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PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE 2022

BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

PLENARY ROOM

SIGNING AND CLOSING CEREMONY

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>> Welcome to the closing ceremony of the Plenary meeting. We'll start in about six minutes. I hope you can hear me well. Before that, I would like to do the channels interpretation check.

(Interpretation check)

>> Recording in progress.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: We'll start very soon. I was just told by the Secretary‑General of the ITU that today is the World Standardization Day. So I think in appreciation for the Union from TSB, the membership that having their efforts to develop standards in the telecommunications and running the ICT. A round of applause for them all.

(Applause)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. And welcome to our 19th and the last Plenary meeting of PP‑22. The agenda for this last meeting was published. It's ADM/49. Can we approve it? I see a request from the floor if it's related to the agenda, I'll give the floor to the Russian Federation.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We simply noticed that we have protocols of meetings from the 13th meeting which haven't been approved. We also see the agenda doesn't have the relevant items. We would like you to simply inform us how we will approve these meeting protocols, the reports of the meetings of our Plenary sessions. Thank you.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you for your question, Russian Federation. I invite the Secretary to the Plenary to address this.

>> SECRETARY OF THE PLENARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As per practice, once the minutes are finalized, they will be approved by the Chairman of the conference and then posted on the website. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you, Secretary of the Plenary. If there are no other questions for the agenda 49, we consider it approved. Thank you.

Let's proceed with the second item on our agenda, which is additional declarations. We have the declarations are published and available on the website as Document 200. Can we note this document? It is noted. We don't have to approve.

The third point on our agenda is the signing ceremony. And you already had a chance to see the instructions in Document 201. So we will proceed with the signing ceremony and start by giving the floor to the Secretary of the Plenary to explain the process again.

>> SECRETARY OF THE PLENARY: Thank you. You have the right to sign the final rights. I hope you have collected your signature file at the entrance of the room. If not, please go and pick up your signature file.

So the signature file contains a copy of your Member States credential indicating the members of the delegation with the rights to sign as well as the release where the delegate can sign. I invite the members of the delegation to sign the file as indicated on the printed list. Please note only the names of the person authorized to sign as mentioned on the credential will be published after the conference. I will now call out the French name of the member states having the right to sign the final rights. In the French, alphabetical order, each member are with the states to sign the final acts is invited to approach the podium. From the right side and proceed to the final act desk and the file duly completed of the accord. When all Member States ‑‑ the rights to sign the final acts have been called, I will call on those who have not yet signed and give them a second and last chance to do so. Are there any question?

So I will ‑‑ I believe that all the delegation now have their signature file. I will start the role call.

I will start with the first group with Albania, Algeria, Germany, Andorra, Angola, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados.

(Member States signing).

>> I'll continue calling group 2. Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, the state of Bolivia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil. Brunei Darussalam. Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia.

We can scan your badge when you arrive at the desk.

(Member States signing).

>> I will continue calling group 3, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Cyprus, Vatican, Colombia, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Republic of Korea, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Denmark.

(Member States signing)

>> I will now continue with group 4, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Dominica, Egypt, El Salvador, United Arab Emirates, Ecuador, Spain, Estonia, Eswatini, United States of America, Ethiopia, Russian Federation, Fiji and Finland.

(Member States signing).

>> I will now continue with group five. France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea‑Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, and India.

(Member States signing.)

>> I now continue with group 6. Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao, and Lesotho.

(Member States signing).

>> I will continue with group 7. Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Malta, and Morocco.

(Member States signing).

>> And now group 8. Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger and Nigeria.

(Member States signing).

>> Continue with group 9. Norway, New Zealand, Oman, Uganda Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, and Qatar.

(Member States signing)   
 >> And now group 10, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkiye, Kyrgyzstan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, San Marino, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and the Solomon Islands.

(Member States signing)

>> I will continue with group 11, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Republic of South Africa, Sweden, and Switzerland.

(Member States signing.)

>> Group 12, Suriname, Tanzania, Chad, Thailand, Timor‑Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, Uruguay, Vanuatu, and Viet Nam.

I will close the last call with Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

(Member States signing)

>> I would proceed with a second and last call from the Member States who have not yet signed. Angola, the national state of Bolivia, the Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guinea‑Bissau, Lao, Libya, Maldives, Mauritania, Mongolia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, the Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Chad, Tongo, Turkmenistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

Please we have 157 Member States have signed the final acts. And this is closed. Thank you. So the list of signatories will be included in the next minutes of this Plenary meeting and of course in the final rights.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you the Secretary of the Plenary. The signing ceremony has come to the end. And we'll proceed directly to the closing ceremony.

(Applause)

>> We will proceed with the closing ceremony and start with a special moment. And you can already see, because the host country, Romania organized a special moment for the next few minutes by inviting the Cantul Mundi Choir and Madrigal being conducted. They'll delight us again with a PP‑22 hymn and a musical performance.

(Hymn and musical performance)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you, Madrigal and Cantu Mundi choir. I adopted it for the PP. The Union is divided on (Audio breaking up) future.

I invite you to another special moment to view a video message from His Excellency Mr. Nicolae‑Ionel Ciuca, Prime Minister of Romania.

(Video Playing).

>> Good afternoon for three weeks we've had the privilege to host in Bucharest relevant debates for the telecommunication and digitalization sectors.

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union, the ITU, has brought together elite specialists in their fields, political leaders, ambassadors, and high‑level representatives of international organizations. I congratulate one and all for their remarkable contributions to the technologies of the future. Telecommunications, artificial intelligence, and indeed all the topics.

The Bucharest Declaration signed during this PP‑22 emphasizes Romania's interest in contributing to the development of new technologies and highlights the creativity and professionalism of our experts.

Romania now holds a new mandate within the ITU Council, and this is thanks to the experts from ANCOM and the Ministry of Digitalization. Through their efforts, our country will continue to have an important say in the following four years developing telecommunications worldwide.

I wish to congratulate, Ms. Doreen Bogdan‑Martin for being elected to steer the activity of the ITU in the next four years, beginning in 2023.

I also thank Mr. Houlin Zhao, the Secretary‑General of the ITU, for his tireless endeavors in his position which he's been holding since 2015 and for the excellent collaboration shown with Romania.

Global digitalization has evolved at a fast pace. The development of digital technologies has changed people's lives from the way they communicate to the way they live and work.

In the near future, digitalization has the ability to provide solutions to the challenges that humanity is facing. For example, creating workplaces, promoting education, combatting climate change, and facilitating the green transition.

The Government of Romania will continue to work with the new leadership of the ITU, with the Secretary General‑Elect, Ms. Doreen Bogdan‑Martin, and with the new Council to implement digital transformation and telecommunication development, which are the very anchors of the economy of the future.

I would like to convey my gratitude to the delegates from around the world and express my sincere hope that you have enjoyed our Romanian hospitality. We hope you come back to our country either as delegates or as tourists. I thank you.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: We have another video prepared for you. We have a few more surprises. Before inviting the director Telecommunication Standardization Bureau, Dr. Chaesub Lee to take the floor, I know we have another video prepared as a tribute to the activity of Dr. Chaesub Lee and the leadership of the Union as he's ending his tenure at ITU. So the video first, please.

