Geneva, Switzerland - The International Telecommunications Union, ITU, has urged both developed and developing countries to use information communications technology, ICT, as stimulus plans to fast-track economic growth and solve the world's biggest financial crisis.

This is the central theme that runs through wide-ranging debates at the ITU Telecom World Forum which started in Geneva on Monday. The five-day forum, which ended today, was held under the theme “Open Networks, Connected Minds” and brought together nearly 20 Heads of State and Government and top-level executives from the information and communication technology industry around the world. Namibia is represented by delegates from the Ministry of Information Communications Technology, The Namibian Communications Commission and Telecom Namibia.

There were more than 300 exhibitors from all over the world, showcasing their latest products and services, alongside national and regional pavilions. Topics discussed ranged from ICT for economic recovery and sustainable development, technology foresight, new regulatory models, cyber security to ICT and climate change.

The forum noted that while analysts were cautiously optimistic, it was likely that economic after-shocks would continue for some time as structural adjustments took place. Participants examined how policy makers could respond, and the role of ICT in governments’ economic stimulus plans.

“Should investment in broadband networks form an essential part of such plans,” asked ITU Secretary General Dr. Hamadoun Toure. “And what are the implications for developing countries and the digital divide? It is important to address these and other important issues as policy choices made now will determine how much nations benefit from next-generation technologies, NGN.”

Dr. Toure and six other dignitaries, who included UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Rwandan President Paul Kagame, Tanzanian Prime Minister, Mwinyi Pinda, and several ministers of information and communications technologies, called on a packed hall of government, business and youth leaders to collectively harness the power of ICT technology to find solutions to the world’s biggest challenge – the world financial crisis. Dr. Toure said that ICT had already made tremendous progress since ITU Telecom World Forum in 2003 in Geneva.

“Back then, we had just achieved the first billion mobile phone subscriptions. By the end of this year, we will have 4.5 billion. Enough. We want all 72 seats in Parliament to be occupied by the SWAPO Party,” said Comrade Namalenga.

He told the born-frees that it is their time to ensure that SWAPO Party wins the upcoming election with 100% votes for their future, adding that the future of the born-free is in their own hands and that

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