



The electronic version (PDF) of this article was scanned by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Library & Archives Service.

Journal Title: Telecommunication journal

Journal Issue: Vol. 40, no. 11(1973)

Article Title : The ITU Plenipotentiary Conference : inaugural meeting

Page number(s): pp. 687-692

union activities

The ITU Plenipotentiary Conference

THE Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), which is the tenth such meeting in the 108 years of the Union's existence, opened on Friday 14 September 1973 at the Palacio de Congresos in Torremolinos (Malaga, Spain).

Some 721 delegates, representing 143 countries, took part in its work.

Inaugural meeting

The inaugural meeting, which was held on the Friday evening, was honoured by the presence of the Prince of Spain, Don Juan Carlos.

● *Welcoming address*

In his welcoming address, Mr. León Herrera Esteban, Director-General of Posts and Telecommunications of Spain, said:

"No less than the radio and the telephone came into being between the two successive Plenipotentiary Conferences of St. Petersburg in 1875 and Madrid in 1932, though it must be admitted that this interval of 57 years was the longest in the history of the Union. However, an event much nearer to us in time is the advent of space telecommunications which between 1965, when they were in their infancy, and today, when earth stations for communication satellites are scattered all over the world, have reached an undreamed-of maturity.

In Malaga-Torremolinos, the conference will have to face many problems and to take note of important facts and situations that have entered the scene since its last meeting. But it must also face the future

and this is no easy task, since it will have to project itself into that era with sufficient imagination, albeit tempered with realism, to foresee what is to happen in the coming years and what its attitude should be towards the important events upon whose threshold we now stand, or perhaps are already crossing.

I believe that our veteran Union has amply proved its ability to keep up with the times. I am convinced that it will be able to retain this ability over the years to come, and I firmly believe that to the wisdom born of its more than a century-old experience should be added the impetus and creative energy of the many young countries that have so brilliantly acquired full sovereignty during these last decades and that have to offer, as indeed they are already offering, their very youth—and youth is always generous in both dreaming and giving—as a creative and life-giving essence worthy of respect and understanding on the road towards world integration that will enable humanity as a whole to benefit from what today is still within the reach of only a few.

Spain, which was one of the small group of founder countries of the International Telegraph Union in 1865, is gratified that

you have agreed to hold this meeting on its territory."

Thanking the delegates for his election to the Chairmanship, the Director-General of Telecommunications continued:

"You can be assured of my whole-hearted, conscious and unreserved devotion to this arduous task and you can rely upon my desire to fulfil this mission to the best of my ability. However, I would ask you to remember among other things that my experience in these matters is slight if, despite the best of intentions, I make mistakes in the performance of my duties which you will not fail to notice.

May I crave your understanding and assistance. I believe that the amazing worldwide orchestra of the ITU, which is to meet for so many days in this room, will play its important score with a universal feeling for harmony and with no flat or discordant notes. Your experience and wisdom are such that whatever mistakes are made by the Chair—and they will be not a few—you will interpret them indulgently, and I am confident that, with or despite the conductor, we will produce an extraordinary, harmonious and magnificent concerto.

May this be so. Thank you very much."

union activities



View of the inaugural meeting

(ITU)



(ITU)

Mr León Herrera Esteban, Chairman of the Plenipotentiary Conference, addressing the inaugural meeting. On his left, the Prince of Spain; on his right, Mr M. Mili, Secretary-General of the ITU

● Address by the Secretary-General

Mr. M. Mili, Secretary-General of the ITU, the text of whose address is given in the editorial (see page 680), then took the floor.

● Address by the Minister of the Interior

The Spanish Minister of the Interior, Mr. C. Arias Navarro, recalling that one of the nine previous Plenipotentiary Con-

ferences of the Union had been held in Spain (Madrid), declared:

“ Already in 1932 the Madrid Conference foresaw a “ world beyond ” which made it necessary to coin the new word which there received its solemn consecration: telecommunication. This word was invented by the French Academician Mr. E. Estaunié, and the *Journal télégraphique*

itself gave full force to its significance. ‘ Telecommunication,’ said the Journal, ‘ newly created in Madrid by the amalgamation of the Telegraph and Radiotelegraph Conventions covers every procedure for the transmission of thought over distances and it is now one and indivisible.’