(Video Playing).

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Director Chaesub Lee, the floor is yours.

>> CHAESUB LEE: Thank you, thank you, thank you very much. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Romania. Thank you PP teams. This my way is my favorite song. Always when they ask me to sing a song, I always did. It really touched my heart.

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, sisters, brothers, and fellow Elected Officials, as shown in the video, it is already 35 years on my journey along ITU, starting with the CCITT in 1987. How time flies is really amazing.

During the 27 years as a technical standard expert, I was able to contribute several times of significant generation change of telecoms, starting with ISDN, what is strange name. It was a very famous name. ADM/broadband, next generation networks, NGNs, and future networks.

I'm a lucky engineer having opportunities for the development of global networks which are essential infrastructure of today's society.

Since 2014, I had another opportunity to contribute to ITU as an elected officer for eight years in ITU‑T/TSB where is a home of international standard and my professional life. I did many efforts to meet my commitments.

I think I did well. Many of you often told me you are grateful for seeing an improvement of ITU‑T and TSB. I have to say it is impossible without your support with excellent contributions given to ITU‑T activities. I thank, thank you again.

In addition, I have to say I am a fortunate person because I worked with the best experts, TSB colleagues. I thank all TSB colleagues for their dedication, their expertise in ITU‑T over the last eight years.

My special thanks to my Deputy Director, Mr. Reinhard Schroll, for always supporting and guiding me in the right direction. My thanks also go to Mr. Bilel Jamoussi, Chief of Study Group department. And Mr. Alex Ntoko, Chief of the operation department.

I could not forget recognition collaboration with other colleagues in ITU, in particular, my special thanks to directors and colleagues from all regional/area offices to show ITU‑T/it be's activities as OneITU.

Last but not least, to my host country, core yeah, for supporting me. My responsibility is ending, but my journey should not stop. I will continue my contribution to ICT communities based on my technical knowledge, collaboration experiences and coordination capabilities.

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, sisters, and brothers, I am sure I am an international standard expert during whole my professional life, because I have my fair well speech today, 14th of October, as the Chairman said, the date of World Standard Day, which is promoted by three international organizations, IEC, ISO, ITU together. This is clear evidence I am an international standard expert.

Finally, my thanks to Secretary‑General and the Chairman of PP‑22. At this last moment, allow my lovely wife, together with me. She always stays with me. She always encouraging me even in moment.

So ITU has new leadership. All the good luck to the leadership and the future for the Union. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you for all that you've achieved with ITU and wish you all the best in the future. And now I invite South Korea to take the floor.

>> South Korea: Thank you, Chair. On behalf of the Republic of Korea, I would like to give my appreciation to Chaesub Lee for his eight years of contribution to director as TSB. As you're aware, he has devoted himself substantial growth to the ITU developments and has played an integral role in new memberships and innovative programmes. We were very confident that Dr. Chaesub Lee is fully qualified and competent when we nominated him as a candidate eight years ago.

So as he has proven himself with his excellent leadership, Dr. Lee, the Republic of Korea is very proud of you. Thank you.

(Applause).

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: As you're suspecting, we have another special moment, another special video. This time for Deputy Secretary‑General of ITU Dr. Malcolm Johnson. So please start the video.

(Video Playing).

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Mr. Deputy Secretary‑General, you have the Chair.

>> MALCOLM JOHNSON: Good afternoon Excellencies, dear delegates, colleagues and friends. You might not have recognized that (Audio breaking up) but it was very well chosen, I would have to say. I don't know who chose it, but it's a very nice song. It's a Welsh song, as I'm from Wales, as you may know.

So that was very heart rendering. Thank you very much for that.

Chaesub said he he'd been in ITU for 35 or 36 years, I think. I can beat him.

(Laughter)   
 In fact it's 40 years this year since I first participated in ITU. And I must say it's been a truly wonderful experience working in ITU, firstly as a delegate, and then as Director of TSB, and finally as Deputy Secretary‑General.

So I would like to express some hopes for ITU's future, which as we know, is somewhat challenging. I believe that ITU's unique tradition of reaching decisions by consensus, based on a willingness of everyone to compromise, together with its reliance on regional preparations and regional common proposals, will see ITU through these rather turbulent times.

With so many organizations, including UN bodies now using digital technology to achieve their aims, there's an increasing risk of duplication, which makes my three favorite words evermore important. And that is collaboration, cooperation, and coordination. I hope ITU will continue to focus on its core competencies and avoid duplication of effort and concentrate on pooling its limited resources.

ITU has always kept in the forefront much technological advancement. And this will be very important to further improve the working methods, such as paperless working, teleworking, and flexible working, remote participation. These are all integral to the modern ITU culture which will be in the new headquarters building.

That's one regret, of course, I have is that I won't see the new building project through to completion. The new building will be a headquarters worthy of ITU of staff and delegates well into the 21st Century. Let me again give my thanks for all those administrations that have sponsored and supported the project.

Since joining ITU, I've always promoted our work on climate change, accessibility, gender, and bridging the standards gap. It's nice to see how those have progressed in those years.

For those who recall, when I published the first report on ICTs and climate change in 2007, it attracted so much skepticism. I was always being asked, what does ITU got to do with climate change? What does ICTs have to do with climate change? It's nice that that question is not raised anymore.

It would take too long for me to name all the incredible people I have met and had the pleasure of working with, both inside and outside ITU. But three persons I have to mention.

Houlin Zhao, of course, whom I've had the pleasure of working closely with for very nearly 16 years, and who has become a close friend. We always seem to have the same view on everything.

Sophie Guerraz, who has been an outstanding assistant to me throughout all the years. I would have been totally lost without her.

And my dear and long‑suffering wife Catherine who has always been my support throughout.

Many of you know her, because she's been at my side at every Plenipotentiary Conference from Minneapolis to Dubai. So she sends her best wishes to you all.

But, of course, I have so many friends and colleagues from so many different countries, so many administrations within ITU Secretariat. Let me just say, thank you to all of you from my heart for your personal support to me, for your friendship, and your collaboration over the years.

I also, of course, am very honored and obligated to the UK government for its strong and vital support to me in all my elections. And I'd like to particularly thank all the hard‑working members of all the campaign teams that have worked hard for my election.

So I look forward to a new era for ITU, a new management team, a new Council, including, I am pleased to say, the UK, and an invigorated ITU that will face the challenges ahead.

Let me wish you all every success for the future. Thank you and good luck.

(Applause)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you and congratulations Dr. Malcolm Johnson. Thank you for dedicating your career to the ITU. I now give the floor to UK.

>> UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Chair. On behalf of his majesty's government, I would like to extend our heart felt thanks and appreciation to Malcolm for his 40 years of service and huge contribution of the ITU. I think the caliber of the man and the caliber of his contribution is set out beautifully by the film and by Malcolm himself.

Very quickly, if I pick up on a couple things that Malcolm mentioned. He spoke about his work on modernization. I just wanted to praise, Chair, your role and the role of Romania in terms of working methods here at PP and I think we're physically and mentally healthier over the improved working methods over the last three weeks.

