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INFORMATION ECONOMY REPORT **2015**

Unlocking the Potential of E-commerce for Developing Countries



UNITED NATIONS



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NOTE

Within the UNCTAD Division on Technology and Logistics, the ICT Analysis Section carries out policy-oriented analytical work on the development implications of information and communications technologies (ICTs). It is responsible for the preparation of the *Information Economy Report*. The ICT Analysis Section promotes international dialogue on issues related to ICTs for development, and contributes to building developing countries' capacities to measure the information economy and to design and implement relevant policies and legal frameworks.

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Countries with economies in transition: South-East Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States;

Developing economies: In general, all the economies that are not specified above. For statistical purposes, the data for China do not include those for Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Hong Kong, China), Macao Special Administrative Region (Macao, China) or Taiwan Province of China.

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A slash (/) between dates representing years, for example, 1994/95, indicates a financial year;

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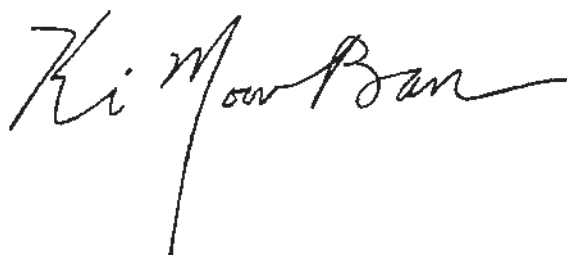
PREFACE

The 2015 edition of UNCTAD's *Information Economy Report* examines electronic commerce, and shows in detail how information and communications technologies can be harnessed to support economic growth and sustainable development.

Electronic commerce continues to grow both in volume and geographic reach, and is increasingly featured in the international development agenda, including in the World Summit on the Information Society outcome documents and in the outcome of the ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization.

The *Information Economy Report 2015* highlights how some of the greatest dynamism in electronic commerce can be found in developing countries, but that potential is far from fully realized. The report examines opportunities and challenges faced by enterprises in developing countries that wish to access and use e-commerce. It highlights the latest market trends, benchmarks country performances with the UNCTAD E-commerce Index, reviews examples of e-commerce in rural areas and low-income countries, addresses relevant legal issues and provides policy recommendations.

As the world looks ahead to implementing a new agenda for the next generation of our development work, I commend this report to all those seeking to help unlock the potential of e-commerce for developing countries.



BAN Ki-moon
Secretary-General
United Nations

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