It gives us, as Spaniards, enormous satisfaction to note the presence at this meeting of two distinguished officials who, in the capacity of plenipotentiaries, formed part of the Spanish delegation to the 1932 Conference, 41 years ago. I refer to the telecommunication engineer Dr. Don Luis Cáceres García who was for many years Director of the National Telecommunication Company and to Don José Garrido Moreno, a member of the Administrative Council of ITU, who will be remembered by many as the doyen of the Union’s Centenary Conference. Both have already retired from their active working life in the service of our common ideals but I am sure that I speak for all of you in wishing them many further years of life and personal happiness.

The decade which began with the Montreux Conference has probably been the one in which the most spectacular progress has been made in telecommunications and, without a shadow of doubt, in space telecommunications. To give but one example, let me recall the unforgettable pictures of man’s first steps on the moon which, thanks to space television, were seen in live broadcast all over world.

The World Administrative Radio Conference for Space Telecommunications, which met in Geneva in 1971, discussed a whole range of problems dealing with such important topics as the orbital position of geostationary satellites and direct sound and television broadcasting from satellites. These subjects give rise to legal problems which are by no means easy to solve and it is clear that some of them will have to be discussed at the present conference at Malaga-Torremolinos.

It is, I think, a good omen that the Conference of Malaga-Torremolinos is being held in the year in which the theme chosen for World Telecommunication Day is ‘ International Co-operation through Telecommunications ’, which can do so much to improve relations between peoples in the five continents.

With the recent accession of Bangladesh our Union now has 146 Members. This constitutes a degree of representation

never before attained in intergovernmental relations and it gives the Union a genuinely universal and œcumenical character in the vast field for which it is responsible.

As Minister for the department which in Spain includes the postal and telecommunications services, allow me, on behalf of the Government, to extend to you a warm welcome and express our gratitude for having accepted our country a second time as seat of the Plenipotentiary Conference. I can assure you that our Administration will spare no effort to see that its important task is performed in the best conditions and that, when you return home, you will take back with you happy memories of your stay with us. To ensure this, Spain is offering, with its hospitality and spirit of peace, the setting of one of its most favoured tourist areas.

In conclusion, Sir, may I express to Your Royal Highness our gratitude for the honour you have done us in presiding over this inauguration ceremony. I do so in the hope that—as in Madrid almost half a century ago—the name of Malaga-Torremolinos will mark a brilliant moment in the history of the International Telecommunication Union.”

The Prince of Spain concluded this opening session by saying:

“ Before declaring this Conference open, I should like to extend a very cordial greeting to all the delegations participating in it and to wish them a very pleasant stay in Spain.

I am sure that the work you are about to accomplish will be extremely valuable because telecommunications, which are of such crucial importance in the world today, must become an instrument of understanding in the service of humanity so that we may arrive at that genuine harmony which we all desire.

In this spirit and in the firm conviction that you will strive to the utmost to attain this end, I hereby declare, in the name of His Excellency, the Spanish Head of State, that this Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union at Malaga-Torremolinos is duly opened.”

First Plenary Meeting

• *Elections of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairmen of the Conference*

In the morning, at its first Plenary Meeting, the Conference had elected as Chairman Mr. León Herrera Esteban, Director-

The Telecommunications Anthem, as arranged for orchestra and choir, was performed for first time at the Opening Ceremony of the Plenipotentiary Conference.

The Anthem, performed by the Malaga Symphony Orchestra and the Choir of Santa Maria de la Victoria conducted by Perfecto Artola Prat, was broadcast over a number of broadcasting stations.

Music by Jean-Pierre Canel; orchestration by Joe Stupin; original French words by Vladimir Redalié; Spanish words by José María Ramos.



