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## **World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2022 (WTISD 2022)** *Digital technologies for older persons and healthy ageing*

### ***Message from ITU Secretary-General, Houlin Zhao***

Humanity and technology are at a turning point. During the pandemic, the world has seen what digital technologies can do and how they can transform our future.

Emerging digital technologies in fields from 5G and the Internet of Things to AI and cloud computing are pushing the boundaries of what's possible. Like other breakthrough technologies before them, they will have a profound impact on our future and that of our planet.

Great possibilities come with great responsibilities. Close to 3 billion people are still unconnected, with the majority of them living in developing countries—especially in rural areas. Gender, generational and affordability gaps also remain.

Equitable access to digital technologies isn't just a moral responsibility, it's essential for global prosperity and sustainability. This includes the more than 1 billion people aged 60 years or older at the center of this year's celebrations of World Telecommunication and Information Society Day.

This group of the population, which is growing larger and larger, has greatly contributed to the social and economic achievements of our time. With time passing, they are now facing new opportunities and challenges. They deserve our care and help.

Observed on 17 May, WTISD marks the founding of ITU. We are focusing our efforts this year on "Digital Technologies for Older Persons and Healthy Ageing" as part of ITU's ongoing efforts to support the Decade of Healthy Ageing launched by the World Health Organization and the United Nations.

I'm calling on you to share with us what has worked and what else can be done to help older persons become active participants in, and valuable contributors to, the digital world.

With WTSA, WTDC and PP-22 all taking place this year, 2022 represents an unprecedented opportunity to break cycles of exclusion and accelerate digital transformation for all.

Let's make this year count. Let's do it for the sake of humanity and the sake of the world.