

## ITU- WTSA brief

1. International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is a United Nation's specialized agency for Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). It is an intergovernmental organization. ITU currently has a membership of 193 countries and over 900 private-sector entities and academic institutions. ITU membership represents a cross-section of the global ICT sector, from the world's largest manufacturers and carriers to small, innovative players working with new and emerging technologies, along with leading R&D institutions and academia.
2. ITU was set up on the principle of international cooperation between governments (Member States) and the private sector (Sector Members, Associates and Academia). It is the premier global forum through which parties work towards making consensus on a wide range of issues affecting the future direction of the ICT industry.
3. It was founded in 1865. India has been a member of ITU since 1869. India is the member of ITU Governing Council, since inception of Council in 1952. As a member of ITU since 1869, India has been a part of ITU activities, earnestly working for and supporting the global community for growth and development of telecom/ ICTs. It has successfully steered in harmonizing the contributions of ITU member states from the region, by respecting the principles of equality and consensus building.
4. ITU comprises of three sectors with its broad functions indicated as below:
  - i. Radio Communication (ITU-R) Sector: To manage allocation of radio spectrum and satellite orbits.
  - ii. Standardization (ITU-T) Sector: To develop standards of telecom/ ICT sector.
  - iii. Development (ITU-D) Sector: To assist the Members States in spreading the access to information and communication technologies (ICTs)
5. ITU works towards bridging the digital divide in assisting the member's states to provide universal and meaningful connectivity, which helps in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
6. The Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) conducts the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) once in every four years to plan its standardization programme for the next four years.
7. WTSA is held for ITU members to refine the strategic direction of the ITU-Telecommunication Standardization (ITU-T) sector. The event is likely to be attended by 1800-2000 delegates from 193-member states, global standardization bodies and the telecom/ICT industry from across the globe.
8. It may be noted that India's stature is growing in the telecom/ ICT sector and so is its commitment to ITU programs & policies to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs). Earlier, Department of Telecommunications (DOT) received a proposal from ITU to host WTSA 2020 in India. However, due to outbreak of COVID-19 and travel related restrictions, hosting of WTSA-20 was postponed multiple times and event was held in Geneva in 2022.
9. DoT expressed its willingness to host the next WTSA-24 during the WTSA-20 meeting held in Geneva in Feb-Mar 2022. Subsequently, delegates unanimously agreed to India's invitation to host the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) in 2024 during the 15th plenary of the PP-22 in Sep-Oct 2022 in Romania.



10. During the inauguration of ITU Area Office by Hon'ble Prime Minister in March 2023, the date and venue of WTSA 2024 were announced by Hon'ble PM i.e. 14 October 2024 for Global Standards Symposium (GSS), 15-24 October 2024 for World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
11. During the ITU Council meeting held in July 2023, Secretary (Telecom) showcased preparedness of WTSA 2024 to the ITU Council and invited delegates to WTSA 2024. In the same ITU Council meeting, logos of WTSA 2024 and GSS 2024 were also unveiled.
12. The recent WTSA events has been held earlier in the following cities: -
  - i. WTSA-2020 - Geneva, Switzerland, 1 - 9 March 2022
  - ii. WTSA-2016 - Hammamet, Tunisia, 25 October – 3 November 2016
  - iii. WTSA-2012 - Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 20 - 29 November 2012
  - iv. WTSA-2008 - Johannesburg, South Africa, 21 - 30 October 2008
  - v. WTSA-2004 - Florianopolis, Brazil, 5 - 14 October 2004
  - vi. WTSA-2000 - Montreal, Canada, 27 September – 6 October 2000



**ITU WTSA**  
NEW DELHI 2024