Malcolm mentioned how he championed gender. It is fantastic. We welcome the fact that we have the first woman Secretary‑General elect in the shape of Doreen. Although I do recall that given the debates we had yesterday, I think there's a long way to go in the ITU if we are to properly tackle issues in terms of the inclusion of women and girls.

Finally, also I would like to acknowledge and thank Malcolm for his support and help for our bid to regain a Council seat. We're proud to regain a Council seat. We're proud of the support we've received. We look forward to working with all of you for the next four years.

Once again, thank you to Malcolm and we wish him a happy and successful retirement. Thank you.

(Applause).

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you, UK. Now we have the presentation of medals and certifications to the ITU Elected Officials. I give the floor to the head of protocol services of ITU.

>> HEAD OF PROTOCOL SERVICES: Thank you, Chair. ITU would like to recognize with the ITU medal and certificate of recognition to the Elected Officials for their dedication and lifelong service of the Union and their contribution to the development of global telecommunications. I invite the Secretary‑General to join me here to present the medals and certificates.

First, I have the pleasure to invite Doreen Bogdan‑Martin, the Director of Telecommunication Development Bureau from 2019 to 2022, to receive the ITU silver medal.

Congratulations, director. Now I have the pleasure to invite Chaesub Lee the Director of Telecommunication Standardization Bureau from 2019‑2022 to receive the ITU gold medal.

Congratulations, Director. Now, it is my pleasure to invite Mr. Mario Maniewicz, director of the Radiocommunication Bureau from 2019 to 2022 to receive the ITU silver medal.

Congratulations, Director. Now, it's my pleasure to invite, Mr. Malcolm Johnson, Deputy Secretary‑General from 2015 to 2022 to receive the ITU gold medal.

Congratulations, Deputy Secretary‑General.

Now, it's my pleasure to present Secretary‑General Mr. Zhao, the gold medal for Secretary‑General period from 2015 to 2022 presented by special person to you.

>> (Off Microphone)

>> HEAD OF PROTOCOL SERVICES: Thank you very much. I now invite you to a group photo.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. I think we discovered there's a third member of ITU who is holding the medals and certificates. Both Mr. Malcolm Johnson and Mr. Chaesub Lee were talking about how many years they spent in ITU. If it's about ‑‑ if we're talking about breaking records of ITU, especially the leadership of ITU, for sure the one who broke all the numbers, it's the Secretary‑General of ITU, Mr. Houlin Zhao. I think we can have a video a half an hour with all the pictures he's done so far. I'm inviting ITU staff to run the video.

(Video Playing)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Secretary‑General, the floor is yours.

>> HOULIN ZHAO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, dear colleagues. It's really very wonderful video. I don't know how can you find all these photos? How can you choose the Chinese music? I can assure you I did not offer any to them. I did not offer anything about my favorite song. They have done a wonderful job. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, ministers, and ambassadors, dep Secretary‑General, and all three directors of the Bureau, new elected and reelected officials, Heads of Delegations, ladies and gentlemen.

It is my distinct honor to bring the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 to a close. Thank you to Prime Minister, His Excellency, Nicolae‑Ionel Ciuca, for his inspirational video message about the ITU's future.

I'm very proud at this happy moment for ITU of what PP‑22 has achieved.

We have adopted the strategic and financial plan for 2024‑2027. By putting universal connectivity and sustainable digital transformation at the center of our strategy, we are sending the message that ICT and sustainable development for all go hand in hand. The more than 60 resolutions you have adopted, including new resolutions on key topics ranging from artificial intelligence technologies to space policy issues to mitigating global pandemics, will help build a global economy and society that is more sustainable, more prosperous, more fair, and more connected.

I'm grateful to Brazil, the United States, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Papua New Guinea, and Cambodia for increasing their contributions and encourage others to do the same.

ITU needs your financial support. With our new financial plan and this increase of more than 12 contributory units, I'm pleased to leave ITU in a sound and promising financial situation. I know the new management team will seize this opportunity and capitalize on these significant assets.

Today, ITU has become a much‑valued partner on the global stage. That was evident in our participation in the Advisory Committee of the Transformation Education Summit that took place at the new United Nations in New York last month where I also addressed a related gathering in the United Nations General Assembly Hall on this occasion.

I also value my role in having BRICS, the G 7 and G 20 start their ICT ministerial annual meetings in 2015, 2016, and 2017, respectively. ITU has actively participated in these meetings, oftentimes as a valued knowledge partner.

I'm pleased that they have held these meetings every year since then and plan to continue to do so in the future.

Because 2.7 billion people are still unconnected, we just have eight years left to have everyone connected. It is my hope that the progress accomplished at this PP and what you will do in Qatar in 2026, will allow us to declare victory when our Union comes back together again in 2030.

We need all the ideas we can get. And I know the new leadership team has a lot of ideas and initiatives and is ready to work with you to take on this challenge. I call on you to advocate for that is both a technical agency and a development agency and to strengthen this message inside and outside the ITU family.

The election of the next ITU leadership team signals the beginning of a new era.

I was pleased to see madam Doreen Bogdan‑Martin become the first woman to be elected as new ITU Secretary‑General. Madam Secretary‑General elect, I wish you and your amazing team good luck and every success for the future!   
 Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate all the new ITU Council Member States and the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Council as well as the members of the Radio Regulations Board.

I am confident that this new leadership will take ITU to new heights. I'm also very much encouraged by the new generation of leadership among delegates on display at this conference! The future of ITU is in very capable hands.

Since this is the last time I will address this Plenary, I would now like to reflect on my 36 years at ITU, including 24 years as an elected official. I just want to confirm I can also beat Malcolm Johnson for the longest year of activities in ITU, because I joined ITU first conference in 1979. And we heard from Malcolm, he had 40 years activity engagement. But I have now three years even longer than him.

I joined ITU in 1986, one year earlier than Chaesub Lee. I think I was Secretary of staff, and he was expert for our meetings.

At that moment in 1986 there was no Internet and only a handful of countries had very limited analog mobile phone service. Only 185 million people were online when I first got elected as TSB director in 1998, the year when the idea of holding a World Summit on the Information Society was born.

Today 5.3 billion people are using the Internet. 5 G, AI, IoT, and broadband have all entered the mainstream vocabulary.

Satellites, optical fibers, and submarine cables have brought continents, villages, and people closer together. Over three decades I witnessed first hand how ICT innovations have changed the world and how important ITU has been in advancing this digital transformation.

Ladies and gentlemen, Romania has been an outstanding host. It was a common effort among the Parliament, the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, culture, and research, innovation, and digitalization, ANCOM, and the protection and guard services of Romania, SPP, as well as the local security team, health services team, help desks, all the volunteers, and my own security officers and driver.

Our delegates are all impressed by the support, warmth, and hospitality of our host. This wonderful PP‑22 will leave delegates with many wonderful memories. Let us give every one of them, the host, a huge round of applause.

(Applause)

Thank you, let's thank the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the conference, the Chairs and vice Chairs. Committees, and working group of the Plenary, as well as the chairs of ad hoc and drafting groups and coordinators of informal discussion. Many among them are women experts and young delegates. Let's give them a warm round of applause.

