

Seizo Onoe

Japan

Candidate
for the post of
**Director of the
ITU Telecommunication
Standardization Bureau**



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

Digital technology enables digital transformation. This plays a major role in realizing a digital society and economy, which has an impact on industries and on people's lives. Digital technology is essential to achieve many of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their associated targets, as well as helping to solve imminent social problems such as climate change and infectious disease pandemics.

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

Throughout its long history, telecom standardization has helped make people's lives more convenient and society more efficient. It has enhanced cost reduction and enabled the spread of technologies to all corners of the world. To strengthen these roles, I will strengthen our ties with industries, both to keep them engaged and to promote the deployment and practical application of technologies.

Bringing benefits to the entire world will increase the value we derive from technologies and create a virtuous cycle through the enhanced dissemination of technology standards.



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

1. **Worldwide outreach:** That is, the global expansion of technical standards. I will strive to facilitate more timely deployment of technology standards all over the world. It is my strong desire to create a virtuous cycle of enhanced, multi-stakeholder involvement and wider technology dissemination. The aim is to bridge the digital divide and minimize time lags in the spread of next-generation technologies for meaningful connectivity.
2. **New ecosystem/collaboration frameworks:** I will strengthen cooperation and collaboration with other organizations, including standards development organizations (SDOs) and industry forums and projects. The ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) needs to respond to rapid technological changes and maintain its credibility, which comes from the involvement of governments worldwide. To simultaneously achieve both agility and credibility, collaboration among multiple organizations is indispensable. In addition, in an era where emerging technologies are widening the scope of technological solutions, it is necessary to collaborate with other organizations to expand our coverage. Just as important is collaboration with regional organizations and between ITU's different sectors.
3. **Organization management:** I will run ITU-T with open and inclusive programmes and an efficient, effective, and transparent management approach. In this, I can make use of my experience in heading key departments and units with large private-sector companies.

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

Telecom standardization directly or indirectly contributes to the realization of the SDGs – the common global goals adopted by the UN. For example, to combat climate change and its impacts, we need to reduce energy consumption amid an explosive increase in the volume of data traffic.

The latest telecom equipment technologies can minimize the power consumed by telecom services. In addition, services provided in line with new telecom standards – amid the global digital transformation driven by information and communication technologies (ICTs) – will greatly aid in reducing the energy consumption of other industries and social activities.

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Tell us about your achievements in leadership and building consensus

There has always been debate between different camps over the standardization of mobile networks. With the third generation (3G), which aimed at a unified global standard, there was a fierce debate among the world's major players throughout the telecom industry. I was involved in all the CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) discussions – Wideband (W-CDMA) versus Time Division (TD-CDMA); and W-CDMA versus CDMA2000 technology – and spent more than a year negotiating with multiple major players for a practical solution. Through technical evaluations and harmonization proposals, I myself made a significant contribution to the final outcome.

At the very early stages of fourth-generation (4G) mobile systems, the industry was reluctant to start 4G standardization so soon after the huge investment in 3G. I advocated the need for long-term evolution (LTE) based on 3G, encouraging key players to recognize its importance. I helped start the standardization of the subsequent, significantly evolved, generation, and this is exactly what 4G LTE is today. That's why I'm called "the father of LTE."

I have also been deeply involved in the development of 5G, while dealing with some confusion in the industry due to overly ambitious plans to move launch dates ahead.

Regarding organizational management, I have led an organization of more than 1000 people as head of research and development (R&D) and Chief Technology Officer of Japan's mobile telecom operator NTT DOCOMO. I have extensive experience and achievements in corporate management, including overseeing a wide range of technological fields, such as telecom networks, application services, cloud services, security, and enterprise solutions. I also reformed the corporate structure to respond to new technology and business trends and incorporated new technology development and innovation processes.

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

Inclusion is fundamentally important. I will promote standardization that engages people with a wide range of attributes from all over the world. We need to further improve the environment to ensure people from various countries, generations, genders, and industries can all participate.

It is also important for people in developing countries to be involved from the first stage of standardization, instead of simply recipients of standards. Their increased involvement will help ensure the widest possible dissemination and acceptance of standards across the globe.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I aim to be a director who listens carefully to the voices of member countries and firmly responds to them.

Through bilateral meetings with people from many countries, I hear many voices expressing the need to develop their countries, introduce sophisticated cybersecurity, and achieve SDGs and respond effectively to climate change.

As Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) and part of ITU's leadership, I will respond to such voices and help resolve their issues on the basis of my stated priorities. This is the ONOE commitment.

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