(ITU)

The ITU Anthem performed by the Malaga Symphony Orchestra and Santa Maria de la Victoria Choir, conducted by Perfecto Artola Prat

General of Posts and Telecommunications of Spain, and, as Vice-Chairmen:

- for Western Europe:
Mr. B. Bjurel (Sweden)
- for Eastern Europe:
Mr. Vassilii Chamchine (USSR) and Mr. Manfred Calov (German Democratic Republic)
- for Africa:
Mr. Taofiqui Bouraïma (Dahomey) and Mr. J. S. Tarka (Nigeria)
- for the Americas:
Mr. Jacob D. Beam (United States) and Mr. Hygino Caetano Corsetti (Brazil)
- for Asia:
Mr. Cheng-ching Liu (China) and Mr. Yasuo Makino (Japan).

• *Structure of the Committees*

The delegates then elected the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Committees set up to facilitate the work of the Conference:

Committee 1 (Steering Committee)

The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Conference, and the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees

Committee 2 (Credentials)

Chairman:
Mr. Francisco F. Duarte (Paraguay)

Vice-Chairman:
Mr. Emmanuel Egbe Tabi (Cameroon)

Committee 3 (Budget Control)

Chairman:
Mr. M. K. Basu (India)

Vice-Chairman:
Mr. Clinton A. Woodstock (Jamaica)

Committee 4 (Finances of the Union)

Chairman:
Mr. Rudolf Rüttschi (Switzerland)

union activities

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. Ahmed
(Pakistan)

Committee 5 (Staff Matters)

Chairman:

Mr. Gérard F. Perrin
(Canada)

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. Ahmed Zaidan
(Saudi Arabia)

Committee 6 (Technical Co-operation and relations with the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other international organizations)

Chairman:

Mr. Mohamed Benabdellah
(Morocco)

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. Ladislav Dvořáček
(Czechoslovakia)

Committee 7 (Structure of the Union)

Chairman:

Mr. Evan Sawkins
(Australia)

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. László Katona Kis
(Hungarian People's Republic)

Committee 8 (Purposes, Composition, Rights and Obligations, and General Legislative Provisions)

Chairman:

Mr. Gabriel Tedros
(Ethiopia)

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. José J. Hernández G.
(Mexico)

Committee 9 (Editorial Committee)

Chairman:

Mr. Albert Chassignol
(France)

Vice-Chairmen:

Mr. Harold A. Daniels
(United Kingdom)

Mr. José María Arto Madrazo
(Spain)

• Messages for the success of the work of the Conference

Messages for the success of the work of the Conference from Mr. Kurt Waldheim, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and from Mr. Richard Nixon, President of the United States, were read out.

The Republic of South Africa and Portugal excluded from the Conference

The decision to exclude the Republic of South Africa and Portugal was adopted on the evening of 26 September after a full

day's discussion of the two resolutions submitted by the following African countries: Algeria, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Dahomey, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Upper Volta, Zaire and Zambia.

The first resolution, adopted by 77 votes to 39, with 10 abstentions, reads:

“ The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Malaga-Torremolinos, 1973),

recalling

1. the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

2. Resolution No. 45 of the Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Montreux, 1965) relating to the exclusion of the Republic of South Africa;

3. Resolution 2145 (XXI), 27 October 1966, of the United Nations General Assembly on the question of Namibia;

4. Resolution 2396 (XXIII), 2 December 1968, of the United Nations General Assembly on the apartheid policy of the Government of the Republic of South Africa;

5. Resolution 2426 (XXIII), 18 December 1968, of the United Nations General Assembly calling on all specialized agencies and all international institutions to take the necessary steps to cease all financial, economic, technical or other assistance to the Government of the Republic of South Africa until it renounces its policy of racial discrimination;

6. Resolution No. 6 of the World Administrative Telegraph and Telephone Conference (Geneva, 1973);

confirms

the provisions of Resolution No. 619 of the Administrative Council of the International Telecommunication Union declaring that the Government of the Republic of South Africa no longer has the right to represent Namibia within the Union;

resolves

that the Government of the Republic of South Africa shall be excluded from the Plenipotentiary Conference and from any other conferences or meetings of the International Telecommunication Union.”