(Applause)

>> A big thank you to all ITU staff who worked on this conference here in Bucharest or in Geneva or in our field offices, in particular those who served as the Secretariat teams of committees, working group of the Plenary, and ad hoc groups, as well as the logistics, IS, communications, security teams, interpreters, translators, captioners, speech writer protocol officers, photographers, technicians, and others. Please give them all a warm round of applause.

(Applause)   
 Now like my deputy, I have three persons to identify. My special thanks goes to Beatrice Pluchon.

(Applause) who spared no effort to address all challenges before and during PP‑22. She is simply excellent! Let's give her a big round of applause.

(Applause) serving a total of six terms successfully as TSB director, Deputy Secretary‑General and Secretary‑General was the pride and honor of my life. My sincere thanks to the people's Republic of China for the trust and support they have' shown me over the last 24 years. Thank you to all ITU members and partners. I was very honored and grateful to Rwanda's president, Paul Kagame for awarding me the Agaciro medal last June. Thank you to my fellow Elected Officials, the past and the current.

I wish Malcolm and Chaesub Lee the best for the future. Thank you to all ITU staff. You are the best team anyone could dream of. I have had made many friends over the years. Thank you all for the marvelous support and encouragement.

Now let me thank my long‑time assistant, Morag Sale, who has devoted 42 years to serving ITU's top management on the 14th floor of the ITU Tower. The longest of all ITU staff today. Morag has been a constant and trusted source of support and a legend in ITU. Since 2013, she has worked as my main assistant day and night, seven days a week, without ever asking for any overtime compensation. She is a model of hard work and sacrifice. I really admire her and thank her for her service. I wish her a long and happy retirement! Where is Morag?

(Applause)   
 Now I have another one to thank. I would like to thank my dear wife, Aihua, who has been a rock in my life. Aihua was a civil engineer, but she didn't hesitate to put her career aside to allow me to pursue my own work. She's always been supportive of me, even when she started having health issues in 2016 for several years. It would mean a lot to me if you could join me to give her a warm round of applause.

(Applause)   
 I just got a medal from you. If you allow me, I will present this medal to her. She deserves it!

(Applause)   
 Let's take a photo. All right. (Off Microphone) thank you very much. Thank you very much. Last but not least or even more important, I want to recognize the Chair of PP‑22, Mr. Sabin Sarmas. From the time of his nomination, he committed himself to our business by joining all major ITU events and regional coordination and consultation meetings. He did it despite his busy schedule as a leading member on ICT of the Romania Parliament. His deep knowledge of our challenges and opportunities, remarkable management skills and leadership, extraordinary commitments, and wonderful personality are appreciated by all delegates. He's fantastic!   
 I thank our Chairman for all he has done for the success of PP‑22. So let's give him a round of applause.

(Applause)   
 I will present him an ITU medal and my certificate of appreciation. But let me finish my last paragraph.

So dear delegates and dear friends, ITU has survived two world wars, the Cold War, many financial crises, military conflicts, and political turmoil in its long 157‑year‑old history. Throughout, we have remained at the cutting edge of innovation amid industry transformation.

Like in all families, we have stood together in good times and sometimes hard times. If geopolitical conflicts are inevitable, we have always tried hard to focus and to maintain our core business.

When I became Secretary‑General in 2015, I promised you I would work with you to create a Harmonized environment for members and for staff. I've tried my best. I believe we will once more come out stronger and continue to build an even better future together.

I have worked with ITU for 36 years without interruptions. I have spent half of my life with the ITU family. I love ITU! I love you all! I will miss you.

I wish ITU the best for the future! The world needs ICT, and ICT needs ITU. Long live ITU!

(Applause)   
 I still have to conclude. To conclude, I wish you a safe journey home. And I wish you and your family all a happy and healthy prosperous new year 2023! Thank you very much.

(Applause)   
 Now, let me present my certificate and medal to our Chairman.

(Applause)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you, Secretary‑General. Congratulations for your outstanding career and leadership of ITU. Thank you for the certificate as well. Appreciation. I would like to invite China to take the floor.

>> CHINA: Thank you, Chair. First of all, on behalf of the Government of China, I thank Secretary‑General Houlin Zhao for his remarkable contribution to the global development of ITU and thank you ITU's Member States for their longstanding support and trust in Secretary‑General Zhao. Since 1986 when he began his work at ITU, the Secretary‑General has been an engineer in TSB, the Director of the TSB, Deputy Secretary‑General, and then Secretary‑General. He's dedicated, professional, and a people person, well recognized and appreciated by all. In the 36 years he served ITU it's position and importance has fully been recognized. ICT has rapidly developed globally and the ITU family has standard continuously. Secretary‑General Zhao China is proud of you and you're an excellent leader in the history of ITU who would be a hard act to follow. Once again, we pay tribute and express our gratitude to you, Secretary‑General, Zhao.

(Applause)

>> CHINA: We would also like to seize this opportunity to pay tribute and express our appreciation to Malcolm Johnson and Dr. Lee, you will begin a new life. We wish you a happy life and all the best for the future. And we will welcome you and your family in China. We would also like to thank the hospitality of the Government of Romania during the past three weeks.

We have had intense debates and also we have enjoyed the wonderful landscape of Romania and have experienced hospitality of the Romanian people. These are all good memories. Mr. Chair, we appreciate your excellent leadership and your leadership and the work of your team with the spirit and the cooperation and compromise we have reached a number of consensus which will contribute to the development of the ICT globally and set developing guidance for the future.

China will continue to support ITU's work in all areas. And we will work together with the new leadership of the ITU in order to contribute to bridging the digital divide and contribute more to a better future. Thank you.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you very much, China. Mr. Secretary‑General of ITU, Houlin Zhao, Mr. Secretary‑General elect of ITU, Doreen Martin, distinguished Elected Officials, your Excellencies, dear friends. Before opening the floor to all the Member States, I would like to say my final remarks.

And I am both happy and melancholic to develop the closing speech. Happy, because this event has been a complete success with historic achievements for the Union and for its Member States, which gives us reasons to be proud for all the work we put in and to celebrate the victories.

Happy because we've done this together. ITU is a union and within a union the only kind of success that exists is the success that belongs to everyone.

On the other hand, I'm melancholic as I said, because it has to come to an end. With highs and lows, the PP‑22 and the preparation process within the past year have been a wonderful experience for me and I hope for all of you with amazing people so many moments to cherish. I think I do feel and look maybe a bit older, but clearly a bit wiser after such an experience. Thank you for that.

Thank you for giving me the chance to Chair this never to forget event and for all the unconditional and invaluable support you have shown along the way. I want to thank you especially for the trust you invested in me. It was the magic wand that helped me to lead this conference.

Once again, I want to express my heart felt thanks to the Romanian government for hosting the plenipot conference and for entrusting me with such an important role. From my colleagues from ANCOM for making this conference such a big success for making this conference come true and for exceeding everyone's expectations   
 Dear colleagues, of the success of this event is built on your commitment and dedication. On this note, I would like to thank again my experienced team of Chairs and Vice Chairs for your great leadership, for your sense much diplomacy, your patience, and for being team players at all times. I still haven't decided which is Barcelona and which is real Madrid and I received complaints that Atletico is not represent understand this. At the end of this ceremony ‑‑   
 My appreciations and thanks go towards all the regions of the union, to their leaders and members for the time, efforts, and spirit of collaboration shown not only during the conference but also throughout the interregional exercises we've done together.

