WELCOME SPEECH

Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me to extend a sincere welcome to the India IT Show 2015, an international business networking event. This event, that brings together Policymakers, Government officials, Corporate Leaders and Academia Members from all over the world, is an excellent opportunity to discuss emerging issues on ICTs, exchange views on existing challenges and further development perspectives in a global technological market as well as to get acquainted with the latest ICT products and solutions.

I want to take this opportunity to inform you that ICT sector in Armenia has recorded significant progress in the recent decades. The Government of Armenia has acknowledged that the development of ICT is the key factor for increasing country competitiveness and productivity and to create a knowledge economy. Today ICT sector is one of the most developed sectors of Armenian economy, and Armenian Government, jointly with private sector, continues its efforts towards further development of this sector in Armenia. Armenian ICT sector doesn't miss out from the development trends of global economy, and our ICT companies continue providing modern, complete and complex solutions for global markets.

The availability of high-qualified ICT workforce in Armenia stimulated a number of multinational companies to open their branches in Armenia and actively cooperate with us in this sphere. Among them are such companies as Microsoft, VM Ware, Synopsys, Mentor Graphics, D-Link, IBM, Oracle, National Instruments etc. At the same time, we have several companies, such as Monitis Armenia, PicsArt, etc., which successfully present their solutions in global markets and involve large foreign investments.

In order to ensure the continuous development of the Armenian ICT sector, recently the National Parliament of the RA adopted a legislative package on state support of IT sector, which is aimed at promotion the formation of new start-up companies and creation of new jobs. According to this initiative, the tax privileges will be given to start-up companies for a certain period of time, particularly profit tax is defined 0% and income tax is defined 10% for startup companies.

Another important initiative of the Armenian Government was creation of 2 free economic zones. The "Alliance" free economic zone is oriented to the production and exports of high and innovative technologies in the field of electronics, precision engineering, pharmaceutics and biotechnologies, information technologies, alternative energy, industrial design and telecommunications. Our another free economic zone, the "MERIDIAN", is specialized in jewelry, stones cutting and watch making. The purpose of free economic zones is to stimulate exports,

create new jobs and promote sustainable economic development by attracting foreign direct investment and international companies.

In 2015 Armenia officially joined the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), which opens news great opportunities for our ICT companies as well as for their international partners to enter the huge EEU market.

Also I would like to announce, that in 2019 Armenia will host for the first time the World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT), The decision to hold WCIT 2019 in the capital of Armenia was adopted at WCIT-14, which was held in Mexico City.

At the same time, taking into consideration that India is the country where the chess was originated, I would like to mention that since 2012 the chess lessons have been made part of the curriculum in every public school in Armenia, and it contributes to the logic development of Armenian children which is very important for our future ICT specialists. Also, we organize the Global IT Award under the President of the Republic of Armenia, which annually honors an individual who has made extraordinary contributions to humanity through advancing the world of IT. The contributions may be in the technological, educational, organizational, or financial areas. The award highlights Armenia on the world IT map as a growing high-tech destination.

Talking about the achievements of Armenian ICT sector, I would also like to mention our effective cooperation with the Indian Government. The Memorandums of Understanding were signed between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Government of the Republic of India for cooperation in ICT field and for establishing the Armenian-Indian Centre for Excellence in Information and Communication Technologies. As a result of our mutual efforts, the Armenian-Indian Center for Excellence in ICT was succesfully founded in Yerevan, The Center provides a specialized infrastructure and high-performance facility for the delivery of advanced IT-related training and R&D programs that create new opportunities for the development of IT workforce skills in Armenia.

We would like to express our willingness to continue the mutual beneficial cooperation in ICT sphere with the Indian Government and implement new joint projects in the near future. The participation in ICT events organized as in India so in Armenia will also promote strengthening of our cooperation in ICT sector.

Let me once again congratulate all participants of IT Show 2015 and wish productive collaboration.

EMIL TARASYAN