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PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE 2002

A Decisive Moment for ITU

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PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE 2002

A Decisive Moment for ITU

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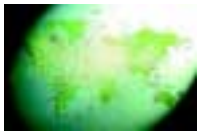

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Much of the world's attention is turned to Marrakesh where the International Telecommunication Union will hold its sixteenth Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-02) from 23 September to 18 October 2002, at the kind invitation of the Government of Morocco. More than 1600 delegates from around the world are expected to attend this all-important global event.

The Plenipotentiary Conference is ITU's top policy-making body. Held every four years, plenipotentiary conferences determine the Union's strategic direction and priorities; adopt its strategic and financial plans; develop new policies for the Union as necessary in the light of industry developments; and elect its top-ranking officials, Member States to serve on the Council (ITU's governing body) and members of the Radio Regulations Board.

The Marrakesh Conference will take place at a time of unprecedented change within the telecommunications industry. In dramatic contrast to the buoyant climate four years ago when the last such event was held in Minneapolis (United States), telecommunication manufacturers, operators, software developers and service providers must deal with harsh new realities governing a sector that has undergone a rapid and profound transformation. As today's industry moves forward in a climate of uncertainty, the case for reform of ITU's regulations, working methods and structures takes on added importance.

Plenipotentiary delegates will be expected to take decisions on a number of issues, including:

- Strengthening the role of the private sector and of regulators in the work of ITU.
- Balancing the ITU budget.
- Establishing faster processes for approving global telecommunication standards.
- Introducing fees to cover the cost of processing satellite applications, as well as time limits on planned satellites, which would see the orbital position and spectrum allocation for satellites that fail to launch within five years reallocated to other users.
- The implications of convergence in telecommunications and the impact of the Internet.
- Strengthening ITU's regional presence.
- The World Summit on the Information Society to be convened under the leadership of the ITU in Geneva in December 2003 and in Tunis in 2005 and steps to overcome the digital divide.

This special edition highlights some of the key issues that will be at the heart of the discussions at PP-02. We offer our special thanks to all contributors for sharing their insights and visions for the future of ITU.

The Editor

An agenda for change

by
Yoshio Utsumi
Secretary-General
International Telecommunication Union

Today, there is widespread acknowledgement of the urgent need for reform in the face of a rapidly changing telecommunications sector. To respond to this need, ITU has started to rethink its role, its relevance and ways to deliver better value for money.

Since the first concrete steps towards defining a new ITU were taken by the Additional Plenipotentiary Conference in Geneva in 1992, we have seen the pace of reform gradually accelerate with the establishment of the ITU-2000 Group and the Working Group on ITU Reform (WGR). The convening, in 1999, of a top-level Reform Advisory Panel comprising prominent industry CEOs and senior government representatives from around the world was another important step on the road to reform.

While no one expects ITU reform to match the breakneck speed of the changes currently transforming the global telecommunications sector, we must go further. ITU's future success clearly lies in our ability to create a responsive, customer-focused organization that combines a high degree of flexibility to directly address the evolving needs of each of its constituencies.

Most encouragingly, resistance to reform is giving way to a broad consensus on the need for change and these first steps have begun to yield solid results. Since the last Plenipotentiary Conference in Minneapolis in 1998, we have substantially overhauled and simplified many internal processes, including the holding of "virtual" electronic meetings and a new fast-track approval procedure for technical standards. With this new procedure, it can take as little as two months to approve technical standards. We have implemented cost-recovery measures in satellite filings and cost-reduction measures in the areas of publication production, methods of work and increased productivity in document production.

Despite growing demands, these multi-million cost-saving measures, together with zero nominal growth biennial budgets in the past six years, have ensured stable member contributions.

We have also successfully refocused ITU as a policy-oriented organization with initiatives such as the World Telecommunication Policy Forum and the New Initiatives Programme, which bring experts from industry and government together to develop policy positions in emerging or rapidly evolving fields, such as IP telephony, licensing policy on third generation mobile systems or fixed-mobile interconnection. Our in-house research capabilities have been substantially strengthened to support new areas of international policy. In the past four years, ITU has assumed a stronger role in international regulatory affairs through the instigation of regulatory workshops, in-depth country case study research and our annual Global Symposium for Regulators.