I would also like to thank the Secretariat and thank you also the Secretariat of the Plenary for the work of the support provided to me and all the ITU staff that offered to me tremendous support from day one of the preparation process till the end of the conference.

Your professionalism that I've seen from the beginning of the conference gave me confidence hard to shakes. Many thanks for the interpreters and captioners for their daily work.

Last but clearly not audio least, I would like to thank my team for bearing with me all this time, to Maria, Alexandra, I think you're here, Vlad, Iulia and Adina. I know it hasn't been easy with me and I am grateful for all your support and commitment.

Dear colleagues, I think we wrote history here in Romania from electing for the first time in the history as SG a woman to adopting landmark resolutions that will drive change and advance the tech for a future and sustainable development of the humanity.

All these in a timely manner, respecting the green oriented working methods that we have proposed from the very beginning of the conference.

I don't know if you remember or not, but in my opening speech I mentioned about the greatest dream of the Union, that of having a better world. I think we are now, a few steps further.

By giving our best throughout these three weeks, by being connected and united, we became better persons. Our actions generated better results that will echo in all 193 Member States in the future.

Now I want to conclude with this thought, that together we made this world a bit better. Is our job done? I don't think so. But it's up to each of us to continue what we've started together here in Bucharest.

The best of luck to everyone!

(Applause)   
 Now, as I promised, the floor is open for any country wishing to take the floor. The first country wishing to take the floor is Romania. I can see from here, how happy she is.

>> ROMANIA: So excited to be the first one to speak. I know it's a moving closing ceremony, literally moving with our PLENARY ROOM. On behalf of Romania, your host country for PP‑22, I want to thank absolutely everyone. But I'll take it one by one.

Chairman, for the tremendous job that you have done, fantastic really. And to your team behind the scene you've mentioned. You've shown us this the work can be done in decent hours and taking a break once in awhile. Under your leadership with very down to earth smiling with a firm but friendly attitude, you have guided us throughout the three weeks to reach consensus on all matters related to PP‑22.

Thank you to the Vice Chairs of the conference, to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the committees and ad hoc groups and Secretariats. Elected Officials, thank you for everything to the outgoing Elected Officials, congratulations on the achievements of your careers in these many years of work devoted to the Union. Mr. Houlin Zhao, Mr. Malcolm Johnson, and Mr. Chaesub Lee. It has been an honor and privilege to work with you.

Wishing the new management team of the Union, best of luck. And we continue to work together for the benefit of this Union. I want to offer a big thanks to my team and colleagues from ANCOM and all other partners, local staff, volunteers that you have seen in the corridors and everywhere here in the palace for your tireless efforts. They have always greeted everyone were a smile and tried to help. And I hope they made you feel at home in Bucharest.

And for that, please I invite you to give a round of applause for the team.

(Applause)   
 Thank you. I want to thank the technical team, interpreters, ITU Secretariat and last but not least delegates from all over the world, you, my ITU family, I absolutely loved hosting everyone here in Bucharest. And I'm already sad to see everyone leaving but look forward to working together to fulfill the mandates that we give to our Union.

We have challenges ahead of us but also very good premises to work together for connecting the world, right, together in a respectful manner with patience and in good faith. We can achieve everything that we want to do and more.

I sure hope that you take a little bit of Romanian flavor with you and the kindness of Romanian people will stay in your hearts. Connect and become more united here in Bucharest.

And as you have seen the PP‑22 logo everywhere this past three weeks, the heart, I will close my intervention by telling you how to say heart in Romanian (Speaking non‑English language). I thank you from the bottom of my heart. (Speaking non‑English language) see you soon. Thank you.

(Applause)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you, Romania. The next country to take the floor is Papua New Guinea.

>> PAPUA NEW GUINEA: Of behalf of the APT I express our thanks to you for your strong leadership which has steered us to such a successful conclusion. Your personal commitment and positivity has been obvious and has played a huge role in that success.

We so much appreciated your taking the time to take a place at our preparatory meetings.

We are grateful to the host country, Romania, having experienced the warmth of your hospitality here in this Parliament and in the streets of Bucharest. We'll be aching away the intangible, the memories and friendships renewed at this conference as well as the tangible, the results of our work and the evidence all around us, the richness, beauty, and skills of Romania's cultural heritage and traditions.

The success of this conference depended on the competence and dedication of many people, all the other office bureaus, the ITU Secretariat, interpreters, captioners, all of our other regional telecommunication organizations, and of course all delegations who work so hard to achieve consensus.

Congratulations to all of the newly Elected Officials recognizing the historic milestone in the election of Ms. Bogdan‑Martin as Secretary‑General. APT looks forward to working with you all, to connect the unconnected and advance the aims of the three sectors to ensure the success of the Union.

I would also like to express our gratitude to the outgoing Elected Officials, for their strong commitment, strong and long commitment and the energy with which they have served the ITU and its members. Mr. Zhao, Mr. Johnson, and Dr. Lee, so well expressed in the videos we have seen. Mr. Zhao and Dr. Lee, you have been such great representatives of the APT region. And we honor and applaud your dedication over so many years and all your achievements and also your love stories, which I think you share with Mr. Johnson.

The APT is proud of you and we will miss you. Thank you, Chair.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. I wanted to announce after all the countries that requested for the floor, we will have another special moment. We'll keep the surprise for that moment.

If it's possible, try also to limit your speech to two minutes because there's a long list of countries that requested the floor. Now I invite Saudi Arabia to take the floor.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: (Speaking non‑English language) I hope I pronounced it correct. I apologize. Christina.

Mr. Chairman, dear delegates, those moments are full of admonish and feelings. We would like to start by expressing our gratitude to our Chairman for his very wise management of the conference and allowing its success. We would like to express our thanks and gratitude to the Romanian administration for the great organization that has allowed the success of this conference and also would like to thank all.

Mr. Chairman, please allow me to thank Mr. Houlin Zhao, Mr. Malcolm Johnson, Mr. Chaesub Lee for all the efforts they have given to ITU during the past year. Thank you and you will have full gratitude for that. We will remain in contact with you in the future.

The new administration elected, we wish you the best success. And we congratulate you for your election to those positions. We will work with you and with all the members of the Union to reach the objectives of the Union in the interest of all. And we wish all safe return to their homes. And we hope to see you in the near future. Thank you.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. I now invite to take the floor UAE. Washington.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am happy in the name of the United Arab Emirates to thank you for reaching this conference with success. We came here three weeks ago, and we were encouraged by the desire to reach developments, progress, connecting the unconnected, and we were working under the slogan, connect and unite. We have had many discussions, we exchanged, had different positions, and thanks to your wise management, we have reached a consensus in the end. And we have concluded this conference in record time.

We have to thank you to express our gratitude to you and to the Romanian administration which has spared no effort to allow the good and safe organization of this conference. We have worked in this building, which is an architectural building. And we would like to express our thanks to the Secretary‑General of the Union, Dubai, the Secretary‑General the past officials and the new elected officials thank you for presenting and keeping the Union. We cannot forget the Secretariat, the interpreters, all that have worked day and night who I will not mention to allow us to reach this good result without delay.

