

SPOTLIGHT



Road-to-WCIT Malaysia Kicks Off November 18

ROAD-TO-WCIT Malaysia is a highlight of the TECHFEST LIVE and it features the latest technology and innovation conversations and the 2020 Global ICT Excellence Awards. The event will run November 18-20, 2020. Please visit wcit2020.org for the schedule of events, speaker details, and exhibition opportunities. WITSA Members should use promo code: ROAD-TO-WCIT MALAYSIA to buy your ticket!

Watch WCIT Malaysia Video
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WITSA Board of Directors & General Assembly to Convene Virtually on November 17, 2020

The last meeting of the WITSA Board of Directors elected to serve from 2018-2020 will take place Tuesday, November 17th from 7am-9am EST. Following that meeting, the General Assembly will convene to elect the 2020-2022 Board of Directors and a new Chairman. Elections for Vice Chairman and other Executive Committee positions will take place on December 1, 2020. All WITSA members are invited to participate; for more information, please contact Molly Poisant at molly@witsa.org



WITSA Mourns the Passing of Marilyn Cade

WITSA mourns the passing of Marilyn Cade, one of the foremost experts on Internet governance and a dedicated and trusted ally of the World Information Technology and Services Alliance. Ms. Cade worked with and advised WITSA and its member associations around the world for more than twenty years, helping raise awareness to important issues, especially with respect to The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and the U.N. Internet Governance Forum (IGF).

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Asia Pacific Panel Highlights Digital Transformation Track Records and NRI Regional Data

Portulans Institute, in cooperation with [UNESCO](#) and with support from our 2020 Knowledge Partner, [STL Group](#), hosted a [regional panel](#) on Wednesday, addressing digital transformation's track record in Asia and the Pacific. For years, many Asian economies like [South Korea and Singapore](#) have been world-renowned champions of digital transformation. In which ways has COVID-19 impacted their ongoing digital progress? On this occasion, Dr. Bruno Lanvin presented the region's results and rankings in the [2020 Network Readiness Index](#) ([read our summary here](#)).

The virtual panel was moderated by Portulans CEO and Co-Founder Carolina Rossini, and featured a line-up of regional experts and global thought leaders, including:

John Garrity, Economist and Policy Advisor, NRI Technical Advisor

Misako Ito, Regional Advisor and Chief, Communication and Information, UNESCO

Dr. Bruno Lanvin, Executive Director for Global Indices at INSEAD and Director, Portulans Institute

Dr. Jim Poissant, Secretary-General, The World Information Technology and Services Alliance

Frances West, CEO, FrancesWestCo, and Former Chief Accessibility Officer, IBM

[Watch the Virtual Panel](#)

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PUBLIC POLICY



Negotiations on e-commerce continue, eyeing a consolidated text by the end of the year

As a member of the Digital Trade Network (DTN), WITSA is actively monitoring the Joint Statement Initiative (JSI) e-commerce negotiations in Geneva. WTO members participating in the negotiation of rules on e-commerce shared updates on the work done to streamline the negotiating text at a plenary meeting on 23 October. The co-conveners, Australia, Japan and Singapore, encouraged members to propose constructive solutions and show flexibility in an effort to deliver a consolidated negotiating text by December this year. Facilitators of small group discussions reported on the work done in between plenary meetings to further streamline text proposals in the areas of spam, source code, open government data, trade facilitation in goods, services market access, electronic signatures and authentication, and online consumer protection. Participants also re-engaged on topics that had been scheduled for consideration in the postponed March and April-May negotiating rounds, namely protection of personal information/data.

COVID-19 has increased the urgency of developing global rules on digital trade and that these negotiations are seen as a key test for the WTO to respond to modern commercial realities. The participating members are only two months away from the deadline for delivering a consolidated negotiating text and the consolidated text are expected to include "clean text" on e-signatures, authentication, spam and online consumer protection.

Due to the worsening situation in Geneva officials [announced](#) many types of businesses are to close and prohibited most meetings. WTO meetings are apparently going entirely virtual as a consequence. Additional information is [available here](#).

MEMBER NEWS



TECHNATION Proposal: The Innovation Adoption Program (IAP)

TECHNATION has proposed a national program that leverages one of the most powerful economic levers that the Government has – its purchasing power – to drive economic recovery.

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HKITF: Symposium on Innovation & Technology 2020 - A New Connected World Beyond The Normal (Nov. 16, 2020)



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Consumer Technology Association: Online Speech Crackdown Will Choke America's Innovation Economy, CTA Says

“We are deeply disappointed in the announcement by Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai that the agency will begin a rulemaking on Section 230. As CTA emphasized in its comments to the FCC, neither the National Telecommunications and Information Administration nor the FCC has the authority to rewrite the law – in our system, that is the job of Congress. Nor does the FCC have the authority to impose new, heavy-handed disclosure requirements on online platforms – a fact the FCC itself recognized in 2017.

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Digital Ethics Summit 2020 - book your free place now

On 9-10 December 2020 techUK and partners will bring together academics, philosophers, lawyers, technology experts, policy makers and other key stakeholders at techUK's fourth annual Digital Ethics Summit. During this year's virtual Summit we will take stock and reflect on developments during 2020 and examine, as this field matures, how much progress has been made against solving some of the most complex digital ethical challenges faced by society.

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PARTNER NEWS

World Economic Forum: How to harness digital tech after the pandemic

- All three highlighted the importance of education in preparing for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.
- Infrastructure, digital access and international collaboration were also key.



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UNCTAD: Global trade shows frail recovery in third quarter, but outlook remains uncertain
Depending on how the COVID-19 pandemic evolves in the winter months, the UN trade and development body expects the value of global trade to contract by 7% to 9% with respect to 2019.

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GLOBAL NEWS



A woman will oversee global trade for the first time

For the first time in its 25-year history, the World Trade Organization will be led by a woman. The field of candidates vying to become the next director-general of the WTO later this year has been reduced to Nigeria's Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and South Korea's Yoo Myung-hee, the Geneva-based body said in a statement on Thursday.

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IGF 2020

The Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) will be hosted online by the United Nations under the overarching theme Internet for human resilience and solidarity. The programme develops around the four main thematic tracks: (1) Data; (2) Environment; (3) Inclusion; (4) Trust.

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SECRETARIAT'S CORNER

WITSA Secretariat & Chairman's Highlight Report

In the last edition of WITSA News, we explored WITSA's relationship with the World Health Organization. This month, we take a look at WITSA's relationship with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). The ITU is the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies – ICTs. ITU members come from all over the globe. ITU's global membership includes 193 Member States as well as some 900 companies, universities, and international and regional organizations.

For a number of years WITSA, representing the global ICT industry, and the ITU, representing government telecom regulators, has had a primarily adversarial relationship. However, when WITSA signed an MOU with ITU's United Nations neighbor, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva in 2015, WITSA was invited to establish what would become a very strong partnership with the ITU. In addition to having a close relationship with the ITU's international development staff, Dr. Poisant has a very good working relationship with the Secretary General the ITU, Houlin Zhao.

As a result of the signing of an MOU with the ITU, Dr. Poisant was invited to speak at three ITU world conferences. Two were held in Budapest, Hungary and the third was held in Durban, South Africa.

In return, the ITU has participated in WITSA's World Congresses and is slated to participate in WCIT 2022, which will take place in Penang, Malaysia. Another significant outcome of the relationship between WITSA and the ITU is a mutual agreement to promote each other's events. This is critical to WITSA's marketing of our events.

Read the Full Report
Here



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