



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



Moderator



Ms. Gitanjali Sah | Strategy and Policy Coordinator, ITU

Gitanjali Sah is Strategy and Policy Coordinator at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and is responsible for the coordination of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process. She has more than 15 years of work experience in ICT policy issues at the national, regional and international level. She is an experienced International Civil Servant having worked at several UN Agencies. She holds M.Phil. Development Studies, University of Cambridge, UK and a master's in political science, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, India.

Speakers



Mr. Adel Darwish, Regional Director | Arab Regional Office, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Adel Mohamed Darwish, the recently appointed Director, Regional Office of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) for the Arab States, covering 22 Arab countries, has more than 20 years' experience in the field of telecommunications, spanning incumbent operator, startup operator, and regulator. In his different roles, Mr. Darwish has been involved with international relations, not only in the ITU, but also in organizations including ICANN, GSMA, the GCC Council, the League of Arab States, Arab Regulatory Network (AREGNET), and SAMENA Council. Based in Bahrain, Mr. Darwish has held leadership positions in major conferences at the ITU and outside. He is known for his leadership of the GCC Council Roaming Working Group from 2009 to 2020, during which time the group achieved a major reduction in roaming rates in the region. Mr Darwish was also active in international bilateral projects and negotiations both within the Arab region and beyond. Mr. Darwish, with the experience from both private and public sectors, is committed to strengthening regional ICT evolution as well as further enhancing the role of the ITU at the Arab regional level, coordinating globally with other regions. His vision is to help achieve an information society, empowered by the interconnected world, where telecommunication/information and communication technologies enable and accelerate social, economic and environmentally sustainable growth and development for everyone.



Mr. Ayman El-Sherbiny | Chief of ICT Policies, UNESCWA

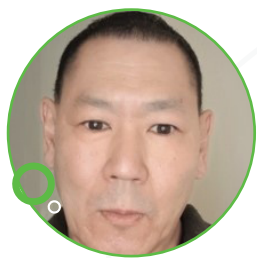
Ayman El-Sherbiny has more than 30 years of experience in the Telecom and IT domain; a senior International Development Strategist in the United Nations, and a former senior executive in several major multinational Technology companies, as well as in the Telecom and Internet Sector in Egypt and the Arab Region during the nineties till 2002. By the mid-nineties, he became a serial entrepreneur. He co-founded and led, as President & CEO, several renowned ICT companies, including establishing two of the five licensed Internet Operators, and acquired more than 40% of internet market share in a record time, in addition to one of the leading systems integrators and one of the pioneering e-commerce companies as well as the first WAP partner to the main GSM operator by then. In 1999, he participated in co-drafting the first Telecom Law of Egypt that triggered the liberalization of the sector, instigated the National TRA of Egypt, and fueled competition in the sector. By late 2002, he joined the United Nations, and participated in establishing the ICT Division of ESCWA, spearheading Arab efforts pertaining to the WSIS in 2003 and 2005. By 2011, and till now, he assumed the leadership role for information society, digital economy and digital development as the Chief of Information and Communication Technology Policies at the UN – ESCWA. During 18 years of tenure in the UN, he authored tens of publications on the Information Society issues including on Advancing ICT Infrastructure, Broadband for Development, Internet Governance, Competitiveness of the ICT Sector, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Investment and Venture Capital in ICTs, e-Government Strategy, and on Digital Economy; and has co-founded the Arab Internet Governance Forum (AIGF) and the Arab High-Level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda.

He led several international and regional initiatives including Arabic Names across several geographical groups. He is a regular speaker at international conferences on digital oriented issues. His current work focuses on global and regional Digital Cooperation and Development, Fintech and e-Commerce post-COVID-19; and on the establishment of a Unified Arab Digital Agenda and Strategy for the Arab region jointly with League of Arab States, and on National Digital Development Reviews and Agendas for a number of Arab countries, with close nexus to the SDGs and to the 2030 Agenda.



Mr. Karim Abdelghani | Arab Regional Office Programme Coordinator, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Karim Abdelghani comes with experience of around 17 years in Information and Communication Technology, specifically in the area of international relations in this vibrant field. Throughout these years, he worked for the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of Egypt, the International Finance Corporation, and the ITU. He is a Chevening scholar and received a master's degree in International Development from the University of Birmingham in 2009. Moreover, he is currently the Programme Coordinator in the ITU Arab Regional Office where he coordinates with stakeholders in the region on several regional issues including Smart Learning, digital health, Arab Digital Content, digital agriculture, ICT Indicators, and digital innovation ecosystems.



