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# Union Activities

## The Plenipotentiary Conference

**T**he 13th Plenipotentiary Conference of the ITU, which met from 23 May to 30 June 1989 at the Nice Acropolis in France, closed with the signature of the new Constitution and the new Convention of the Union.

The Conference was attended by more than 1000 delegates from 143 countries of the ITU's 166 Members and by observers from international and regional organizations.

The Plenipotentiary Conference, which is the ITU's supreme organ, adopted a Constitution and a Convention to supersede the International Telecommunication Convention which was adopted at Nairobi in 1982. The Chairman of the Conference was Mr J. Grenier, Director of the Directorate of Industrial and International Affairs of the French Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Space with Messrs T. Marshall (United States), A. Ituassu (Brazil), C. Lemos Simmonds (Colombia), H. Venhaus (Fed. Rep. of Germany), P. Muscat (Malta), Y. B. Zoubarev (USSR), A. Popov (Bulgaria), J. Tomaszewski (Poland), R. Sagna (Senegal), A. Wolde Amanuel (Ethiopia), D. A. Mark (Nigeria), Son Zhiyuan (China), F. A. Zaidan (Saudi Arabia) and S. M. Gharazi (Islamic Republic of Iran) as Vice-Chairmen.

### Administrative Council

The Conference decided that the number of seats on the Administrative Council should be increased from 41 to 43 and that the new Council should take office immediately.

There are now two additional Members: one for the Africa region and the other for the Asia and Australasia region. The increase was decided in order to secure more equitable geographical distribution in the Council's decision-making process, having regard to the fact that the number of Member countries from these

regions had increased since 1982, the year in which the previous Council was elected.

The results of the elections to the Administrative Council were reported in the August issue of the "Journal".

The new Council held its first session on 30 June and elected Messrs A. P. Djitawampu (Indonesia), Chairman and J. Jira (Czechoslovakia), Vice-Chairman.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council will remain in office until the 1991 session of the Council.

At its meeting, the Council considered the provisional agenda for its Extraordinary Session, which is to be held in Geneva from 6 to 10 November 1989, and it adopted the budget for 1990.

The Council's task at the Extraordinary Session will be to establish the Committee responsible for reviewing the structure and functioning of the Union. It will also have to define precise procedures for the tasks required, including general guidelines to the Committee on its activities.

### Elected officials\*

Mr P. J. Tarjanne (Finland) was elected Secretary-General replacing Mr R. E. Butler (Australia), who did not stand for re-election. Mr J. Jipguep (Cameroon) was re-elected Deputy Secretary-General.

The following candidates were elected or re-elected members of the International Frequency Registration Board (IFRB):

Mr G. C. Brooks (Canada), re-elected

Mr W. H. Bellchambers (United Kingdom), re-elected

Mr V. Kozlov (USSR), re-elected

Mr M. Harbi (Algeria), elected, the outgoing member being Mr A. Berrada (Morocco)

Mr M. Miura (Japan), elected, the outgoing member being Mr Y. Kurihara (Japan).

The Directors of the CCIR—Mr R. C. Kirby, United States—and CCITT—Mr T. Irmer, Fed. Rep. of Germany—were re-elected.

All the elected officials will take office on 1 November 1989.

### Reform of the Union

The Plenipotentiary Conference recognized the need to adapt the Union's structure, management practices and working methods to the changes in the world of telecommunications and to the increasing demands placed upon it by the accelerating progress in telecommunications, but it considered that any hasty action to introduce fundamental changes in the ITU could have serious repercussions on the Union's future and on world telecommunication development. It therefore decided not to carry out structural reforms in Nice, but to entrust a high level Committee with the task of reviewing the structure and functioning of the Union in order to recommend measures to ensure greater cost-effectiveness of all ITU organs and activities. A future Plenipotentiary Confer-

\* See the *Telecommunication Journal* of July, page 417, and August 1989, page 490.

ence will have the task of implementing all or part of the Recommendations.

