning to formulate the Information Technology Act to deal with current issues, such as cyber security, digital signature, e-governance, data protection and security, child online protection, and e-waste management. The government is also planning to introduce 4G and 5G in a phase wise manner. Furthermore, the National Emergency Telecommunication Plan and the Strategy for Making ICT Services Accessible for Persons with Disabilities have been prepared.

Mr. Chairman,

Since Nepal has a very difficult terrain consisting of remote, rural, and mountainous regions which are very expensive and difficult to connect via high speed optical fiber network, we are also working to utilize our own satellite orbital slots assigned by ITU.

In line with international best practices and strategic directions of ITU, we are continuously preparing and adopting our national policies, strategies, and regulatory frameworks. In this regard, I would like to convey my gratitude for the continuous cooperation and support provided by ITU. I hope the cooperation and partnership will be further enhanced in the coming days for technology transfer, human resource development, and special arrangements for low income and landlocked countries.

In the end, I express full commitment of my delegation to engage constructively during the next three weeks and we are committed to strive towards achieving the vision, goals, and targets of Connect 2020 in cooperation with ITU.

Finally, I would like to thank all the delegates for their cooperation and patience.

Thank you and Namaste!!!