Armenia can become regional technological hub - WITSA Chairman

[YEREVAN, MARCH 25, ARMENPRESS] Deputy Prime Minister of Armenia Tigran Avinyan received on March 25 Chairman of the World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) Yvonne Chiu. Greeting the guest Tigran Avinyan noted that the 23rd global forum of World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT-2019) is one of the key events of the year for Armenia and will organized at the highest level.

As ARMENPRESS was informed from the Office of the Deputy PM, thanking for the reception, Yvonne Chiu said that she is impressed by the technological potential of Armenia and expressed an opinion that Armenia can become a regional technological hub.

Tigran Avinyan presented the investment and business environment of Armenia, emphasizing that WCIT-2019 is an excellent opportunity for the businessmen of the 82 member states to better examine Armenia, discover its investment potentials, as well as establish cooperation with Armenian companies. See the article here.
WITSA Holds Board of Directors Meeting in Minsk
Hosted by Infopark, WITSA held its Board of Directors meeting at Hotel Europa in Minsk on March 29, 2019. In addition to the WITSA meetings, members were invited to a number of exciting tours, including the majestic MIR CASTLE, built in the XVI century, and NESVIZH - the former capital of the Radziwill's Ordination. In addition, members were treated to an unforgettable performance of Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet at the National Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus. Our most sincere expressions of gratitude goes to Dr. Boris Komrakov for hosting our meeting and making memories for a lifetime.
WITSA Organizes Workshop on Globalization at UNCTAD’s eCommerce Week 2019

[Geneva, April 3, 2019] Following the recent WITSA paper published on the same topic, WITSA on April 3 organized a workshop entitled “Globalization: Perception vs. Reality. Why Opposition to International Trade and Open Borders is Misplaced, Counter-Productive and Harmful to our Future Security and Prosperity”. The workshop was moderated by WITSA Secretary General Sr. Jim Poisant and featured opening remarks by WITSA Chairman Yvonne Chiu. The workshop included the following esteemed panelists:
Key topics discussed included:

- Is the Global Trade System Broken? Around the world, many people are looking for ways to press the undo button on globalization. The liberal economic order which Britain, the U.S. and other countries did so much to bring together after World War II is under attack everywhere. Can it be salvaged?
- What are the domestic policy shortcomings and their impact on open borders, multilateralism and e-commerce?
- Does prosperity depend on e-commerce and international trade? E.g. threats to flow of human talent across international boundaries, cross-border data flows?
- Can globalization address pressing political concerns such as economic inequality, "cheap labor" and loss of middle class jobs? What are some guiding principles that can mitigate any negative effects of globalization?
- Can globalization and multilateralism overcome state capitalism, discriminatory and damaging trade practices, and abusive tax avoidance?
- In delivering the promise of the digital age, is there really an alternative to multilateralism and trade liberalization? How can businesses best prepare for an uncertain future where tariffs and nontariff barriers will continue to rise, reversing decades of trade liberalization, and tax codes are being reconsidered for the digital and intangible era.

While anti-globalization forces are not new nor necessarily ICT specific, panelists felt compelled to challenge them as the recent mushrooming of nativist populist leaders, including in certain key markets, are now engaging in dangerous rhetoric and implementing destructive policies that go well beyond discussions over protectionism or even past concerns over labor and environmental standards, and which -if unchecked- can have long-term detrimental implications for our current, rules-based international order as well as for the future and prosperity of our children and future generations.

Globalization has proved to work for most people and has improved countless lives. If this case isn’t made and voiced in strong terms, the case for protectionism and nationalism remain as potent and dangerous as it has been for the past centuries. The workshop attempted to debunk some the main misinformation and misconceptions that are all too often presented as “facts”.