This study will involve a comprehensive review of the Union's structure, its working methods and its finances for all its permanent organs, whether existing or proposed. It will have no set aim, its only purpose being to make the ITU as efficient as possible in the performance of its duties. It will be carried out by a Committee composed of 15 to 20 Member countries, with due regard to equitable geographical representation. Each country will designate representatives enjoying the highest reputation in international telecommunications and having broad ITU experience. These experts may be assisted, if necessary, by outside consultants selected by the Administrative Council within the limits of the budget agreed for this purpose.

The mandate of the Committee adopted by the Conference is as follows:

- To carry out an in-depth review of the structure and functioning of the Union, in order to study and recommend, as necessary, measures to ensure greater cost-effectiveness within and between all ITU organs and activities by improving the conditions relating to structure, organization, finance, staff, procedures and co-ordination in order to:

1. identify and analyse options for the structure of the permanent organs of the Union;

2. include study of the internal management of the permanent organs including organizational, financial and staffing aspects and arrive at conclusions relating to:

- the most effective organization of the growing volume of work in the various organs of the ITU,
- cost-effective and harmonized working procedures in and between the individual organs,
- staff requirements in the medium term (three to five years) taking

account of the projects and activities of the Union,

- the establishment of improved financial management and control processes suitable to the needs of the Union and intended to improve financial transparency and accountability;

3. include a study of a method of co-operation between the permanent organs including the role of the Co-ordination Committee with a view to ensuring greater harmonization of the activities of these organs.

- To examine the functioning of the non-permanent organs of the Union in order to improve efficiency and management; study the question of the rotation of Members of the Administrative Council.

- To provide for interim reports and a final report showing clearly the advantages and disadvantages of any alternative proposals.

Some of the reforms in working methods can be implemented by the CCI Plenary Assemblies and the Administrative Council within the limits of their competence, but fundamental changes going beyond the competence of the Plenary Assemblies and the Council will be submitted to a future Plenipotentiary Conference.

The next Plenipotentiary Conference will implement all or part of the Recommendations which concern it. Depending on a decision to be adopted by the ITU Administrative Council in 1991, it will be held either in Japan in 1994, or earlier, after 1992, if necessary.

Transitional provisions were included in the Nice Constitution, firstly so as to enable an Extraordinary Conference to be held to review the conclusions in the Committee's report and take the relevant decisions, and secondly to ensure that the results of the elections held in Nice that were not affected by any structural reforms decided on by the extraor-

dinary Conference were not called in question.

### Technical co-operation

The Nice Conference decided to set up a new permanent organ—the Telecommunications Development Bureau (BDT)—within the ITU's federal structure, with the same status and level as the other permanent organs (General Secretariat, CCIR, CCITT and IFRB).

The progressive establishment of the BDT, the nucleus of which will consist of the staff and facilities of the present Technical Cooperation Department, will begin immediately after the Nice Conference. Until the Director of the Bureau is elected by the next Plenipotentiary Conference (Ordinary or Extraordinary), it will be under the direct responsibility of the Secretary-General.

The functions of the BDT will be to discharge the Union's dual role as the United Nations specialized agency for telecommunications and as executing agency for the implementation of projects of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Bureau will also be able to make other funding arrangements so as to facilitate and enhance telecommunication development by offering, organizing and co-ordinating technical co-operation and assistance activities.

The Bureau's mandate is as follows:

- a) to raise the level of awareness of decision-makers concerning the important role of telecommunications in the national socio-economic development programme, and to provide information and advice on possible policy options;

- b) to promote the development, expansion and operation of telecommunication networks and services, particularly in developing countries, taking into account the activities of other relevant bodies, specifically by reinforcing related capabilities for human resources development, planning, management,

resource mobilization, and research and development;

c) to enhance the growth of telecommunications through co-operation with regional telecommunication organizations and with global and regional development financing institutions;

d) to encourage participation by industry in telecommunication development in developing countries, and to offer advice on the choice and transfer of appropriate technology;

e) to offer advice, carry out or sponsor studies, as necessary, on technical, economic, financial, managerial, regulatory and policy issues, including specific projects in the field of telecommunications;

f) to collaborate with the CCIs and other concerned bodies in developing a general plan for international and regional telecommunication networks so as to facilitate the co-ordination of their respective development with a view to the provision of telecommunication services;

g) to provide support in preparing for and organizing development conferences.