The second resolution, adopted by 73 votes to 42, with 11 abstentions, reads:

“ The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Malaga-Torremolinos, 1973),

recalling

1. the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

2. the Declaration of the United Nations General Assembly on 14 December 1960 on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples, which states: ‘ subjecting peoples to foreign subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of the fundamental human rights, is contrary to the United Nations Charter and jeopardizes the cause of peace and world co-operation ’;

considering

1. the obstinate refusal of Portugal to give heed to the request made by the Plenipotentiary Conference (Montreux, 1965) in its Resolution No. 46;

2. the scale of the atrocities committed in conducting the colonial war and the suffering thus caused in defiance of human rights;

3. the recent massacre of the people of Mozambique and the disgusting assassinations of African leaders, including Amílcar Cabral;

condemns

without appeal the colonial racist policy of Portugal;

denies

Portugal the right to represent the African territories at present under its domination;

resolves

that the Government of Portugal shall be excluded from the Plenipotentiary Conference and from all other conferences and meetings of the Union.”

Election of the Secretary-General

On 28 September, by 104 votes out of a total of 129 votes cast, Mr. M. Mili (Tunisia) Secretary-General of the ITU, was elected for a further term of office.

Thanking the delegates for the confidence shown in him, Mr. Mili said:

“ Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Forgive me if the emotion I feel at this solemn moment prevents my finding the right words to express my profound gratitude to you for the confidence you have just shown in me and which I value so much.

I am particularly touched by the fact that this confidence has been confirmed after eight years of hard work often performed in the most difficult conditions.

However, thanks to your support and encouragement and to the warm friendship with which you have always honoured me, I shall endeavour to serve the ITU with the same enthusiasm, like devotion and equal dynamism as inspired my activities during the past eight years.

Mr. Chairman,

I blush at the laudatory terms in which you have just spoken of me. I really cannot believe that I deserve all that. Allow me to thank you with all my heart.

In truth, what I like so much about the International Telecommunication Union is the spirit of international co-operation that pervades it and the striving towards international understanding by all delegations to be observed on all occasions. For at all ITU conferences and meetings, do we not seek to do everything in our power to reach a consensus acceptable to all, whatever the importance of the subject under discussion and whatever the difficulties encountered?

Indeed, here, in this beautiful Palacio de Congresos, you have already set a good example by taking some very important decisions unanimously and by acclamation.

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

After my election at Montreux in 1965 I made a short statement in which I referred precisely to these fundamental characteristics of the ITU. With your permission, and apologizing in advance, I should now like to recall my words in identical circumstances eight years ago:

'It is this search for unanimity in solving problems which are liable to provoke cleavages with equally harmful consequences for both sides—it is this search for unanimity, as I say, that has enabled our Union constantly to rejuvenate itself as it grows older.

This spirit of international co-operation, this atmosphere of mutual understanding, have won my decisive allegiance to the ITU and are for me ample reasons for devoting oneself to its service without any reservations.

You who know me are aware of how strongly I uphold the principle of international co-operation; and it has surely been reiterated often enough in this Assembly and elsewhere that the basic characteristic of the International Telecommunication Union is precisely that of

strengthening co-operation among all the peoples of the world.

Accordingly, to place myself at the service of the ITU is for me the best means of serving an ideal which is very dear to me. I can therefore solemnly assure you that I shall devote all my efforts to the service of this noble cause.'



(ITU)

28 September 1973, election of the Secretary-General: vote by Japan

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, at Torremolinos, after eight years packed with events which can be called historic, years of upheavals of every kind, I have nothing to add to what I said then at Montreux.

I will, however, proclaim my firm conviction that the Plenipotentiary Conference of Malaga-Torremolinos will preserve and strengthen this international co-operation which is so valuable and so beneficial for the Union, just as your predecessor plenipotentiaries did at Montreux in 1965, Atlantic City in 1947, Madrid in 1932 and Paris in 1865."