By getting at the root causes of the discontent, perceived or real, WITSA believes progress and recovery is attainable, if not inevitable. Markets, countries and people are simply too well-connected. Protectionism is a dead end, and ultimately tends to impoverish those who practice it. Policy makers share a responsibility to take citizens’ concerns seriously and need to develop solutions that help reduce inequality, restore a greater sense of security, and improve upward economic and social mobility. Policy-makers must protect and maintain global openness while striving for inclusive growth that meets real human needs.
Digital Trade Network (DTN) Update: WTO Digital Trade Negotiations to Launch May 13-15

WITSA is an active member of the Digital Trade Network (DTN) set up last year to provide a permanent private sector resource for digital trade policy makers in Geneva. Through DTN, we are building an impartial, broad base of international supporters to work with the World Trade Organization, UN Conference for Trade and Development, International Trade Centre, and related economic policy agencies in Geneva with a focus on the networked economy.

We are currently busy working on a strategy to support and help facilitate the new talks at the WTO in Geneva to establish new global rules on electronic commerce. The new WTO initiative was launched on January 25th through a Joint Statement of Electronic Commerce, signed by 76 countries - about half of all WTO members. The plurilateral negotiations will likely include the moratorium on e-commerce, protecting cross-border data flows, source code, and encryption technology; prohibiting discrimination, customs duties, technology transfer or localization requirements; and promoting cybersecurity and open government data.

Key facts about the forthcoming negotiations:

- Participating WTO Members have agreed to table text proposals by mid-April
- The scheduled negotiating rounds to date are 13-15 May 2019, 18-20 June, and 15-17 July.
- There will be several further rounds.
- The countries participating have accepted the target of a complete text by the end of July, to allow the remainder of the year for consideration.
- DTN's Nick Ashton-Hart will be in the room at each negotiating session.
- The goal of the negotiations is to finalize a WTO plurilateral agreement on digital trade by the June 8-11, 2020 WTO Ministerial in Kazakhstan.

Challenges for Industry:
Delegations across the board are complaining that the level of engagement by industry in capitals and Geneva is very low. There is not enough specific advice from industry as to what outcomes would represent an 'ambitious' outcome. Data flows - and how to address related issues like localisation and data protection - will be the first big crunch point of the negotiations. Delegations are in serious need of much more detail from industry in this area. DTN will be hosting seminars at many negotiating rounds over the lunch break to unpack specific key priorities.
The preparations for the World Congress on IT (WCIT 2019) in Armenia were presented in Minsk

[March 29, 2019] After the visit of the chairman of World Information Technology and Service Alliance Yvonne Chiu to Armenia, the president of the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE) Alexandr Yesayan accompanied the head of the Alliance during her visit to Minsk to attend the annual meeting of the organization.

During the first day of the corporate visit, with the support of the Armenian trade representative in Belarus Karen Yesayan, meetings with the Belarusian IT industry representatives were held. At the meeting with the president of DigitalBusiness Confederation Vladimir Basko, WCIT 2019 Project Director Syuzanna Azoyan presented the ongoing organizational procedures, the list of the participating countries, the topics discussed with the speakers and other details. Vladimir Basko and Alexandr Yesayan have discussed the perspectives of bilateral cooperation, which was later presented in the meeting to the president of Business Angels network Valery Astrynski. Alexandr Yesayan invited his Belarusian colleagues to take part in the world’s largest IT event held in Yerevan on October 6-9, 2019.

On the second day of the visit, the President of UATE Alexandr Yesayan, who is also a WITSA board member, presented a report at WITSA BOD meeting on the organizational process of the WCIT 2019 and the support of the Armenian Government to host the event at a very high level. A meeting with Armenian Ambassador to Belarus Armen Ghevondyan is also planned. See the full press release here.
Alexis Ohanian and Acer founder Stan Shih to attend WCIT 2019 in Armenia
[Itel, March 6, 2019] Reddit, Initialized Capital co-founder Alexis Ohanyan and Acer co-founder & Chairman Stan Shih have confirmed they will attend the World Congress of Information Technology, which is to be held in Yerevan on October 6-9, 2019, the Armenian government press service said. See the full article here. See Armenpress article here. News.am article.