The private sector has also been more directly involved in planning and governance through a stronger role for the Sector advisory groups where Member States and Sector Members participate on an equal footing. Similarly, Sector Members have been given the right to approve study group work programmes and to adopt standards along with Member States, as well as the ability to gain leadership positions in study group management. Today, most of the study groups are actually chaired by private sector representatives. We have also introduced a new category of participants in ITU work to encourage smaller companies, institutions and organizations with highly focused areas of activity to bring their knowledge and expertise to the work of any study group within the Sector of their choice, while having the opportunity to shape the issues of the day.

Despite these major strides, there is still much work to be done. We need to improve our processes further, making them even leaner and more transparent. We must also strive towards a true partnership among all ITU stakeholders. To this end, the private sector must be given a greater voice in ITU affairs commensurate with its considerable contribution to the Union's technical work. We must overhaul the way the spectrum is shared and satellites are filed to better serve the satellite industry. We must be able to secure adequate funding for our activities around agreed core competencies, recognizing that not everything can be done at the same time.

We also need to ensure that ITU work in standards-setting focuses on areas where it has a leadership position while still adding value to work undertaken at national or regional level.

Finally, the Union's financial base needs to be strengthened through a broadening of our membership base, as well as a sustained war on inefficiencies, in order to retain our relevance to the industry and to keep competing organizations at bay.

But with the organization firmly moving forward under a new spirit of cooperation for the many exciting opportunities ahead, I have no doubt that the Member States at Marrakesh will embrace not only all of the recommendations put forward by the Working Group on ITU Reform, but also other proactive reform proposals tabled by Member States. This is essential if ITU is to be able to shape this increasingly crucial industry and help build a better, brighter, information-rich society for future generations. ■

Marrakesh and the future of ITU

by
Nasr Hajji
Secretary of State to the Prime Minister in charge
of Posts and Telecommunication and Information Technologies

On behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, it gives me great pleasure to welcome distinguished delegates to the city of Marrakesh, which has the honour of hosting the Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) — the sixteenth such event to be held since the organization's establishment in 1865.

With its ochre colouring, Marrakesh, this most entrancing of cities, founded in around 1070, indisputably represents the living memory of the age-old history of Morocco, and has the magical ability to ensure that all who come here enjoy their visit.

It means a great deal to Morocco to be hosting this very major and important world conference, thereby marking its position as a dynamic country that is firmly set on the road towards open trade and integration into the global economy. In line with the High Guidance of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, the Moroccan Government, headed by Prime Minister Abderrahman Youssoufi, has made telecommunication and information technologies a spearhead for sustainable development, more rapid growth and the reduction of inequalities. This event, the 2002 Plenipotentiary Conference, will be taking place within a context of far-reaching technological change to which ITU must make every effort to adapt.

With this in mind, the Union should focus on two types of objective:

- *Capitalizing on its knowledge, experience and strengths while opening up to new horizons with a view to enabling all inhabitants of the planet to benefit from information and communication technologies (ICT) through a global approach to the information society and economy.*
- *The taking of new initiatives aimed at making ITU the global organization at the heart of the information and knowledge society. For this to happen, ITU will have to show itself as being capable of a high degree of adaptability and flexibility.*

The broadening of its activities should constitute a shared undertaking for the future and a major challenge in terms of partnership between the public and private sectors, in an association of interests and competencies that will serve to maintain and strengthen the Union's role.

