



**Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**  
**Side event on “ICTs as a tool for the empowerment of indigenous communities”**

20 April 2018  
1:15 - 2:45 pm

Amartya Sen Room (seats 45 persons)  
10th floor, FF Building, 304 East 45th Street, NY

CONCEPT NOTE

Agenda 2030 recognizes that the spread of information and communications technologies (ICTs) and global interconnectedness has great potential to accelerate human progress, to bridge the digital divide and to develop knowledge societies. Digital inclusion means ensuring the accessibility of ICTs for social and economic development, especially for people with specific needs, including indigenous peoples. Despite the increasing deployment of ICT networks, equipment, services and applications, many people, including many indigenous peoples, remain excluded from the information society and the digital economy.

However, ICTs can be a key tool for the empowerment of indigenous peoples. For example, ICTs can be used by indigenous communities to develop their own digital content, enhance civic engagement and participation in the information society, strengthen indigenous businesses and other entrepreneurial initiatives of indigenous communities, and develop and manage networks of indigenous radio through web tools. Moreover, capacity building programs can seek to use ICTs to promote, preserve and protect indigenous cultural development, languages, identities and traditional knowledge, develop indigenous technicians, as well as to develop digital and complementary skills to facilitate participation in the digital economy and contribute to development of indigenous communities based on tradition and self-sustainability. Digital inclusion, enabling universal, sustainable, ubiquitous and affordable access to ICTs for all, including indigenous peoples, can also deliver benefits like financial inclusion, education, health and improved livelihoods. (See also the World Telecommunication Development Conference RESOLUTION 46 (REV. BUENOS AIRES, 2017) on Assistance to indigenous peoples and communities through information and communication technology.

This side event will highlight some existing initiatives to enhance digital inclusion of indigenous peoples including to enhance access and capacity building/ skills for the empowerment of indigenous peoples and how such initiatives could possibly be replicated and/or scaled up to bridge the digital divide and support digital inclusion for indigenous communities.

The session is co-organized by the ITU and the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations.



*Panel*

Professor Ian Anderson, Deputy Secretary in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet,  
Australian Government

Ms. Mikaela Jade, CEO and Founder Indigital Pty Ltd

Ms. Amy Rosen, U.S. Country Managing Director and General Counsel of Telstra

Ms. Ursula Wynhoven, ITU Representative to the UN in New York (Moderator)