Germany to participate in the World Congress on IT in Armenia.
[March 4, 2019] The president of WCIT 2019 Mr. Alexandr Yesayan and the Eastern-European regional director of German Eastern Business Association Mr. Stefan Kägebein have discussed the format of Germany's participation in the World Congress on Information Technology. WCIT 2019 program director Ms. Syuzanna Azoyan and managing director of the business association Ms. Ute Kochlowski-Kadjaia have participated in the discussion. The meeting was a follow up to the document signed within the framework of the official visit of the Armenia Prime Minister to Germany. See the press release here.
Penang Sets to Host the Olympics of the Global ICT Industry: The World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT) IN 2020

[March 18, 2019] The World Congress On Information Technology, WCIT is the largest and the most reputable international event among worldwide IT leaders. It is a signature event of the World of IT and Services Alliances (WITSA) since 1978. Madam Yvonne Chiu, Chairman of WITSA made a momentous announcement today that WCIT will be returning to Malaysia in 2020. Scheduled from the 13 - 16 Sept 2020, in Penang, WCIT2020 MALAYSIA sets Penang as the gateway to Southeast Asia for the world; punctuated with a consumer exhibition of tomorrow; it is expected to attract the participation of international 4,000 visionaries, captains of industry, government leaders and academics that span across 80+ countries. “To have the Olympics of conferences in the global IT industry in Penang will mean that we get to represent Malaysia on the world stage in technology and this is in line with our efforts to achieve PENANG2030 - a family-focused green and smart state,” quoted YAB Tuan Chow Kon Yeow, Chief Minister of Penang. See the full article here.

Member News

Information Technology Association of South Africa Elects New Leadership

Johannesburg, 11 April - Following a successful period of growth and influence in the ICT sector, the Information Technology Association of South Africa (ITA) has elected a new management team to build on the successes of its predecessors at the recent annual general meeting held on 4 April 2019 in Johannesburg. Thabo Mofokeng, owner of technology consulting firm Solario Technologies, was elected President of ITA. Mofokeng has served as ITA vice-president to outgoing President Sunil Geness and has played an influential role in the organisation’s success. See more at ITA.
The Executive Committee of Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS) has been reformed
We are pleased to bring to your kind notice that the portfolio among the Executive Committee of BCS has been reformed. According to the previous announcement and understanding of the Directors, Mr. Md. Shahi-Ul Munir has taken charge as President of BCS from 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. Please find (below) the list of the present Office Bearers in the Executive Committee of Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS).

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<tr>
<th>SL #</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>MR. MD. SHAHID-UL-MUNIR</td>
<td>President</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>MR. YOUSUF ALI SHAMIM</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>MR. MOSHARAF HOSSAIN SUMON</td>
<td>Secretary General</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>MR. MD. JABEDUR RAHMAN SHAHEEN</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>ENGR. SUBRATA SARKER</td>
<td>Director</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>MR. MD. ASUB ULLAH KHAN JEWEL</td>
<td>Director</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>MR. MOHAMMAD MUSTAFIZUR RAHMAN</td>
<td>Director</td>
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NZTech Inform - Creating world class businesses locally
NZTech and the Tech Alliance, now play a key role in the growth of the local tech and innovation ecosystem. As reported in the Australian media last week, “New Zealand is a model in many things, and the ability of its tech industry groups to co-ordinate may be another.” The report highlighted the fragmentation of their tech sector and pointed to the Tech Alliance, as yet another great New Zealand success story. See more here.

NZTech Inform - achieving diversity and inclusion in tech
ShadowTech provides girls in years 9 -11 with an opportunity to experience what working in the tech sector is like, encouraging them onto education pathways that lead into tech sector roles. The programme connects secondary school students with people working in the tech sector, who act as mentors, allowing them to experience a day in the life of an IT professional. It educates girls about the wide range of careers and opportunities available to them. More information here.

techUK Expresses Concern Regarding EU’s first guidelines for the ethical development of AI
The EU also published its first guidelines for the ethical development of AI. The guidelines are incredibly granular and techUK has expressed its concerns that this could have a negative impact on SMEs who want to act ethically. See more here.

techUK publishes a new Human Rights Policy guide
A Human Rights Policy is a company's expression of its commitment to meet its responsibility to meet internationally recognized human right standards. The plain language guide covers the key elements that companies need to consider when develop their own Human Rights Policy for the first time. See the guide [here](#).