In parallel with the work of the Conference, we have programmed a number of activities whose success will depend largely on delegates' participation and enthusiasm. These activities, which lie outside the strict framework of the Conference and are intended to enrich and diversify the debate, include:

Palais des Congrès of Marrakesh, venue of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference

ITU 020147/Moroccan National Tourist Office

- *A Forum, from 28 to 30 September 2002, that will seek to give further impetus to the global debate on the information society, and in particular the "digital divide". The Forum will be attended by various leaders from the ICT sector, political decision-makers, intellectuals and representatives of civil society.*
- *An exhibition area located opposite the Palais des Congrès of Marrakesh, entirely equipped and managed by a private company and devoted to the promotional activities of global companies operating in the field of telecommunication and information technologies that wish to be present on the basis of pre-established commercial conditions.*

We have also planned other activities in order to ensure that delegates enjoy their stay to the utmost. I am fully confident that the enchantment, magic and bewitchment of the location and its setting, coupled with the friendliness of the people of Marrakesh, will charm delegates and leave them with an enduring memory of their stay in this city and with new and lasting friendships.

Allow me to wish all participants in the Conference a very heartfelt welcome to Morocco — **Ahlan wa sahlan!!!** ■

At the helm of the Council: 1999–2002

Words of wisdom*

ITU 990118/A. de Ferron

"There is one poster that many of you may have seen which has a simple but profound message that I would like to share with you. It is a poster which, for me, most represents the challenge before all of us today… It is a poster about our future, about the past of many of us and, perhaps most painfully, about the present of millions of children today. It is the UNICEF poster in which a child is asked: 'What would you like to be when you grow up?' The child responds: 'Alive'. […]

Many may wonder what a child and this answer have to do with our work… I would like to suggest that a lot.

[…]

The world has millions of people who have never made a phone call. Millions who, unless we act urgently and decisively, will die without ever having made one, let alone having sent an e-mail message…Each one of us has the responsibility of ensuring that the new technologies address the ever-widening gap between the information-rich and information-poor, the North and the South, the male and the female, the minority and the majority cultures and languages…

[…]

To borrow from Ernest Hemingway's classic For whom the bell tolls*, I would like to say: 'Let us not wonder to whom the challenge by the children on the UNICEF poster is posed, it is posed to us.'"*

Lyndall Shope-Mafole (South Africa), Chairman, 1999 Session of the Council

ITU 000105/A. de Ferron

"While technological advances in telecommunications have led to regulatory reforms and liberalization, national laws have not grown fast enough to address the rapid evolution of technology and the marketplace. With the world focusing on issues in the global information economy, the Union's credibility and relevance to its membership, especially in the policy domain, will be vital in establishing an acceptable global framework and a universal mechanism for moral, if not legal, enforcement of standards and access in the borderless world of telecommunications."

Kathleen G. Heceta (Philippines), Chairman, 2000 Session of the Council

*Excerpts from the opening speeches of the Chairmen of the ITU Council in the period 1999–2002. Chairmanship of the Council rotates each year among the different regions of the world in accordance with the principles of equitable geographical distribution.

ITU 010056/A. de Ferron

"Why is it necessary to reform ITU? When we talk today about reforming the Union, we are not talking about improving its structure and adapting it to changing outside conditions, that being a natural process which has to go on constantly and regularly as the current situation changes and new questions and problems arise.

It seems to me that, in setting a course for reform and concrete action, we should first of all understand what ITU's role in the world can and should be in the short and longer term.

I say 'in the world', and not just in our professional telecommunications community or in the United Nations system of international organizations, because in recent years telecommunication and information technologies have ceased to be the concern just of those professionals whose supreme body laying down basic technical standards and rules for cooperation is ITU.

Modern information and communication technologies represent a significant part of the economies of the developed countries. The successful development and introduction of these technologies in developing countries, so as to bridge the so-called 'digital divide', is a necessary condition for their development and integration into the world economy."

Yuri Grin (Russia), Chairman, 2001 Session of the Council

ITU 020142/A. de Ferron

"You will recall that the Administrative Council, as it was then called, was created by the 1947 Plenipotentiary Conference in Atlantic City. The United States served as the first Council Chairman. Fifty-four years later, we once again have that honour. The modern ITU was created at the 1947 Plenipotentiary — the same year that the transistor was first demonstrated, with the solid-state computer soon to follow. That must have been a challenging time for ITU and the newly-created Administrative Council. This Council faces no fewer nor no less demanding challenges.

