

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

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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.