The side-event is aimed at making the world digital by default and will discuss the ways to accelerate universal connectivity, such as GIGA. The event will bring together various stakeholder groups, including startups and senior-level policy makers in charge of ICT in the GIGA champion countries, to exchange views and seek solutions on developing appropriate financing models for providing connectivity.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that digital technologies have become a tool that allows us to overcome global challenges. Being "digital by default" is the key to cope with the social and commercial disruption. In turn, "digital by default" only works when connectivity issues are addressed.

Launched in 2019 by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and International Telecommunication Union (ITU), GIGA aims to provide connectivity to every school in the world. Kazakhstan has joined the initiative as a regional leader in Central Asia. GIGA is consistent with Kazakhstan’s concept of digitalization, the country’s commitment to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and the key messages of the UN Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation.

In this context, the Government of Kazakhstan organizes a side-event as part of the 75th Session of the UN General Assembly, where we will discuss the importance of "digital by default" and how global and regional cooperation can support it.

Specifically, participants will discuss use of modern technologies and strategy for enhancing global dialogue with a focus on overcoming digital inequality.

The ministerial-level segment will discuss how to ensure safe, stable, accessible and inclusive communication in the context of the pandemic, and identify possible solutions and common approaches of various countries and stakeholders, with a view to further establish cooperation through joint initiatives and creating regional alliances.

Finally, leading startups from various countries around the world will present their solutions and innovative financial models for providing connectivity. International experts then will share their comments and recommendations for countries to strengthen digital cooperation and develop joint projects using the presented models.

The event is co-organized by UNICEF and ITU.

PROGRAMME

OPENING REMARKS
► Fabrizio Hochschild, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and Special Advisor on Preparations for the 75th UN Anniversary and the High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation

WELCOME SPEECH
► Askar Mamin, Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Remarks by ministers
► Bagdat Mussin, Minister of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan
► Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT & Innovation, Rwanda
► Dag-Inge Ulstein, Minister of International Development, Norway
► Ibrahima Guimba-Saidou, Minister of ICT, Director General of National Agency for the information society (ANSI), Niger

DISCUSSION
► Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau of the ITU, the Secretariat of ITU-D
► Dr. Didacus Jules, Director General of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
► Katherine Yip-Ribeiro, Co-Founder, Animoca
► Heather Johnson, Vice President for Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility, Ericsson Group
► Bill Tai, Co-Founder, Chairman of the Board, Treasure Data, Venture Capitalist
► Kavita Gupta, Blockchain, Fintech & Media Expert, Infrastructure and Technology Financing Expert