Mr. Mili was born in Djemmal, Tunisia, on 4 December 1917. A former student of the *Ecole Normale Supérieure* of Saint-Cloud and of the *Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Télécommunications* of Paris, he qualified as a telecommunications engineer in 1946 and joined the Tunisian PTT Administration in 1948.

In 1957 he was promoted to the rank of Chief Engineer and took up duty as Director-General of Telecommunications at the Ministry of PTT, in which capacity he directed the modernization and renewal of the Tunisian telephone network, in particular by the introduction of the automatic crossbar-type system.

He had, since 1956, led the Tunisian delegation at nearly all major conferences of the ITU: Plenipotentiary Conferences (1959 and 1965), Plenary Assemblies of the CCITT (1958, 1960, 1964) and of the CCIR (1963). He also took part in the work of several study groups, among them, CCITT Study Groups XI (Telephone switching and signalling), XIII (Automatic and semi-automatic telephone networks), and Special B (World-wide automatic and semi-automatic telephone network) and CCIR Study Groups IV (Space systems and radioastronomy) and IX (Radio-relay systems).

He has taken an active part in the work of the World Plan Committee which is responsible for planning the world telecommunication network. In 1961 he was elected Vice-Chairman of the Plan Committee for Africa and became its Chairman in 1964.

From 1960 to 1965, Mr. Mili represented Tunisia on the ITU Administrative Council and was elected Chairman of the 19th Session in 1964. In 1965 he was elected Deputy Secretary-General of the ITU and took up the duties of Secretary-General in 1967.

Election of the Deputy Secretary-General

On 1st October, by 78 votes out of a total of 129 votes cast, Mr. R. E. Butler (Australia), Deputy Secretary-General of the ITU, was elected for a further term of office.

Mr. Butler took the floor to thank the delegates for the confidence thus shown in him and said:

"Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to express my profound appreciation for the vote of confidence that you have shown this morning on completing the re-election of the team formed by Mr. Mili and me, to continue at the head of the General Secretariat of the International Telecommunication Union for the next few years.

For me, the election which has just been concluded this morning is of special significance.

When I was elected in 1968 by the Administrative Council, after the death of my friend Dr. Sarwate, I was in Melbourne,

union activities / technical co-operation

not very near to Geneva. As a matter of fact, owing to the difference in time, I was at home with my wife and family. As a result, I did not have the opportunity to express my gratitude directly to all Members.

Today, however, it is different, even though my wife is here with me.

You, Plenipotentiaries of the ITU, have seen fit to elect me. I thank you most warmly for the vote of confidence that you have given me for my contribution to the Union and for the confidence you have shown in my people and in the government of my native country.

My re-election having been confirmed, I can assure you that I will continue to work actively and energetically for the fulfilment of the purposes of the Union and for the cause of internationalism, including of course the implementation of the general policy decisions you will make here in Malaga-Torremolinos.

I wish to offer my best wishes to my friend and colleague of long standing in the ITU, Mr. Baczko, and his Administration. I should like to assure him that my particular esteem for him will not diminish and I know very well that our relations will become even more friendly in the future.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I wish to thank you for the kind words you have spoken as Chairman of this important Plenipotentiary Conference which is being held in such beautiful surroundings of your great country, Spain; this will be a memorable conference for me, even though at this moment, under the stress of my emotion, I cannot give full expression to my feelings. I know that you, with the generosity that all Spaniards have, will appreciate the special moment I am experiencing. Many thanks to all."

Mr. Richard E. Butler, born in Australia on 25 March 1926, was first elected to the post of Deputy Secretary-General on 27 May 1968 while he was serving as Deputy Assistant Director-General of the Australian Post Office.

At the Post Office Mr. Butler was also adviser for international relations, planning, investments and intergovernmental projects in telecommunications as well as for the national services, including sound broadcasting and television. He took part in many Union conferences and in international negotiations connected with the conclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements, particularly with regard to space, radiocommunications and submarine cables.