We would like to express to our colleagues from all the countries. We were happy to work with you. Thanks to all our efforts, we have reached objectives for this conference. And we would like to look to the future, and we hope to meet you in coming meetings and we will be thrilled to welcome you in the United Arab Emirates in 2023 for WRC.

Romania has put very high standard in the organization of conferences, and we will do our best to give you a similar experience when you join us for WRC 2023, which will be organized in the city of Dubai. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And we wish all a safe trip back home. Thank you.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. Right now I invite USA to take the floor.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: On behalf of the United States of America and the CITEL region I would like to congratulate the people and Government of Romania for organizing and overseeing this Plenipotentiary Conference. We especially want to thank our Chair Sabin Sarmas and Ms. Christina few tore leading to the excellent execution of PP‑22. Thank you to the ITU Secretariat and the team behind them for their hard work throughout the planning and execution of this conference.

Chair, this hard work has paid off. It's contributed to an ITU that is stronger and better prepared to tackle the global challenges while ensuring everyone and I mean everyone can benefit from telecommunications and ICTs. Under your able leadership we have shown that an ITU conference can complete its work and ensure a strong mandate for this Union ahead of schedule while respecting the time of delegates and allowing them to see and experience the beautiful city of Bucharest and the country of Romania.

These are working methods that the ITU and future host countries should wholeheartedly support and adopt in the future for the rest of the time of the ITU. And we also have made history here in Bucharest.

We have elected Ms. Doreen Bogdan‑Martin, not only as the ITU's first female Secretary‑General in its 157‑year history but the most competent person who was on the ballot. I know so many people here feel truly inspired by your vision for universal connectivity, digital empowerment, and an innovative and inclusive ITU. And I know that your impact and legacy will only grow in your new role. We are proud to have you representing us and leading the ITU in the future.

CITEL also congratulates Mario Maniewicz and his reelection as the Director of BR as well as all the newly selected officials. We look forward to working with the new team to support ITU in our region and worldwide.

In closing, I would like to personally thank you, Chair, your team, and the ITU Secretariat and the full ITU membership for this very successful Plenipotentiary. The United States and CITEL stand ready to support this union and it's new leadership. We look forward to work with other Member States to connect the unconnected, close digital divides, and ensure digital future for all. Thank you.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you, USA. I now ask the Republic of Korea to take the floor.

>> I would like to express the gratitude on behalf of the Korea delegation. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for organizing and productive conference. Your positive speech helped us to find common ground. Congratulations to a job well done. Our thanks also goes to the Government of Romania for their great hospitality.

I wish to also express my sincere congratulations to the new management team. We look forward to working with them the next four years. Many thanks to all our colleagues and to you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. UK.

>> UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Chair. I would like to speak on behalf of CEPT as European Vice Chair of this PP to congratulate you and our staff our hosts on a successful conference. Thank you, Romania. And thank you particularly to my own CEPT Chair, Christiana, we're proud you've allowed us to have a PP in Europe. This conference we've elected a strong new leadership team that our region is excited to work with. Of course, enormous thanks on behalf of CEPT to Malcolm, Chaesub Houlin for your dedicated service.

We will work on the period 2024 to 2027 with a new framework that will guide the ITU's activities across the three sectors securing its goal and mission. Together at this conference we achieved important new resolutions for these times, a resolution that will help realities benefits from technologies to telecommunications and ICTs. A new role on telecommunications in mitigating global pandemics that will enable assistance to Member States in emergency situations and bring new cooperation at the UN level. A new resolution on the Space 2030 agenda and PP space issues have never been so prominently or keenly discussed.

We've also done important work to update our resolutions including on cybersecurity where we will now take steps forward to work on cybersecurity skills, on global resilience, and encouraging people, particularly women, to join the profession. And on the ITU's most important issue, the digital divide.

We've made good progress. But there's more to do. We've managed to do all this, Chair, while keeping to sensible working hours and in a spirit of great collaboration to conference, which is rightly worked hard on advancing gender equality, youth participation, and sustainability.

Sabin, we have done all this under your wise guidance and leadership. It's been an honor to work with you, thanks.

(Applause)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you, UK. I now invite Brazil to take the floor.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Brazil would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and thank the Romanian government and people one more time. Besides hosting PP‑22, Romania created an environment that did our work to thrive. Brazil wishes to express gratitude to Mr. It Zhao and other Elected Officials for the great work they have done since PP 18, bringing us all remarkable achievements.

Brazil came to this conference with the spirit of improving its commitment to ITU. To move ITU Tower advances in critical topics we tried to work together in different positions and to build consensus. In the end we recognized the remarkable outcomes of PP‑22, the fruits of common understanding. But there are still tasks. For this reason, the Brazilian disposition to build within ITU remains strong. Just to give concrete examples regarding development, we understand that data availability on network deployment is key. And we want to support ITU mapping initiatives.

Mapping outcomes are strong tools for diagnosing infrastructure gaps and then to give focus and effectiveness to the policies to bridge them. So this week we made the dataset from Brazil available to the public at large and expressed our intention to work on the team.

Another priority that Brazil is addressing and wants to reinforce in years in telecommunications recognizing we must attend very specific needs. Since 2016, the country has specific regulation and actions, and now the positive results can be shared and improved.

I stop here with this message, Brazil will be permanently working on ITU with openness and eager to build together. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

(Applause)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. I will allow first the regional coordinators to take the floor. After that ‑‑ because it's a long list of countries wishing to take the floor. We will spend 20 more minutes here.

So the next country invited to take the floor is Russian Federation. On behalf of the Russian Federation and RCC as well.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you very much, Chair. Yes. As you always do, guess what the next step will be. I'm speaking on behalf of Russia as well as the SSC first and foremost I would like to thank you because Romania and Bucharest, this wonderful palace and even this tent have become our home over the last three weeks. And we have all experienced how important goodness and peace are as values to the Romanian people. We've really felt that here.

We wanted to say in response to what you've said that we're not only going to be taking a part of Romania with us in our hearts, but we also hope that we will be able to leave part of our spirits in our hearts with you forever following on from this PP.

This PP will be in the memory of all delegates and also our regions. Thank you very much. I hope to see you all soon.

(Applause)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. The next country invited to take the floor is Nigeria.

>> NIGERIA: Thank you, Chairman. Nigeria is glad to add its voice with other voices on the successful conclusion of the ITU PP‑22. Firstly, Nigeria gives all glory to God on this occasion.

Secondly, we will wish to give profound gratitude to Romanian government and its people for its excellent place to host this conference and the hospitality we're receiving since our rifle in Bucharest.

Furthermore, ITU officials for their tireless efforts and conduct of this conference. To Chairman of the conference, we congratulate you for the excellent and ‑‑ of this Plenary. We took particular notice of your expertise and managerial skills and experience that came to bear on the conduct of this conference. Your skills was the reason why we were able to finish all we were supposed to do just on time.

To delegates and staff to ensure this conference Nigeria and thanks you for your contributions.

For newly Elected Officials, we wish you successful tenure and for the outgoing officials, we wish you luck in your future endeavors.