**CESSI Communications, Computing, Budget and Finance Committees Debates Knowledge Economy**

A favorable opinion was obtained with modifications the knowledge economy regime. In a joint [meeting](#), the communications and computing and budget and finance commissions resumed the debate with guests and gave an opinion to the creation of the system of promotion of the knowledge economy.

**CESSI Holds 4th Argentine forum of digital transformation**

From CESSI we held the 4th Argentine forum of digital transformation of the state to treat "the experience of the digital services of the citizen and its impact on the organizational culture of the state". we have the presence of more than 300 attendees, where we The Centre of the debate what was achieved in these four years in specific benefits to citizenship with the experience in digital services, whether it was possible to do or not to the most affordable state, as well as if it was possible to change the culture of the public organization The impact of the way in which the public administration service is provided, and what are the best practices to achieve a smarter state, and above all how it was managed to prioritize the effective use of the most scarce resource we all have: the Time. See [more](#).

**The Microchip Revolution was the Theme of the Latest Tech Gathering**

The microchip revolution was the theme developed by Tomás de Camino, a scientist and university professor, on April 23 at the [Tech Together](#) event organized by the Chamber of Information and Communication Technology (CAMTIC), which was held at the Hilton Garden Inn hotel in La Sabana.

**VINASA Celebrates 17 Years as Leader of the Vietnamese ICT Industry**
PIKOM Quarterly Membership Meeting Facilitates Networking and Learning

PIKOM Members Meet is a quarterly event to facilitate for networking and learning purposes. The first Members Meet of the year was held recently with 80+ members attendance. Thank you Glocomp for sponsoring the event. We had a wonderful session with Gartner.

Statement on U.S. Congressional Hearing to Secure Release of Hostages in Iran

[March 7, 2019] Zakka Family Appreciates Continued Support Of The U.S. Congress

The Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and International Terrorism held a hearing today, The Status of American Hostages in Iran. Mr. Omar Zakka, the youngest son of Mr. Nizar Zakka, testified before the Committee. Mr. Zakka is a U.S. Legal Permanent Resident and U.S.-based ICT professional who has been held hostage in Iran since 2015. See more here.

Global News

Future of Work - Private Sector Survey

Employers, help Source America and FlexJobs learn how remote and flexible jobs can help people with disabilities by taking this 5-minute survey. This survey is designed in partnership with SourceAmerica to better understand how public, private and nonprofit sector groups can promote increased employment in sustainable career fields for persons with disabilities.

By participating in this survey, your insights as a trusted employer will help raise awareness and contribute to successful strategies for including the more than 70% of persons with disabilities who are currently out of the labor force.

As a thank you for completing the 5-minute survey, you'll be entered into a contest for fun freebies and FlexJobs swag

We need a reskilling revolution. Here’s how to make it happen

[World Economic Forum, April 19, 2019] As the world faces the transformative economic, social and environmental challenges of Globalization 4.0, it has never been more important to invest in people. See the full article here.

Sri Lanka’s social media ban won’t solve its misinformation problem

[CNN April 23, 2019] “Nationwide internet restrictions accelerate the spread of disinformation during a crisis because sources of authentic information are left offline.” See article here.

Facebook’s role in Brexit - and the threat to democracy

[TED 2019] In an unmissable talk, journalist Carole Cadwalladr digs into one of the most perplexing events in recent times: the UK’s super-close 2016 vote to leave the European Union. Tracking the result to a barrage of misleading Facebook ads targeted at vulnerable Brexit swing voters -- and linking the same players and tactics to the 2016 US presidential election -- Cadwalladr calls out the “gods of Silicon Valley” for being on the wrong side of history and asks: Are free and fair elections a thing of the past?

WSIS Forum 2019 Outcome Documents

WSIS is the largest gathering of information and communication community discussing the trends, evolution and challenges of new digital innovations. More than 3000 information and communication technology (ICT) experts and implementation actors contributed to and participated in the recent World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2019 to foster partnerships, showcase innovation, exchange best practices and announce new tools and initiatives to use ICTs to advance the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For the last 10 years, WSIS Forum has proven to be an
efficient global multi-stakeholder platform that is open and inclusive for all to exchange knowledge and information, enhance collaborative networks, and to share best practices in the ICTs sector. See the Executive Brief and WSIS Action Lines Contributing towards Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality.