The BDT will work through the medium of world and regional development Conferences and will be headed by a Director elected by the next Plenipotentiary Conference.

The additional resources for technical co-operation will also be used to strengthen:

- the Group of Engineers and the regional presence of the ITU in its role as adviser on network improvement and extension, identification of requirements, and co-ordination and promotion of the activities of all parties concerned in network development, including the private sector;
- training;
- promotion of technical co-operation between developing countries;
- assistance to the least developed countries;
- organization of world and regional development conferences, one for each region and one world conference in the interval between two Plenipotentiary Conferences.

The establishment of the BDT will enable the ITU to fulfil its role as a

specialized agency in the United Nations system (activities centred essentially on identification of requirements, representing about 75% of all technical co-operation activities) as opposed to its activities as an executing agency for the UNDP (implementation of projects financed by UNDP representing about 25% of all technical co-operation activities).

Hitherto no distinction has been made between these two functions which have been performed by the ITU Technical Cooperation Department and financed exclusively out of UNDP support costs, which has led to annual deficits.

It was decided that the Centre for Telecommunications Development (CTD), which has separate terms of reference and is financed from voluntary contributions, should retain its autonomy in relation to the new development organ for a period of at least two years, it being left to the Administrative Council, which set up the Centre and gave it its terms of reference, to decide on its future.

The initial budget of the BDT will be 15 million Swiss francs (CHF) for 1990, rising gradually to 22.5 million in 1994, a very substantial increase over the 6 million available to the Department in recent years.

#### Future Conferences of the Union

Seven Conferences have been programmed by the Nice Conference for the period 1989-1995:

- the Second Session of the Regional Administrative Conference for the planning of VHF/UHF television broadcasting in the African broadcasting area and neighbouring countries - AFBC(2) (Geneva, 13 November - 8 December 1989) and a two-day Regional Administrative Conference to abrogate the regional agreement for the African broadcasting area (Geneva, 1963) (Geneva, 4-5 December 1989);



*The Nice Plenipotentiary Conference. From left to right: Messrs R. E. Butler, ITU Secretary-General; J. Grenier, Chairman of the Conference; Dr P. J. Tarjanne, ITU newly elected Secretary-General*

- an extraordinary Plenipotentiary Conference (Geneva, two weeks) depending on the decision taken by the Administrative Council at its 1991 session;
- a World Administrative Radio Conference on frequency allocations in certain bands: 2-30 MHz for additional allocations to the broadcasting service; 0.50-3.0 GHz for allocations to the land-mobile, mobile-satellite, direct broadcasting satellite, space research and space operation services; and 11.7-23.0 GHz for allocations to the high-definition television broadcasting-satellite service (Spain, 1992, four weeks and two days);
- a World Administrative Radio Conference on matters related to the HF broadcasting service (Geneva, 1993, four weeks);
- a Regional Administrative Radio Conference to establish criteria for shared use of the VHF and UHF bands allocated to the mobile service, the broadcasting service and the fixed service and, if necessary, to plan the broadcasting service in all or part of Region 3 and the countries concerned in Region 1, to be decided by the Administrative Council after consulting the Members concerned;
- an Ordinary Plenipotentiary Conference (Japan, 1994, five weeks), to be confirmed by the Administrative Council in 1991.

#### Union finances

The Conference adopted budget ceilings for the years 1990-1994, amounting to a total of 600 million CHF for the five years. All other things being equal, these ceilings represent a decline in the Union's funding in real terms.

On the question of ITU finances, the Plenipotentiary Conference added four new contribution classes of 28, 23, 18 and 1/16 units, the classes of 1/8 and 1/16 units being however reserved for the

least developed countries as identified by the United Nations and for any other country designated by the Administrative Council.