We wish everybody for safe journey back home. Thank you.

(Applause)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. I now invite to take behalf of ATU and Algeria, Algeria. Let's give the floor to Algeria.

>> ALGERIA: Thank you, Chair. I am the Secretary‑General at the ministry for post telecommunications in Algeria, and I would like to speak on behalf of the Member States of the Africa region and first of all I would like to express our gratitude to the ITU Secretariat and the Government of Romania for the excellent organization of the conference. Not only have we appreciated the hospitality of this beautiful city, Bucharest but the high level of the commitments that have been undertaken at the end of this important conference.

I'd like to use this opportunity on behalf of the region to thank Mr. Houlin Zhao, the outgoing Secretary‑General, and Mr. Malcolm Johnson and Mr. Chaesub Lee for their great support during your mandate. And we wish you all the best in your new undertakings.

Under the leadership of Ms. Doreen Bogdan‑Martin, we would like to congratulate you once more. Just three years ago you were with us in Algiers. During the African Union telecommunications Plenipotentiary and we have worked with you in the past, so we are convinced our relationship will strengthen.

The election of Ms. Bogdan‑Martin, a source of inspiration for our countries and the women ‑‑

(Captioner switch at 17:59 EEST)

>> ALGERIA: Under the leadership of Ms. Doreen Bogdan‑Martin, we'd like to congratulate you once more. Just three months ago you were with us in Algeria during the African Union's telecommunications Plenipotentiary. And we have worked with you in the past. So we are convinced that our relationship will but strengthen.

The election of Ms. Doreen Bogdan‑Martin is a source of inspiration for our countries and the women in our countries to see everything is possible.

To the Chair of the conference, we would like to thank you for your leadership and for having led this conference to a fruitful outcome.

And I'd like to thank you, the Chairs and the Vice‑Chairs of the various Committees, ad hoc groups, and informal groups for having carried out sensitive negotiations and to arrive at consensus decisions for this conference.

The success of our conference and meeting was facilitated by many people who worked with us directly but also in the background. The staff, the Union here and in Geneva and those who helped with the Committees, Ad Hoc Groups, the technical groups, the interpreters, the Rapporteurs, and the captioners and those who helped those participating remotely, all the staff who provided security and conference assistance, I'd like to give thanks for having been able to be here where we have been able to discuss and work in a spirit of compromise. And to set the path for the Union for the four coming years.

In adopting a Strategic Plan, we have adopted many Resolutions and decisions. And we've also elected the management team, the Member States who will be joining the Council and we have worked on the radiocommunications ‑‑ Radio Regulations board. And we would like to state our solid commitment to work on progressing the implementation of these Resolutions and decisions. And finally, and not least I would like to thank the Government of Romania for your immense efforts in hosting the conference in this emblematic building. The people of Romania always have a friendly smile. And we have made many friends who will always remind us of your hospitality.

It has been a very beautiful and productive conference. And I look forward to meeting everyone once again at future Forums and at the next conference in Doha in Qatar in four years. I wish everyone safe journeys home. Thank you.   
 (Applause.)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. I invite the UAE now to take the floor on behalf of Arab group.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you very much, Chair. Good afternoon to everyone. Thanks to God, we have completed the work of the PP with success. Amazing success. At this conference we have been able to look at all of the proposals which were submitted. And we didn't have to hold night sessions. We did it all in record time. And this was due to the great efforts of the Delegations as well as your exceptional steering of our work.

I would like to congratulate you for the success of this conference and the excellent leadership of our work. We would like to thank Romania, the host country of this conference, for the wonderful hospitality as well as for the assistance that they granted to the Delegations. We would like to warmly thank you for that. I would like to thank our dear friend Mr. Houlin Zhao for all the efforts he has made as the ITU Secretary‑General. I worked at his side over the last eight years on a number of different essential issues. He is a wonderful friend who has attempted to help all of the administrations and countries. We wish him a very happy life.

And we would like to thank Mr. Malcolm Johnson as well for what he has done as Deputy Secretary‑General. I have been a friend of Mr. Johnson for more than 20 years, since when he was working in the BR. I wish him every happiness. I would like to thank our dear friend Mr. Lee for the efforts he has made over the TSB. He has developed a number of projects. We wish him every success in the future.

On behalf of the Arab group, we would once again like to congratulate Ms. Doreen Bogdan‑Martin, the Secretary‑General elect, the first woman to take up this post at the ITU. We would also like to congratulate Mr. Tomas Lamanaukas, Mr. Mario Maniewicz as well as Mr. Seizo Onoe as well as Dr. Cosmas Zavazava who have been elected to their positions. We wish you every success in your roles. We ensure that the work of the ITU is successful. The success of the ITU means success for the Member States and the international community.

Chair, dear Delegates, over the last three weeks we worked as one single team. We have debated a number of different issues. There were some divergencies of opinion during that time which is completely normal during such conferences because we have come to defend our proposals and interests in line with our values and principles. And, of course, our legislation. We have been able to reach solutions that have been accepted by all the parties. And as the ‑‑ the Arab group I would like to thank all of the regional groups and coordinators. We wish you every success and a safe journey home.

I would like to take this opportunity, Chair, to also extend my thanks to the group I belong to, the Arab group, which placed their trust in myself. We worked as a single team together in order to reach what we have achieved.

Mr. Sabin, dear Chair, perhaps I have spoken quite at length but I wish to say we are glad to see the outcomes of our work today. This has all been made possible thanks to God as well as your excellent leadership and your patience. You have encouraged us to finish our work within the Committees which made our task easier. You always kept a smile on your face and kept calm. And this is what has allowed the conference to work and ‑‑ to work so brilliantly. We wish you every success in your future work.

And we hope to see you occupying a very high post in the future.

Thank you very much. Safe travels home to everyone. Thank you.   
 (Applause.)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you, UAE. Thank you very much. We use the next ten minutes to invite the countries that take the floor, to invite the countries that requested the floor for the speeches. And after that we will proceed with the next special and final special moment we prepared for you today. And the next country invited to take the floor is Malaysia.

>> MALAYSIA: Thank you. It is my pleasure and honor after one year of serving here in Bucharest to join this prestigious ITU Plenipotentiary meeting in Bucharest. This is one of the biggest conferences that Romania is hosting.

We congratulate Romanian Government for hosting and we congratulate you also, Chair, on your able and fair leadership throughout this conference which has been delivered elegantly, patient and calm disposition. We take this opportunity to congratulate all the newly elected ITU officials. And we offer our deep appreciation to the outgoing ITU team. We would like to extend our thanks to bringing Malaysia back in to the Council as part of the Asia. We hope to contribute to our region first with our ASEAN family and the dialogue panels in the region, our brothers and sisters in West Asia and cousins in the South Pacific, for us to bridge the digital divide and to undertake efforts to face the spectrum of challenges that in ITU.

Malaysia would also like to thank the Member States for its meaningful and robust presence. We are competent and ready to support the ITU towards a sensitive response and innovative Union. Until we see each other again in the future, I bid you safe travels home back to your families and loved ones. Thank you so much. Bye‑bye.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. India.