The history of all institutions is recorded at those points in their history when their members must decide which road to take when they have come to a crossroads. This Union has endured and become stronger as it has faced many historic changes — many decisions at many crossroads. The nearly 140 years' history of ITU has seen it change and accommodate its structures and functions to the transition to voice telephony, the development of radiocommunications, the launch of the first communications satellite and, most recently, the emerging reality of true technological convergence that could bring the dawn of a new, multimedia-based information age. The Council has played a central role in ITU's history of adjusting to a changing telecommunications environment."

Richard Beaird (United States), Chairman, 2002 Session of the Council

ITU Strategic Plan: 2003–2007

A blueprint to reinvent ITU in a changing environment

by Kathleen G. Heceta

A defining moment

From 23 September to 18 October 2002, plenipotentiaries from the International Telecommunication Union's 189 Member States and representatives of its more than 650 Sector Members and Associates will meet in historic Marrakesh (Morocco) to discuss key issues and take decisions as to how the one hundred and thirty-seven-year-old organization should advance and redirect its energies to meet the challenges of recent global information and communication developments.

In a significant way, the Plenipotentiary Conference will be the Union's defining moment as it reinvents itself to deal with the challenge of surviving in the new century while maintaining its relevance and pre-eminent stature in global telecommunications. ITU's greatest test is how to evolve and perpetuate its existence to a membership saddled by various "divides" within a global society and a fast-changing environment.

ITU 000102/A. de Ferron

Kathleen G. Heceta is Deputy Commissioner at the National Telecommunications Commission (Philippines). She was Chairman of the Informal Group that drafted the ITU Strategic Plan for the period 2003–2007 and Chairman of the ITU Council Session of 2000

Can ITU rise to the great challenge of its evolving role and maintain its influence and priorities as the world's largest and oldest international organization in telecommunications? On the other hand, will ITU, assured of its strength as a Union of 189 States and of its competence, one day find itself extraneous with the rise of other global telecommunication organizations?

Historic Marrakesh

Built by Almoravids at the end of the eleventh century, the red city has given its name to the country.

A magical city, located at the end of ancient caravan routes, Marrakesh is known not only for its mild weather and the cheerful nature of its inhabitants, but also for its handicrafts and the famous Jemaa al-Fna square, a UNESCO world heritage site.

Marrakesh has been intimately linked with the Kingdom's great history. Chosen as the seat of central power in various eras (Almohads, Saadians, Alaouites), the red city boasts a large number of great monuments (the Koutoubia, the Menara olive grove, Al-Badi palace, the Saadian tombs…).

By virtue of the excellent facilities it offers, Marrakesh has played host to key international events, such as Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) in 1989, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1994 and Conference of Parties (COP7) on climate change in 2001.

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1- Koutoubia mosque *(ITU 020134)*
2- Jemâa al-Fna square *(ITU 020135)*
3- Menara olive grove *(ITU 020136)*
4- Agnaou gate *(ITU 020137)*
Photos: Moroccan National Tourist Office

Source: Morocco in the Digital Age — E-Morocco strategy: brochure issued by the Secretary of State to the Prime Minister in charge of Posts and Telecommunication and Information Technologies.

Chairing the first Council session of the 21st century in July 2000, I asserted that our challenge is how we can structure, manage or even restructure the Union, its officials and staff in a rapidly evolving and challenging environment. Today, I am more than convinced that to keep its pre-eminent role, relevance, and credibility, the Union must look beyond present boundaries and recognize existing global trends and challenges as characterized by the global society for it to fulfil its purposes.

New directions

Today, the Union's existence stands at a crossroads. Foremost to its continuing quest for relevance is the ability to integrate the needs, aspirations and expectations from its membership. At no time in the history of the Union had it become so necessary than now for it to exploit its greatest strength — its membership representing organizations, entities, competing companies and governments of all ideological persuasions — to develop a new focus or perspective in carrying out its mission in a global society.

