
**Open Letter
from the
Broadband Commission for Digital Development
to the
High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda
5 April 2013**

The [Broadband Commission for Digital Development](#)¹ wishes to address this Open Letter to the members of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

As the one-thousand day countdown to 2015 begins on 5 April 2013, we urge you to ensure that broadband features prominently in the post-2015 Development Agenda, as an important development accelerator and engine of progress.

There is today a sizeable body of empirical evidence suggesting that broadband networks, applications and services empower individuals, contribute to the free flow of information and ideas, as well as access to knowledge, enable countries to participate in the global digital economy and reduce poverty.

We call on the members of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda to recognize the power and promise of broadband applications and services to expand people's horizons and opportunities, enhance their freedom of expression and civic participation, better share their culture and hence foster understanding, enable people to engage freely in self-expression and the exchange of ideas, and sow the seeds of genuine learning, as well as quality education for all.

Broadband technologies can also help us make more effective and efficient use of the planet's existing resources to ensure sustainable development and combat climate change and the growing risks and vulnerabilities of the world's poorest people to natural disasters and external shocks.

¹ The Broadband Commission for Digital Development, launched in May 2010 by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), comprises government leaders from around the world along with top industry leaders and representatives of international agencies, and organizations concerned with development. The full list of Broadband Commissioners can be found at: www.broadbandcommission.org.

One of the major developments over the lifetime of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) since 2000 has been the explosion in access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Today, there are 6 billion mobile subscriptions, with 75% of the world's population having access to a mobile, in a market worth in excess of one trillion dollars. Beyond these impressive statistics, however, mobile continues to transform the lives of ordinary people and children by enabling them to make life-saving emergency calls, learn numeracy and literacy skills, consult news and weather services, source higher prices for their produce, and conduct business transactions. Broadband, including mobile broadband, is fundamental to ensure connectivity at sea and in the air, as well as on land in remote areas, and will also facilitate emergency and humanitarian communications, distance learning, and electronic commerce; and in public health matters, broadband will enhance remote diagnosis, the tracking of symptoms, and mapping epidemics and outbreaks of disease. Furthermore, broadband promotes increased opportunities for women and girls to participate in economic and social activities.

That is why, in particular, any set of measurable goals and targets agreed upon as part of the Post-2015 development agenda should explicitly include broadband.

To realize the full benefits of digital inclusion for all, disadvantaged citizens of the world must be able to participate in and enjoy the same opportunities as those who are today empowered by broadband communications technologies.

We respectfully ask the members of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda to ensure that the power of broadband networks and services can be fully harnessed in the evolving frameworks for sustainable development.

We express the willingness of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development to work with you to achieve our common goals.

[Original] Signed,

Chairs & Co-chairs

On behalf of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development