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### PLEASE CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT HOW YOU CAME TO JOIN ITU?

I first learned about ITU when I was studying Computer Engineering. The World Wide Web had just been born and Mosaic (the first graphical browser to become popular with the general public) supported only Latin characters and images. I became active in developing solutions to publish Amharic texts on the web — Amharic is the official language in Ethiopia and uses the Geez alphabet dating back to 100 BC. These open and free solutions later became widely used in online forums and helped promote local content in Amharic, contributing to the promotion of multilingualism on the Internet. At the time, ITU was striving to pioneer a multilingual website in support of Council meetings and Plenipotentiary Conferences and had also initiated a project on putting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights online in all languages with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. I had the privilege of joining the team working on these pioneering and noble initiatives.

### YOU HAVE GAINED AN MBA FROM EPFL, THE SWISS FEDERAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY IN LAUSANNE. PLEASE CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR MOTIVATIONS FOR STUDYING SUCH A TOUGH COURSE FROM SUCH A RENOWNED INSTITUTION, AND HAS IT HELPED YOU PRACTICALLY IN YOUR WORK? WHAT WAS THE HARDEST PART, AND WOULD YOU RECOMMEND STUDYING FOR AN IT OR BUSINESS QUALIFICATION TO OTHER COLLEAGUES?

I wanted to broaden my horizons and have a better understanding of the complex interactions within the technological, business, social, development and international environments. The curriculum focusing on Management of Technology is designed for technology-based organizations and targets well-experienced university graduates. It was essential to complement my engineering background and allowed me to practice multidisciplinary approaches much needed to manage the delivery of ICT services and products but also understand some global issues relevant to ITU's many different areas of action.

In my final paper on "[E-government in Africa](#)", I researched numerous sources and suggested that the development of e-government applications had a stimulating effect on the emergence of other e-applications with high socio-economic benefits (such as e-agriculture, e-commerce, e-education and e-health), and also identified major barriers to the success of e-government in Africa. The paper is still frequently quoted by researchers and practitioners.

I would recommend an MBA to colleagues with an IT or business background, engaged in encouraging entrepreneurship in local communities or developing new and innovative activities within ITU. Additionally, this programme offers opportunities to build a strong network of people with both technology and business competencies.

### PLEASE CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT SOME OF YOUR WORK IN THE INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF THE MOBILE APP FOR ITU'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY?

ITU is celebrating its 150th anniversary in the smartphone era. This celebration represents an opportunity to develop a mobile app as part of a comprehensive communications campaign to make ITU better known, better understood, and to attract new technological players, youth, academia and civil society in becoming partners and members of the Union. With this app, we tried a novel and innovative approach with a layer of gamification through a quiz related to the work of ITU. All ITU staff and membership are invited to [download the app](#) and learn more about ITU's many areas of actions, including historical facts.

Another example worth mentioning is ITU's Corporate Portal serving as the main gateway of information to staff and allowing our members to securely access live analytical reports on budget implementation and human resources, thereby increasing the Union's transparency. It was among [ITU Performance Awards recipients](#) and was [mentioned among numerous «Green» initiatives](#) that the United Nations is undertaking in «Greening the Blue» and move towards a Climate Neutral UN.

### HOW DO YOU PERSONALLY SEE SOME OF THE KEY TRENDS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET?

Personally, I believe that there are a number of key trends, which will have an overall positive impact on societies. Smartphones (and possibly smart wearables) tied with the Internet of Things (IoT) will allow people to benefit from artificial intelligence empowered by cloud-based big data. Ubiquitous connectivity of "everything" will transform lives, human interactions, health, education, jobs and politics. Low-cost mobile devices available worldwide via faster broadband, m-banking and educational tools will have an immense impact on literacy and empower citizens on all continents.

On the other hand, increasing abuse of personal data, organized cybercrime, mass surveillance, cyberespionage and new forms of divides will shape rising pressures to establish multi-stakeholder governance structures for the Internet that respect and promote fundamental rights of all citizens.

*"The best way to predict the future is to invent it"*, as some say. Through the ITU, I am convinced that we are humbly contributing to the positive trends that will shape an Internet offering a brighter future for our children. ■