ITU's greatest test is how to evolve and perpetuate its existence to a membership saddled by various "divides" within a global society and a fast-changing environment. Can ITU rise to the great challenge of its evolving role and maintain its influence and priorities as the world's largest and oldest international organization in telecommunications?

Whether groundbreaking or minute, suggested changes have been incorporated into the 2003–2007 draft Strategic Plan. The Plan will be the Union's enabler, a strategy unto itself towards a new direction of change. In it, the Union will establish its relevance and competence to perpetuate its existence and make a difference in the lives of the world's inhabitants, whichever side of the great divide they belong within a global society.

Agenda for change

Change itself was evident in the way the 2003–2007 Strategic Plan was crafted. Compared to the two previous strategic plans, the draft Strategic Plan deviated substantially in that it was culled directly from proposals from the membership. These proposals were sent to the drafting group either in the form of individual Member State contributions or as input from meetings and discussions of the Union's three Sectors and advisory groups.

Marking a milestone in the Union's history, the draft Strategic Plan, which was developed from the contributions, representations and varied interests of the membership seeking change and instituting reforms, is characterized by its conciseness compared with previous plans. The brevity and crispness of the Plan's language are indicative of the urgency and practicability with which it should be implemented. Furthermore, the Plan provides for direct linkages to the Union's financial and operational plans and bears the sincerity and clarity necessary to bring about its successful and meaningful implementation.

The changing environment

For the next four-year cycle, the membership has set the Union's priorities and strategies based on changes characterized, among others, as follows:

- Significant shortages, both in telecommunication infrastructures and capability in accessing information due to several factors, including associated cost.
- Expansion and diversification of the telecommunication and radiocommunication networks and the bigger challenge in securing and maintaining the interoperability among telecommunication services and between radio-based and fixed-line service.
- Convergence of technological platforms for telecommunication, information and computing.
- Digitization of broadcasting and increased interactivity, new technologies, broadband application and new uses for existing technologies.
- Further moves towards market liberalization, opening markets to competition, greater private participation and the growing role of regional organizations.
- Market need for appropriate, high-quality, global standards which are developed rapidly,

including those that ensure global connectivity and reliability of telecommunication networks.

- Increased awareness of the role of telecommunications as a tool for the overall development of society.
- A need for increased use of the six working languages of the Union to facilitate effective participation in its work by all countries.
- Continued development of mobile telecommunications, which is one of the fastest growing segments in the history of telecommunications.
- Continued growth of the Internet, and the creation and development of applications attached to its use, with a corresponding increase in IP access and backbone networks.
- Continued separation of operational and regulatory functions and the creation of many new independent telecommunication regulatory bodies.
- Limitations to the financial and human resources available to support the Union's activities.

Under this scenario, significant tasks already lie ahead for the Union. A major and challenging event of the year will be

ITU 000102/Donald Stampfli

It is the Union's vision to remain as the world's pre-eminent inter-governmental organization, fulfilling its role as the sentinel of telecommunications in global society, securing its bid for relevance in a time of great change

ITU 001006/A. de Ferron

the successful conclusion of the Marrakesh Plenipotentiary Conference. This will be followed by the World Radiocommunication Conference to be held in Geneva from 9 June to 4 July 2003, preceded by the Radiocommunication Assembly at the same venue from 2 to 6 June 2003; ITU TELECOM WORLD 2003 to be staged in Geneva in October; and the most significant of these events is the holding of the World Summit on the Information Society, the first phase of which will be convened in Geneva in December 2003 and the second in Tunis in 2005, under the high patronage of the United Nations Secretary-General, with ITU taking the lead role in the preparations.

As we then move forward against a backdrop of a decade of high investment, rapid network growth, and radical sector reform, the Strategic Plan is a stratagem for a "reinvented ITU." A Union that can transcend its traditional roles and transform itself into a truly global organization committed to extending its resources and energies to create an environment that will promote and sustain the interests, aspirations and futures, not only of its membership, but also those of the rest of the world, securing unto every citizen the privileges and rewards of technology.