Every Member is free to choose the class of contribution used to calculate its contribution to the Union budget. The contribution classes represent the relative value of the share contributed by each Member; they are "converted" into Swiss francs when each annual budget is adopted by the Administrative Council, on the basis of the total number of units pledged and the size of the budget. Each Member will have to inform the Secretary-General of the ITU within six months of the class of contribution chosen and applicable until the next Plenipotentiary Conference.

#### Entry into force of the Constitution and the Convention

The Nice Constitution and Convention will enter into force 30 days after the deposit of 55 instruments of ratification/acceptance/approval/accession with the General Secretariat of the Union. It should be noted that the Conference also approved the principle of simultaneous ratification of the Constitution and the Convention by any Signatory in accordance with its existing constitutional rules in the form of a *single instrument*. Thus the ITU will continue to live by the Nairobi Convention until 55 instruments have been received. Of the decisions adopted at Nice, only those contained in Resolutions allowing them to be implemented before the entry into force of the Constitution and Convention will be immediately effective.

#### Next Plenipotentiary Conference

The next Plenipotentiary Conference will be held in Japan at the invitation of the Japanese Government. It is scheduled for 1994. However, the Conference also authorized the Administrative Council to decide at its 1991 session to bring this date forward, if it proved essential to consider the conclusions of the Committee and implement all or

part of the Recommendations. The nearest date would be 1992, in Geneva.

#### Other Resolutions and Recommendations

##### Israel

The Plenipotentiaries adopted a Resolution condemning "Israel's repressive practices against the uprising (*Intifada*) of the Palestinian people and against Arab civilians in the Palestinian and other occupied Arab territories" and "the deliberate isolation by Israel of the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories from the outside world and the restriction of free transmission of information".

The Resolution decides, among other things, that:

- World and Regional Administrative Radio Conferences and the IFRB shall take due account of and safeguard the requirements of the occupied Palestinian territories in all matters relating to the utilization of the frequency spectrum and satellite positions on the geostationary orbit;
- instruct the Administrative Council to form a Committee from among its Members with the task of ascertaining the facts concerning Israel's violations of the International Telecommunication Convention and to report to the Administrative Council on those violations which, within the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, prevent the Palestinian people and Arab civilians from making free use of telecommunication facilities;
- instructs the Secretary-General to find suitable means of providing technical support and assistance for the benefit of the Palestinian people in order to improve the situation of telecommunications in the occupied territories.

##### Republic of South Africa

The Conference also confirmed the decision taken by the Plenipotentiary Conference

rences at Malaga-Torremolinos (1973) and Nairobi (1982) to exclude the Government of the Republic of South Africa from the Plenipotentiary Conference and from all other ITU Conferences and meetings until the complete elimination, as determined by the United Nations, of its policy of apartheid.

#### **Handling of world telecommunication exhibitions**

A Recommendation was adopted concerning the regular organization of world telecommunication exhibitions and forums as a part of the ITU's permanent activities and calling for a significant part of any excess of income to be used for technical co-operation activities for the benefit of the developing countries.

#### **Adjustment of pensions**

The Plenipotentiary Conference, "acknowledging the concern of the ITU staff about the level of pensions in the present system and possible subsequent changes to it, as well as the potential effects of future monetary fluctuations and inflation", decided in a Resolution to instruct the Administrative Council of the Union "to take, at its session in 1991, appropriate action to secure for ITU staff retiring in any country in the world pension benefits comparable to those prevailing at the base of the system (New York)" and "to envisage the implementation of any scheme protecting the purchasing power of pensions which is found to be compatible with the Common System".

#### **Direct remote access to ITU information systems**

The Conference invited the Administrative Council to authorize the progressive installation at the seat of the Union of facilities giving all administrations the opportunity to obtain direct remote access to appropriate information systems within the limits of budgetary constraints. Recommendations with proposed cost estimates for the first phase of installation will be submitted to the Administrative Council in 1990.