

**World Telecommunication and Information Society Day,
17 May 2010
Message from Mr Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General**

Better city, better life with ICTs



In today's world, telecommunications are more than just a basic service – they are a means to promote development, improve society and save lives. This will be all the more true in the world of tomorrow.

The importance of telecommunications was on display in the wake of the earthquake which devastated Haiti earlier this year. Communications technologies were used to coordinate aid, optimize resources and provide desperately sought information about the victims. The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and its commercial partners contributed scores of satellite terminals and helped to provide wireless communications to help disaster relief and clean-up efforts.

I welcome those efforts and, more broadly, the work of ITU and others to promote broadband access in rural and remote areas around the world.

Greater access can mean faster progress toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Internet drives trade, commerce and even education. Telemedicine is improving health care. Earth monitoring satellites are being used to address climate change. And green technologies are promoting cleaner cities.

As these innovations grow in importance, so, too, does the need to bridge the digital divide.

The theme of this year's observance, "Better Cities, Better Life with ICTs," is a reminder that communications technologies must be employed – and disposed of – in a manner that raises living standards while protecting the environment.

The United Nations is committed to ensuring that people everywhere have equitable access to information and communication technologies.

On this International Day, let us resolve to fully harness the great potential of the digital revolution in the service of life-saving relief operations, sustainable development and lasting peace.

Ban Ki-moon
UN Secretary-General

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