



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Gibraltar Hosts Commonwealth Telecommunications Conference**

The Ministry for Economic Development, Telecommunications and GSB is hosting the Commonwealth data forum, the first Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO) event to be held in Gibraltar, on 21st and 22nd February 2018, at the University. This is to be followed by a tourist and social programme on the 23rd for over 50 overseas delegates. The CTO, together with the Ministry of Economic Development Telecommunications and GSB, are bringing together some 40 Government and Intergovernmental agencies, non-governmental bodies and enterprises from the ICT and telecommunications sectors of 12 Commonwealth nations. The Conference will comprise of a wide cross section of nations representing Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Pacific Regions, and Europe including participation of overseas Ministers and the Secretary General of the CTO.

The conference theme is 'The Data Revolution: Maximising Opportunities and Managing Risks'. The Forum is to be opened by the Hon Sir Joe Bossano, Minister of Economic Development, Telecommunications and The GSB, who will emphasise the crucial role of telecommunications and data in the global economy, as well as the importance of Gibraltar's links with the Commonwealth.

Sir Joe commented: "This is an important occasion for Gibraltar to play its part in the CTO since we joined and contributed on the debate of the continuing data revolution, a force for progress in the ever changing world of communications."

Over the course of the Forum delegates will explore ways of monetising this growing data resource, as well as understand the complexities and legal obligations from holding data and ensuring that privacy and security remain at the top of the agenda. Experts from organisations such as the European Union Data Protection Supervisor, Facebook, the UK Information Commission and International Telecommunications Union will be presenting on the various topics, alongside local speakers which include the Gambling Commission, Gibraltar Regulatory Authority, Rockolo, Gibtelecom, Hassans and the Royal Gibraltar Police.

Minister Bossano added: "We are delighted to host such a meeting in Gibraltar comprising real expertise within communications. In addition, we are committed to participating in the CTO as well



as in other Commonwealth organisations. The Government thanks the sponsors: Gibtelecom, Rockolo, Ericsson, Cerillion and One Trust, as well as the many contributors from Commonwealth Governments and organisations, in addition to other bodies and enterprises, without whom, supporting this event would not have been possible. We are grateful to The University of Gibraltar for providing an excellent venue and facilities.

#### **Notes to Editor:**

The Ministry for Economic Development, Telecommunications and GSB was first involved with the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO) when Minister Bossano was invited to attend the ICT Minister's Forum in London in 2016 and identified that the CTO, which has over one hundred-years of history, catered only for companies, foreign countries and regulatory institutions. Initially Gibraltar, an Associate Member, was not recognised on a par with Commonwealth states governments but Minister Bossano made the case for Gibraltar to have an equal right to participate. This was subsequently accepted in principle and a draft constitution was prepared, allowing Associate Members to have full speaking, voting and participation rights in all constitutional bodies of the CTO on a par with a Full Member Countries.

The CTO is the oldest and largest Commonwealth intergovernmental organisation in the field of information and communication technologies (ICT). Being fully involved in the development and use of ICTS for social and economic development, the organisation recognises that it must stay at the cutting edge of ICT developments in order to deliver significant benefits to its members. The history of the CTO can be traced back to 1901, although the organisation has only existed in its present form as an intergovernmental treaty organisation since 1967. They support policymaking and regulatory bodies, specialised agencies and the private sector in understanding the challenges and opportunities new technologies bring and facilitate evidence-based decision-making. More info at [www.cto.int](http://www.cto.int).