

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927
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May 9, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to you today in support of the nomination of Doreen Bogdan-Martin to be Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) of the United Nations (UN). As the UN agency that specializes in spectrum management, telecommunications technical standards, and improving broadband access in communities across the globe, it is imperative that the ITU is led by someone with the experience, knowledge, and values exhibited by Ms. Bogdan-Martin. With Ms. Bogdan-Martin's election occurring at the upcoming ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference in September, we hope to work with you over the next few months to promote the historic nature of her candidacy, as Ms. Bogdan-Martin would be the first woman to lead the agency.

As Committee leaders, we know how important telecommunications and broadband connectivity are to our constituents and business communities. Furthermore, we recognize that the policies and standards governing the use and development of these technologies directly affect the lives of the American public.

Likewise, the global harmonization of spectrum usage plays an important part in the availability of broadband in our congressional districts, as well as throughout the telecommunications industry, and on our digital economy. In order to maintain our nation's technological leadership, it is critical that the individual leading the ITU recognizes the importance of an open, merit-based approach to global telecommunications policy.

Throughout her career, Ms. Bogdan-Martin has demonstrated her experience and leadership in global telecommunications policy. In her current role as Director of ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau, she has focused on closing the digital divide, school connectivity, and developing digital skills and cyber safety. Further, Ms. Bogdan-Martin has excelled in forming new partnerships between the ITU and the private sector, thereby bringing

more resources to the ITU's important development efforts. Her expertise and demonstrated skills make her an ideal candidate to lead the ITU as Secretary-General.

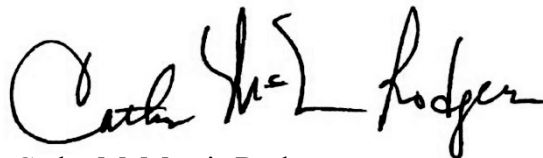
While it is without question that Ms. Bogdan-Martin's qualifications and experience make her the best candidate for Secretary-General, we note with great concern that the other candidate, Rashid Ismailov, has been nominated and supported by the Russian government. Mr. Ismailov is Russia's former Deputy Minister for Communications and Mass Media and a former Huawei executive. Russian citizenship in and of itself is not of concern, but former participation in the Putin regime is alarming. Russia's disregard for international law as evidenced by its unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and the country's continued support of cyber criminals, should make it clear to all ITU Member States that Russia's preferred candidate is unworthy of a position demanding international cooperation and consensus building. Further, his experience as a Huawei executive—a company determined by the U.S. government to have concerning ties to the Chinese government and to be a vector of espionage and network disruption—is also deeply troubling.¹

For all these reasons, and with Ms. Bogdan-Martin's fast-approaching election, we want to join you in support of her candidacy and urge your Administration to use every possible opportunity to discuss the importance of having Ms. Bogdan-Martin become the next Secretary-General of the ITU.

Sincerely,



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member



Mike Doyle
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications
and Technology



Robert E. Latta
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Communications
and Technology

¹ *Huawei: U.S. Congress Acted as 'Judge, Juror, and Executioner' With Ban On Our Products*, CNN (Mar. 7, 2019) (<https://www.cnn.com/2019/03/06/tech/huawei-suing-united-states/index.html>).

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cc: The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
Department of State

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary
Department of Commerce

The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel
Chairwoman
Federal Communications Commission