

Welcome,

Ladies and gentleman,

I am delighted to welcome so many companies from the telecom and ICT sectors to the Hilton Hotel in The Hague. Co-hosting this seminar is a great honour and a fine opportunity to establish new contacts.

The Hague is connected to the world by the many international companies based in the city. Among these are creative and innovative technological companies in the telecom and mobile sector, such as KPN, Huawei and AT&T. The city boasts a powerhouse of businesses and industry, particularly in the ICT and Telecom sectors. Telecom providers play an important role in offering IPTV. Which is why we are here today.

The Telecom sector in The Hague accounts for 10,000 jobs. And among the top 10 companies providing employment in the city, three are ICT & Telecom enterprises.

In the Telecom sector, the transition from 'calling' to 'connectivity' is in full swing. Take the development of the smartphone and social networks like WhatsApp, Skype and Twitter, for example.

Today, with the rapid development of ICT, IPTV plays an important role in promoting the development and application of advanced technologies.

The capabilities of Connected TV have dramatically increased in the past few years. Operators can now connect the TV set directly to the IPTV platform. This produces significant cost savings for operators and makes it easier for user.

Harmonised international standards have not only accelerated the development of new TV services. They also enable operators to provide TV connection straight from their IPTV platforms.

IPTV has made new ways in connectivity!

The Hague's connectivity is characterised by a sophisticated fibre optic infrastructure, as well as the investment relating to creating the 'Next Generation Network'. This will enable higher bandwidth Internet connections.

The ICT infrastructure, including fibre, is not a world apart. It is the basis of our Smart City.

We are developing a programme related to the application of new technologies which can be used in social domains. The Hague is aiming to become a Smart City and our ambition is to be the smartest city in the Netherlands. A city with a first class digital infrastructure, which can be optimally deployed in health care, security and sustainability, for example.

The Hague is investing unreservedly in innovation. We promote innovative programmes, projects and potentially successful clusters. The Hague Security Delta is one such cluster which could become the largest European knowledge cluster in the field of security. One million euros has been allocated to trials which improve security by means of technical innovations. The tender process is now closed. 17 projects were submitted.

New investments, a highly educated and multilingual workforce, a healthy competitive climate, an existing cluster of industry leaders and the rise of specialised companies in niche technology markets are just some of the reasons for both ICT and Telecom enterprises to opt for The Hague. Add to this the presence of the Postal and Telecommunications Authority (OPTA), the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ), as well as the Netherlands Competition Authority (NMa) among others, and the scene is set for innovation and opportunity.

The favourable climate for these enterprises continues to attract new players, increasing innovation and offering opportunities for the future. This is also what the municipal council is aiming to achieve.

Innovation is chapter 1 of our coalition agreement and our number one priority. Furthermore, companies coming to the region have access to a large pool of skilled labour (Delft University of Technology and Hague University of Applied Sciences) and research institutes (TNO) in the field of ICT & Telecom.

The Hague is bursting with talent in the field of ICT. Knowledge organisations, government departments and businesses can and must work together in order to deliver optimal results.

This is the challenge I propose to you. And in which The Hague is happy to be your partner!