Britain unveils a plan to regulate online content
[Economist, April 11, 2019] The government makes the novel suggestion that companies should care for their users. n the spring a government's fancy turns to thoughts of internet regulation. This month alone, Singapore announced a bill to clamp down on fake news, Taiwan said it would ban Chinese-owned video-streaming services and Australia rushed through its parliament a Sharing of Abhorrent Violent Material bill, which among other things seeks to hold tech-company executives personally liable for failing swiftly to take down offensive content. On April 8th the British government published a 102-page policy paper outlining how it thinks internet regulation should work to reduce what it awkwardly calls "online harms". See full article here.

Mark Zuckerberg: The Internet needs new rules. Let's start in these four areas
[Washington Post, March 30, 2019] I believe we need a more active role for governments and regulators. By updating the rules for the Internet, we can preserve what's best about it - the freedom for people to express themselves and for entrepreneurs to build new things - while also protecting society from broader harms. See full article.

Why big tech should fear Europe
[Economist, March 23, 2019] To understand the future of Silicon Valley, cross the Atlantic. If you want to understand where the world's most powerful industry is heading, look not to Washington and California, but to Brussels and Berlin. In an inversion of the rule of thumb, while America dithers the European Union is acting. See the full article here.

OECD Publishes Going Digital Toolkit
The Going Digital Toolkit helps countries assess their state of digital development and formulate policy strategies and approaches in response. Data exploration and visualization are key features of the Toolkit. The Going Digital Toolkit is structured along the 7 policy dimensions of the Going Digital Integrated Policy Framework, which cuts across policy areas to help ensure a whole-of-economy and society approach to realizing the promises of digital transformation for all. See the toolkit here.

ICANN64 Kobe GAC Communiqué
ICANN, March 14, 2019] KOBE - 14 March 2019 - Today, the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) meeting at ICANN64 issued its Kobe Communiqué. It is available for review here.

UK Report: Competition, not break-up, is the cure for tech giants' dominance
“Unlocking digital competition” Report of the Digital Competition Expert Panel. The United Kingdom has an opportunity to seize the full potential of the digital sector, increasing the benefits for consumers and fostering an even more vibrant ecosystem for businesses. Competition should be at the heart of this strategy, leading companies to produce better outcomes for consumers, helping new companies enter and grow, and continuing to encourage existing companies to innovate. See the full report here.

76 WTO members launch talks on e-commerce
At the World Economic Forum in Davos today, 76 partners - the European Union and 48 other members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) - decided to start negotiations to put in place global rules on electronic commerce. See more.
**UNCTAD eCommerce Week 2019: Countries discuss proposed WTO talks to boost e-commerce**

[April 5, 2019] UNCTAD is ready to support developing countries to maximize the development benefits of e-commerce, as they mull over proposed negotiations within the WTO. See more.

**UNCTAD eCommerce Week 2019: Network to connect women e-commerce leaders launched**

[April 4, 2019] UNCTAD has launched a new network for women leaders in e-commerce, aiming to raise their profile, including in policy processes. See more.

**UNCTAD eCommerce Week 2019: Digital poverty needs to be a development priority**

[April 3, 2019] Speakers at UNCTAD’s eCommerce Week say that uneven patterns of digitization could create a new class of poverty - the digital poor. See more.

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**ITU News: Meet a Mentor! The Network of Women for WRC-19 shares career advice for Girls in ICT Day**

International Girls in ICT Day (April 25, 2019) is the global day for girls to learn more about careers in information communication technologies (ICTs). ITU estimates that within the next 10 years, more than 2 million jobs will go unfilled because of a lack of digital specialists. As a fast-growing and innovative field, girls with technical skills can find rewarding career opportunities in areas such as artificial intelligence, robotics, virtual reality, telecommunications and more. See more here.

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[www.witsa.org](http://www.witsa.org)