

# International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

April 2, 2022

**In news–** Recently, India has secured a leadership position in the Council Standing Committee on Administration and Management of ITU as Ms Aprajita Sharrma, an Indian official, has been appointed as vice chairperson for the same.

## **About International Telecommunication Union (ITU)-**

- **ITU is the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication.**
- It was established on 17 May 1865 as the **International Telegraph Union**, making it the **oldest UN agency**.
- Its history contains a number of important 'firsts', such as the standardization of the use of the Morse code and the world's first radiocommunication and fixed telecommunication networks.
- **ITU's global membership includes 193 Member States as well as some 900 companies, universities, and international and regional organizations.** □
- Its headquarters is located in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- The ITU was initially aimed at helping connect telegraphic networks between countries, with its mandate consistently broadening with the advent of new communications technologies.
- It **adopted its current name in 1934** to reflect its expanded responsibilities over radio and the telephone.
- On 15 November 1947, the ITU entered into an agreement with the newly created United Nations to become a specialized agency within the UN system, which formally entered into force on 1 January 1949.
- The ITU is **governed by the Plenipotentiary Conference** and the Administrative Council.

- **The Plenipotentiary Conference is the supreme organ of the Union and is the decision making body** which determines the direction of the Union and its activities.
- **The Council, on the other hand, acts as the Union's governing body** in the interval between Plenipotentiary Conferences.
- Its role is to consider broad telecommunication policy issues to ensure that the Union's activities, policies and strategies fully respond to today's dynamic, rapidly changing telecommunications environment.

### **Its functions and contributions-**

- **It powers the mobile revolution, forging the technical standards** and policy frameworks that make mobile and broadband possible.
- It **coordinates the world's satellites through the management of spectrum and orbits**, bringing television, vehicle GPS navigation, maritime and aeronautical communications, weather information and online maps, and enabling communications in even the remotest parts of the planet.
- **It allocates global radio spectrum and satellite orbits, develops the technical standards** that ensure networks and technologies seamlessly interconnect, and strives to improve access to ICTs to underserved communities worldwide.
- **It helps support communications in the wake of disasters and emergencies** through on-the-ground assistance, dedicated emergency communications channels, technical standards for early warning systems, and practical help in rebuilding after a catastrophe.
- **It works with the industry to define the new technologies** that will support tomorrow's networks and services.