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To Guide the Telecom Industry for Sustainable and Coordinated Development

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In order to face the new era of communications industry, our new English-version magazine, coined *China Communications*, is initiated, published and distributed to the whole world. ITU has concreted the theme of 2004 World Telecom Day, "Information Communications Technologies (ICTs): Leading the Way to Sustainable Development," which bears strong features of the times and reflects the active role of ICTs and informatization in the economic and social development, and in the commonly concerned sustainable socio-economic development.

China is striving to build a well-off society in an all-around manner. The vigorous development of ICTs, networks and services contributes to the enhancement of economic operation efficiency, the optimisation of the industry infrastructure and the reduction of energy and environment cost, therefore bearing a vital significance to the promotion of the all-round, coordinated and sustainable development for economic society.

Since reform and opening up, China's telecom industry and information industry have witnessed rapid development. By the end of 2003, the added value of information industry has come to 6% of China's GDP. The numbers of both wired and wireless subscribers have topped the world, with the penetration rate reaching 20.5% and 20.8% respectively. China has been the second largest in the globe in terms of total Internet users. Its network technology has reached the world level and a variety of new services have been flourishing. Substantial progresses have been made in the informatization in all sectors. The developments of both telecom industry and information industry have positively impacted the emergence of advanced productivity, dissemination of advanced cultures and improvement of people's life quality. Therefore, telecom and information industries have been becoming the crucial driving force shaping the socio-economic development in China.

On the other hand, it is noted that China's information industry lags far behind the developed countries in terms of the overall quality and the core competence. There are many deficiencies in serving the economic and social development of China. Therefore, we must build up and fulfill the scientific development concept and take practical measures to boost the coordinated development of the economy and society through the coordinated development of the information industry.

TO ACTIVELY AND PRATICALLY BUILD CHINA INTO A STRONG TELECOM NATION BASED ON COORDINATED DEVELOPMENTS

Confronted with the opportunities and challenges against new national and international situations

during the process of developing the telecom industry, China must pay equal attention to quality, efficiency, speed and scale, transform economic growth pattern, enhance core competitiveness, strive to build a bigger and stronger telecom industry, and march toward the goal of building a strong telecom nation. This is a historical transformation, is an arduous and progressive process, and requires the efforts of several generations. At present, to deal with the difficulties and the lack of coordination in the industry, we must speed up studies to formulate the 11th 5-Year Plan as soon as possible to guide, control, standardize, improve and promote the coordinated development of the industry with sound plans and policies.

TO BENEFIT MORE FOR THE PUBLIC FROM TELECOM DEVELOPMENT AND REFORM BASED ON HUMAN CENTRICITY

As part of the service industry, the telecom provides information and communication services for the public. We must bear the fundamental interest of the masses in mind no matter in terms of the industry planning, market regulations, business operations, or the interconnections. In accordance with this principle, we must take the interests of all sectors into consideration, continue the reform in tariff management in an active and stable way, and establish the market-based tariff mechanism so that the massive consumers can obtain concrete benefits from the development and reform of the telecom industry.

TO NARROW DOWN THE DIGITAL GAP BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS BASED ON RURAL COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENTS

The telecom industry is characterized by the service universality. Therefore, to solve rural, agricultural and farmer's problems, we must find out new ways of thinking, explore new mechanisms and develop new measures for the development of rural communications facing new situation in market competition. At present, the MII is working closely with related ministries and departments to set up a compensational mechanism for universal telecom services, accelerate the implementation of Project - "Phone to Every Village," innovate specific communication technologies satisfying the requirements of rural areas and take effective measures for active deployments. Meanwhile, the MII further strengthens planning and policy guidance to foster the communication markets in rural areas according to the development status of different areas,

to advance informatization in different environments of rural areas, and to balance the coordinated developments between urban and rural areas.

TO POSITIVELY GUIDE THE INNOVATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND SERVICES BASED ON THE MARKET-ORIENTED TREND

Considering the migration of global information and communications to the next generation network, the MII must strengthen the overall guidance through development planning and technology policies, and promote the healthy development of new technologies and services. In the interest of the whole country, and on the principle of overall planning, the MII must actively and practically push forward the development of the 3rd generation mobile communications. At present, the technical and network trials and the relevant policy studies for the 3rd generation mobile communications are under way.

TO DRIVE THE COORDINATED DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATIZATION ON BOTH ECONOMY AND SOCIETY BASED ON OVERALL PLANNING

While accelerating the informatization on economy, we must further promote the informatization on society for the balanced development in these two fields. The R&D organizations must positively develop a variety of advanced and suitable hardware and software products. The telecom corporations should take advantages of networks and services, work with other departments to create various public information services and fully explore the values of ICTs in administering public affairs and fighting disasters.

TO CREATE A FAIR, JUST, EFFECTIVE AND ORDERLY MARKET ENVIRONMENT FOR COMPETITION BASED ON TRANSFORMATION OF GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS

At present, the technology, market and competition environment of the telecom industry have been undergoing profound transformations. The ministries and departments must be adapted to new situations, adhere to law, and take legal, economic, administrative and technological means to turn our focus upon guiding, standardizing, regulating, and serving the telecom industry. We must further strengthen the market regulation and control, rectify

and specify the order of the telecom market. Particular efforts should be emphasized on the legislative work and a scenario shaping in which the government regulates the industry according to the laws, the enterprises run business according to the laws and the consumers safeguard their interests according to the laws.

Dear colleagues and friends, developing the information industry to push forward informatization needs collaborative efforts from all aspects at the same time. The telecom academia in China initiate the new English-version China Communications which is the critical ingredient of this endeavor. It is my strong belief that to have a very successful China Communications and to speed up the international academic exchange will positively impact the advancements of ICTs and the achievements from a big telecom nation into a strong one.

BIOGRAPHY

Mr. Wang Xudong is the incumbent minister of the Ministry of Information Industry (MII) and also of the Office of State Informatization Steering Committee of P. R. China. He is in charge of formulating ICT policy, implementing the relevant laws and regulations, coordinating efforts among different state departments and providing services, so as to achieve the strategic goal of "rejuvenating the electronic information industry, the communication industry and the software industry, and promoting the informatization of China's economy and social services."

Minister Wang studied in the specialty of system engineering and has been long involved in the R&D of electronic products. He assumed leadership positions in the municipal government of Tianjin, the ministries and departments of the central government, and Hebei Province successively. Since March 2003, he has hold Office in the Minister.