Mr. Joe Hironaka | Programme Specialist, Digital Innovation and Transformation Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO



Ms. Scarlett Fondeur Gil | Economic Affairs Officer, E-commerce and Digital Economy Branch, UNCTAD

Scarlett Fondeur Gil has worked for the Division on Technology and Logistics at UNCTAD since 2003. She and her colleagues produce UNCTAD's flagship report on the digital economy, which looks at trends in ICT for sustainable trade and development. She also works on the development of information economy statistics, representing UNCTAD in the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development. UNCTAD currently collects data on the use of ICT by businesses, in the ICT sector, and on international trade in ICT goods, and is working to improve the measurement of e-commerce and of international trade in ICT-enabled services.



Ms. Minerva Novero-Belec | Policy Specialist, UNDP

Minerva Novero-Belec is a Policy Specialist in UNDP's Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS)/Global Policy Network (GPN) based in New York. Her experience and expertise center on shaping and supporting efforts that advance inclusive governance and poverty eradication, with a focus on strategic policies and innovative use of new technologies in transforming societies and economies for sustainable development. Her work straddles governance, cities and digital transformation, which explores policies and strategies on "smart" technologies for addressing challenges in today's cities and for building cities envisioned in the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda. She serves, among others, as Secretariat of UNDP's Programmatic Response Coordination Group (PRCG), which is UNDP's governance mechanism for ensuring effective response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

As Policy Specialist for ICT for Development, e-Governance and Access to Information in UNDP previously, she managed a portfolio that continues in current post: as technical focal-point for UNDP's role in the Broadband Commission and manages UNDP's permanent vice-chairmanship of the UN Group on Information Society (UNGIS). Before joining UNDP, she was the Director for Policy, Communications and University Training/Information Programmes at New York University. She Holds a degree in Mass Communications from the University of the Philippines and a master's degree in International Affairs with a focus on economic and political development from Columbia University in New York.



Mr. Michael Hodin | CEO, Global Coalition on Aging (GCOA)

Michael W. Hodin, Ph.D. is CEO of the Global Coalition on Aging, Managing Partner at High Lantern Group, and a Fellow at Oxford University's Harris Manchester College. He is also a blogger on Medium. From 1976-80, Mike was Legislative Assistant to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. During this period, he was also a Visiting Scholar at Brookings Institution, on U.S. Foreign Economic Policy. He was a senior executive at Pfizer, Inc. for 30 years, where he created and then led its International Public Affairs and Public Policy operations and served on Management Boards for a number of its businesses. Mike is a Member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and from 2010-2013, was Adjunct Senior Fellow with a focus on population aging. In 2013, Mike was invited by then-Committee Chairman Bill Nelson (D-FL) to lead a Members' Roundtable with the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging. Mike was also the recipient of the 2012 Fred D. Thompson Award from the American Federation for Aging Research. He sits on the Boards of the Foreign Policy Association, Business Council for International Understanding, NYC Blood Center, American Skin Association, American Federation for Aging Research and Emigrant Savings Bank, where he is Chairman of its compensation committee. Mike was a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Ageing And he sits on the Advisory Board for the Milken Institute Center for the Future of Aging. Mike holds a BA, cum laude, Cornell University, M.Sc. in International Relations from The London School of Economics and Political Science, and M.Phil and Ph.D. in Political Science from Columbia University.



Ms. Mei Lin Fung | Chair and Co-founder, People Centered Internet

Chair, co-founder with Vint Cerf of the People Centered Internet, gave the keynote on Decade of Digital Transformation at the World Bank IFC Global SME Financing Forum October 2020, she presented at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Digital Economics launch in 2017. Mei Lin is an early pioneer of customer relationship management (CRM). She served as socio-technical lead for US Federal Health Futures initiative 2011-2013. Within the IEEE Standards Association she chairs the Industry Connections Social Impact Measurement committee, and on the Executive Committee for IEEE's Humanitarian Activities Committee. Mei Lin is Singaporean, living in Silicon Valley who worked at Intel then Oracle. She was Douglas Engelbart's business partner 2000-2004, organizing the 2008 Program for the Future. She was on the 2016-2018 WEF's Global Future Council on Digital Economy and Society and is anti-techno colonialism. She earned her BSc in Math from ANU, MBA in Finance from MIT where she studied under two future Nobel Economics Prize winners.



Ms. Lara Rudar | UN Youth PreCOP26 Delegate

Lara Rudar is a 17-year-old environmental advocate and virtual reality artist. As one of the 20 Official UAE Ambassadors for Nature, she is currently working closely with Emirates Nature-WWF to create digital environmental initiatives that provide youth in the UAE with the experiences, knowledge, and skills to become future change-makers and environmental leaders. She is also the Education Coordinator at the Re-Earth Initiative, an international youth-led climate organization.