



What is the ITU?

From the smartphone in your pocket to the satellites orbiting Earth, and even your grandparent's old rotary phone, all of these devices are able to work and connect to each other thanks to a United Nations agency known as the International Telecommunication Union! Often referred to as the "ITU," the agency governs technology related to communications. They allocate radio frequencies, manage the orbit of satellites, and develop standards for new technologies! In recent years, the ITU has also started working on closing the technology gap



Did you know... the ITU has a joint commission with UNESCO called the *The Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development*? The Commission is dedicated to using the power of broadband to achieve the goals of the UN Sustainable Development Goals! Now that using technology to create a better tomorrow!

between countries that have advanced communications technologies and those that do not. The ITU is so important because every day it is working to create a more connected world and a brighter future for communications technology.

Telecommunication Development Sector

The Development Sector of the ITU (ITU-D) is responsible for ensuring the UN goal of technological development in Less Developed Countries (LDCs). By working to get LDCs up to date with the latest telecommunications technologies, teaching skills like cybersecurity and network development, and providing statistics and analysis the ITU-D is creating a more interconnected world. American University alumni Doreen Bogdan-Martin (pictured below) has led the ITU-D since 2019 and has helped make great strides towards the UN's development goals.

Did you know... the ITU-D is currently overseeing 25 Digital Inclusion projects across the globe? This is part of the ITU-D goal of having a more digitally connected world.

The ITU Secretary-General

The Secretary-General is the leader of the ITU. They play a critical role in all of the agency's operations and get to make important decisions about the work that the agency does. They are the agency's top legal representative and financial manager. Every four years, representatives from all 193 ITU member states come together to vote for who will be the next Secretary-General. The current Secretary-General is Houlin Zhao who began his second term in 2019. Next year there will be another election, and the current head of the Telecommunications Development department, Doreen Bogdan-Martin (bottom right), has been nominated by the U.S. for the Secretary-General position.

Did you know... in its 156 year history the ITU has never had a woman Secretary General. But next year, the election will have a U.S. nominee, a Russian backed nominee and maybe others as well. Exciting!

