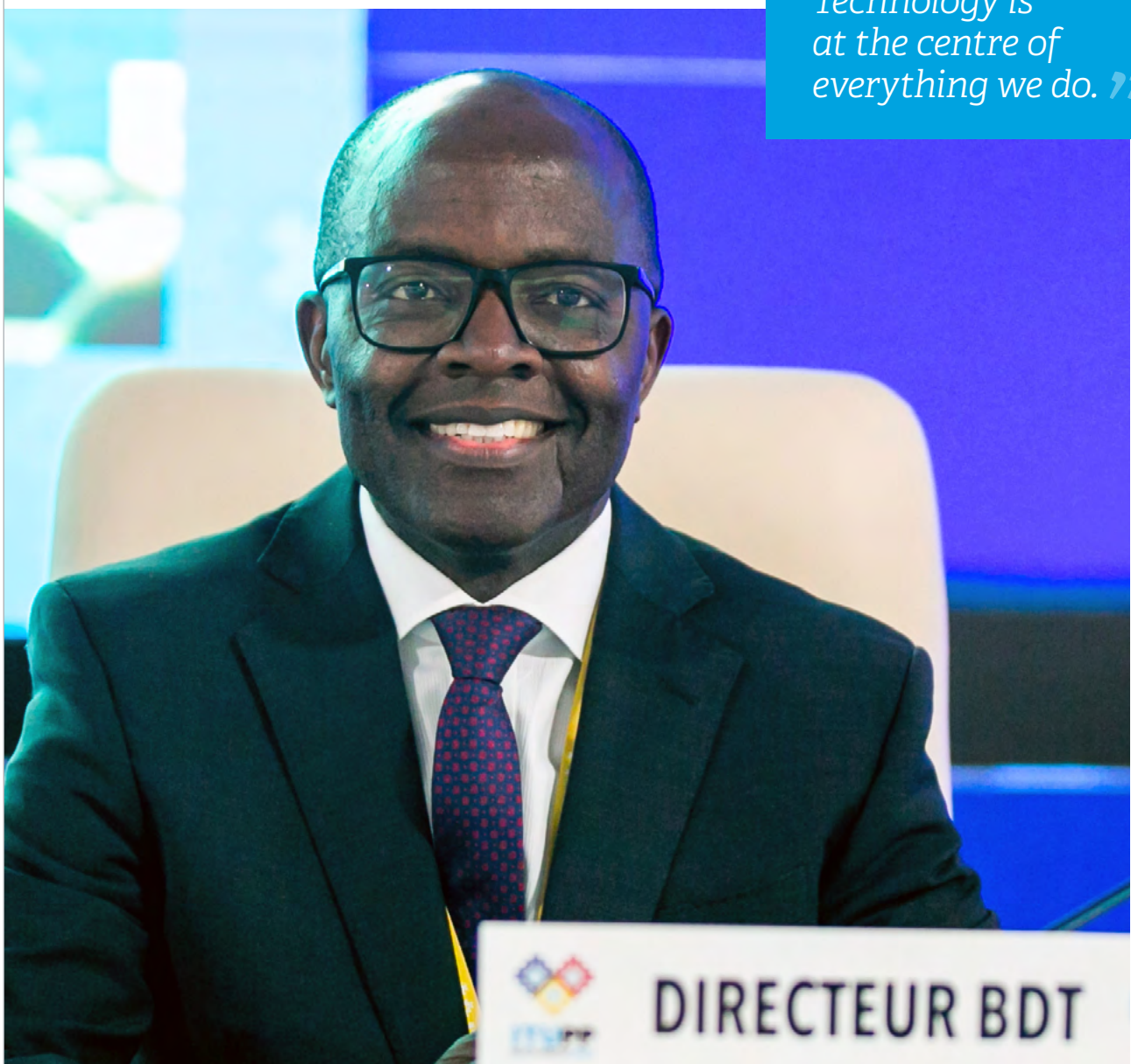


# Cosmas Zavazava

Zimbabwe

Elected Director of the  
ITU Telecommunication  
Development Bureau

“  
Technology is  
at the centre of  
everything we do.”



Cosmas Zavazava received 101 votes, with 165 Member States present and voting and with a required majority of 83.

## Cosmas Zavazava's plan to spur global tech development

ITU is at the centre of action in countries that are making an effort towards attainment of the 2030 development agenda, says Cosmas Zavazava, highlighting the deepening linkages between new and emerging technologies and the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals set out by the United Nations for 2030.

"Technology is at the centre of everything we do," he asserts.

Zavazava, the next Director of ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), explains ITU's critical global role following his election victory at the organization's recent Plenipotentiary Conference in Bucharest, Romania.

"It is leading in terms of information and communication technology deployment, development of standards, allocating spectrum, and also executing projects across the globe, which can change the entire game of socio-economic development," he says, adding that ITU will continue to play an important role and help other sectors to succeed.

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*We should be working towards closing the digital gap as well as the skills gap.”*



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*Each one of us has the right to meaningful information and communication technology access.”*

For more insights, watch the full [video](#) interview.

Internet access is increasingly recognized as a key development indicator. Yet still today, one third of humanity remains unconnected. Those 2.7 billion people who are still offline today need affordable meaningful access, which would in turn enable them to participate in economic activities and dialogue, says Zavazava.

But the reality is more complex, especially in many developing countries.

“There is just no interest and no appetite to get connected – firstly, because some governments don’t have the capacity to roll out government digital services to the people, which in turn stimulates demand; and secondly, there is an issue of affordability, which needs addressing.” Just as importantly, he adds: “There is a skills gap” at the local community level.

Closing the digital divide and the digital skills gap, making digital technologies and services affordable, and enabling governments to roll out those technologies and services are crucial global development challenges – and top priorities for Zavazava over the next four years.

“Each one of us has the right to meaningful information and communication technology access,” he says. “We want to close the skills divide and accelerate digital transformation and to make an impact on the ground.”

ITU, through its deep engagement with industry and the private sector, is uniquely positioned to create an enabling environment, mobilize infrastructure investments and help expand connectivity, Zavazava notes.

“Inclusiveness is a critical element,” he adds. “We have to make sure that we address those that are offline today and those that are marginalized – whether in urban or rural areas, girls or boys, women or men, the disabled, and elderly people.”

Cosmas Zavazava would like to help close all the world’s digital divides.

After taking up his mandate on 1 January 2023, he aims to “implement impactful projects across the globe” to connect the remaining 2.7 billion people.

“I think my job is clear cut,” he concludes.



## Career path | Cosmas Zavazava

*Cosmas Zavazava's experience spans over 30 years in telecommunications and over 20 years in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector.*

*As Chief of ITU's Partnerships for Digital Development Department since 2019, he has been responsible for negotiating partnerships, mobilizing resources for projects, engaging with industry and private sector, and managing ITU's project portfolio.*

*He previously headed the Projects and Knowledge Management Department and the Projects and Initiatives Department in the Telecommunication Development Bureau, where he was responsible for managing projects and regional initiatives, statistics, emergency telecommunications, capacity building, promotion of gender equality, child online protection, accessibility for people with disabilities, and designing strategies for bringing access to people living in under-served areas including those in the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing states.*

*Before joining ITU, Zavazava headed the Government Telecommunications Agency of Zimbabwe and then served as a senior diplomat for his country at Minister Counsellor level.*