

# Working together in 2020: New Year's message from the ITU Secretary General



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**I**t is my pleasure to take this opportunity to greet ITU's friends in Japan as we approach the New Year, a year full of promise for the global ITU community.

Firstly, let me thank the ITU Association of Japan (ITU-AJ) for its continued support to ITU, as well as the government of Japan for its significant financial support, and the many Japanese companies that are sector members of ITU and provide us with so many technical experts that contribute significantly to ITU's output and activities.

As countries around the world use the power of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to help accelerate progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), I often encourage them to follow Japan's example, as a global leader of connectivity initiatives, and focus their efforts on promoting infrastructure, investment, innovation and inclusivity.

As the United Nations specialized agency for ICTs, ITU relies on the collaboration of its 193 Member States and over 900 industry, academic and other members to manage spectrum and satellite orbits, develop relevant international standards for technologies and services, and promote good governance and best practices to create an enabling environment for investment in the infrastructure and services that will accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

Together, we lead the work on many new innovations to ensure that they are green, efficient, secure, cost-effective and available to everyone, everywhere.

ITU is at the forefront of developments such as artificial intelligence, smart cities, digital currency, the Internet of Things, new television, and 5G standards.

In this effort, ITU tackles issues covering digital literacy, gender, accessibility, health, security and financial inclusion.

ITU also helps build the ICT skills to enable young people and others capitalize on the benefits and job opportunities of the digital age.

Despite this progress, however, nearly half the world's population remains unconnected and therefore unable to benefit fully from the digital revolution.

This is why ITU has to redouble its efforts, and so as we start a new year I encourage all our friends and partners in Japan to continue your excellent collaboration with ITU and help us bring affordable connectivity to everyone. Only then will the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda be achieved.

I wish you all a peaceful, healthy, and happy 2020!