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## **National Communications Authority**

*- Press Release*

### **MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITALISATION CALLS FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE PARTNER2CONNECT DIGITAL COALITION BY ITU MEMBER STATES**

The Minister for Communications and Digitalisation, Hon. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful who is currently participating in this year's World Telecommunications Development Conference (WTDC) has called on ITU member-states to promote the Partner2Connect initiative.

According to the ITU's Facts and Figures 2021, 63% of the world's population used the Internet in 2021. This represents an increase of 17% since 2019, with 782 million people estimated to have come online during that period leaving 2.9 billion people offline.

According to the Minister, the Partners2Connect Coalition initiative is aimed at fostering meaningful connectivity and digital transformation globally and therefore needs to be formalized and focused on but not limited to the hardest-to-connect communities in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDs).



- *The Minister for Communications and Digitalisation, Hon. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful delivering her remarks.*

Hon. Owusu-Ekuful also indicated that the Partner2Connect initiative is the gateway to solving most of the challenges member-countries are facing and for that matter “let us resolve for the Telecommunication Development Bureau to promote the Partner2Connect programme at regional and international levels to mobilize new resources and partnerships in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the WSIS Action Lines, and the United Nations Secretary General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation”.

She further called on member-states to cooperate in implementing the various Partner2Connect pledges and commitments for the benefit of all stakeholders.

She made the call on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2022 at the closing ceremony of the Partner2Connect sessions being held as part of the ongoing WTDC. The WTDC is scheduled to end on the 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2022.



- ***Other dignitaries at the closing ceremony: Hon. Paula Ingabire, Minister, ICT and Innovation, Rwanda, Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of BDT and Houlin Zhao, Secretary-General ITU.***

Also present at the closing ceremony was the Director of the International Telecommunication Union’s (ITU’s) Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, who revealed that the ITU Partner2Connect initiative had received more than 360 pledges which is equivalent to an estimated value of \$18.5 billion.

She further stated that there is power in collaboration and the pledges received demonstrate that helping the world will ultimately benefit us.

***About the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition***

The Partner2Connect Digital Coalition is a multi-stakeholder alliance launched by ITU in close cooperation with the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology, and in line with the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, to foster meaningful connectivity and digital transformation globally, with a focus on but not limited to hardest- to-connect communities in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The Partner2Connect Digital Coalition will serve as a leadership level platform to engage all stakeholders to mobilize and announce new resources, partnerships, and commitments to achieve universal and meaningful connectivity.

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