>> INDIA: Thank you, Chair. At the outset let me extend our sincere thanks to you in person for conducting it excellently. The hospitality of Romania will continue to be in our hearts. We are carrying back your culture, smiling people's faces and very sound history. We would also like to take this opportunity to extend our very sincere thanks to the outgoing Secretary‑General, Mr. Houlin Zhao; the DG, Malcolm Johnson; and the director of TSB, Mr. Lee who has contributed for a very long time and successfully led the ITU with full capabilities for all of us to give a very good path.

I would also like to extend our sincere thanks and congratulations as well as good luck to the newly elected team, Secretary‑General, Ms. Doreen Bogdan‑Martin; Mr. Tomas; Mr. Mario, Mr. Onoe, Mr. Cosmas. Also we would like to extend thanks to all the members who attended, voted for India for getting being re‑elected in ITU Council. We look forward to working with all of you in a collaborative manner and in coordination with all of you as suggested by outgoing SDG, Mr. Malcolm Johnson. Looking forward to welcome all of you in India for the WTSA‑24. Thank you. Thanks again to all the people who are present here and the entire team contributing for a successful hosting of this event. Thank you.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. Netherlands.

>> NETHERLANDS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the Kingdom of the Netherlands I would like to congratulate you with a very successful conference. I would like to thank you and your team and Chairs and Vice‑Chairs for helping sometimes in difficult times to forage consensus.

Mr. Chairman, there may be some differences remain. We must remind ourselves these are only words. Billions of people around the world still need assistance. We must make sure to connect the unconnected and build an all inclusive digital society. A digital society that's free, open and safe for everyone to participate in.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the host country Romania and all her colleagues for the heart warming and welcoming reception and providing us the opportunity to explore and experience this beautiful country. The past three weeks you made us feel at home. I would like to congratulate the newly elected and re‑elected officials of the RRB. I would like to thank our Dutch colleague who has been served on the Radio Regulations board for the past eight years. It has been a pleasure working with you, and hope our paths will cross again. I would like to thank all then men and women who work behind the scenes for providing not only us but also the remote participants a wonderful and smooth experience. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. Rwanda.

>> RWANDA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On behalf of the Republic of Rwanda and our entire delegation, thank you, Romania, for sharing your beautiful country and a wonderful, smooth experience for the past three weeks. I thank you for your wise counsel and expertise during this whole conference that helps us achieve great success. I equally appreciate the Chair and Vice‑Chairs of the various Working Groups and Committees.

On the other hand, we commend the spirit of consensus and compromise that was demonstrated through the last three weeks and commend the Union for the new and groundbreaking Resolutions that were adopted during this PP. Let me also appreciate and wish success to the outgoing elected officials, Mr. Houlin Zhao, Mr. Lee and Mr. Johnson for your leadership for the past and long years at ITU.

We also vow to continue supporting the new leadership led by Mrs. Doreen Bogdan‑Martin, to continue working together to achieve your leadership, your goals and leaderships you have. We also appreciate countries that have placed their confidence in the Republic of Rwanda to serve another time on the Council. And we look forward to continue working to connect the unconnected. Thank you very much.   
 (Applause.)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. Czech Republic.

>> CZECH REPUBLIC: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor. I would like to express our gratitude to the outgoing elected officials, and wishing all good and also success at the newly elected ones. We would like to thank everyone, the Delegates, Chairs and Vice‑Chairs of the conference bodies, ITU staff, as well as the technical and supporting local staff. But what I would like to say here once again I remind you that my country has this six months the presidency of the European Union and after a long break, the Plenipotentiary of the ITU has come back to the European continent and to the ITU. And this makes us in the EU family really proud of Romania. Proud of having you among us.   
 (Applause.)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. Thailand.

>> THAILAND: Thank you very much, Chair. I will be very quick. Oh, my goodness, three weeks, three weeks. First of all, I have to thank you, Chair, Sabin, you are splendid. I have to thank Romania. Having been away for three weeks away from home for everyone is a big sacrifice. But Romania, the host country has made us living here such a joy. That's not a sacrifice at all. We really enjoy it. One complaint I would give you though you make it hard for every future host of ITU, Thailand included because we have big shoes to fill.

I have to quickly congratulate all the elected officials, RRB and ITU Council. Thailand is so proud to be in the Council again. And we can assure you that we will work hard. We are grateful for your vote. We would like to express gratitude to all the outgoing elected officials and management and also to show our appreciations to all candidates who push forward themselves and volunteer to work for the ITU.

Everyone here at this meeting is such a big success. Because we are here, we are here with intentions with dedication and commitment. We have some challenges. We have some difficulties. We have some differences. But hey, it is the charm of the international meeting. This is what we are here for. And we celebrate diversity.

Now we celebrate the success of this meeting but our job is not done. We will continue working together. We will join hands. We will stay united to reach our ultimate goal of connecting the unconnected, leave no one behind. And reach Sustainable Development Goal. So for now, congratulate everyone for the success. Thank you, everyone. It has been such an honor and pleasure to be here. Thank you very much. Until we meet again, thank you. Thank you. Thank you.   
 (Applause.)

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you very much, Thailand. Thank you. All the best with the preparations for. The next country to take the floor is Egypt.

>> EGYPT: Thank you. Egypt congratulates you for residing successfully the conference and leading the meetings with professionalism and wisdom which allowed us to complete our work and to come up with acceptable results. For all we know it was a difficult task but you managed to do what was necessary. We would also like to thank the country of Romania, both the country and the people for the wonderful organization and hosting the PP. And for the warm hospitality to the participating Delegations and efforts undertaken to overcome any difficulties that the Delegations might face. And also we would like to thank you for all the cooperation. We were very happy to be with you in Romania.

We thank you profusely. I would like to thank the ITU management and we thank Mr. Houlin Zhao for every effort he has undertaken during the past years and for the ITU and its membership. And we wish him much success in his future. We'd also thank the elected officials for all the efforts that were done in the past. And we wish them a lot of success. And we congratulate the new management. And we wish all the members of the new management much success in their tasks. I do not forget to thank the Secretariat of the ITU for the efforts, tireless efforts and their continuous support to the heads of the subgroups in order to facilitate the work of all.

Finally, we would like to thank the interpreters for their efforts. Thank you to the participating Delegations for the spirit of cooperation and friendship despite the disparities and opinions that never stopped our work from being fruitful, fruitful. And we are blessed for having achieved the success. Thank you.

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Thank you. I would like now to thank all the countries that requested the floor for congratulatory messages. And I read all of them. And apologize for not being able to give the floor. But thank you very much. So the countries are Japan, Mexico, Qatar, Iraq, Iran, Turkiye, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, South Sudan, Uzbekistan, South Africa, Bahamas, France, Tanzania and Armenia. Thank you very much all of you.

And now as I promised we will play a special edited highlights video with some more memories from the last three weeks. Maybe you will see yourself in this video. And before that I invite all the high‑elected officials to join me on the red chairs so we can enjoy this movie in all its glory.

(Video).

>> PLENIPOTENTIARY CHAIR: Wonderful video. Thank you all. Wonderful conference. Thank you all. Wonderful moment and very good moment to declare this Plenary closed. Thank you very much.

(Gavel)

(Session concluded at 1830 EEST)

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