Recalling the words of Secretary-General Yoshio Utsumi at Council 2002, he stated that

ITU is at the core of this global effort to promote the importance of information and communication technologies (ICT), which is one of the goals of the Millennium Declaration — that of "ensuring that the benefits of new technologies, especially ICTs… are available to all".

we must be ready to take "on a mission that goes beyond the traditional technical domain. Our concerns must now stretch beyond networks, to focus on users; beyond services to look at applications; and beyond the medium to see the message".

Staying relevant

It is the Union's vision to remain as the world's pre-eminent intergovernmental organization, fulfilling its role as the sentinel of telecommunications in global society, securing its bid for relevance in a time of great change. And all these for an even nobler purpose — that of empowering the world's inhabitants to enjoy the benefits which ICTs can provide. While the goals in the Strategic Plan for 2003–2007 may not reflect fully the goals for an "ITU reinvented," they nonetheless establish the Union's capability and competence to evolve and reinvent itself in the changing global environment.

The 2003–2007 draft Strategic Plan, to be discussed, revised, and finally approved during the Plenipotentiary Conference, establishes the goals upon which every Bureau, unit, and resources of the Union shall be directed to:

- Maintain and extend international cooperation among all Member States and regional organization to improve and rationalize the use of all telecommunications, taking the lead in the United Nations system initiatives on ICT.
- Assist in bridging the digital divide in information and communication technologies, facilitate the development of fully interconnected and interoperable networks to promote global connectivity and take a lead role at the World Summit on the Information Society.
- Widen the Union's membership.
- Develop tools based on contributions from members to safeguard the integrity and interoperability of networks.
- Improve the efficiency and relevance of ITU's structures and services to its membership.
- Disseminate information and expertise to provide the membership, particularly the developing countries, with capabilities to respond to the challenges of privatization, globalization and technological changes.

The need to reinvent is as urgent as the need to address the digital divide that separates the developed and the least developed Member countries. In this regard, the Strategic Plan being proposed for the coming years is more than just a strategy of action; it is a stratagem to reinvent ITU in a changing environment

While bias for least developed countries shall continue to be a major motivation for the Union, it is essential for ITU to reach beyond its traditional roles, to think outside the box when introducing new policies, programmes and initiatives that aim to increase humankind's awareness and application of technology, and ultimately, fulfil its more important task: to ensure that the inhabitants of this earth shall benefit from the simple applications and affordable access to technology, particularly in ICT. This task takes on a more urgent tone in a global society gone increasingly competitive and where the "digital divide" has widened significantly.

The future now

The need to reinvent is as urgent as the need to address the digital divide that separates the developed and the least developed Member countries. In this regard, the Strategic Plan being proposed for the coming years is more than just a strategy of action; it is a stratagem to reinvent ITU in a changing environment. It signifies the Union's readiness, sincerity and resolve to look inwards, determining its strengths and weaknesses, networking at the national, regional, international levels or globally to increase its opportunity for insights and knowledge, and moving onwards with the view to attaining the best interest of all the inhabitants in a global society.

The rise of many other organizations in information and communications signals a word of caveat to the Union as it races towards sustaining its relevance in the new century. Reform may come at a faster pace; it may come in the form of laws, rules and regulation; it may also come to evolve as a strategy for change.

The approval of the 2003–2007 draft Strategic Plan is imminent.

It is a way forward to a "reinvented ITU"! ■

ITU at a crossroads

Working together for the good of all nations

by
George Hugh Railton (New Zealand)
Deputy Executive Director, Asia-Pacific Telecommunity
Member of the ITU Radio Regulations Board

The Plenipotentiary Conference is of vital importance not only for the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), but also for all countries of the world. Being the first Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-02) of the 21st century, the event due to take place at Marrakesh assumes more significance.

Recently, telecommunication has made rapid advances in the scope, variety and extent of its applications. It influences all sectors of economy and all sections of society. Apart from its inherent importance for the business world, telecommunications is becoming increasingly important in government work and in social uses.

Although the growth of the telecommunication sector in the Asia-Pacific region has been very encouraging in recent times, the region has a long way to go.

The Asia-Pacific region harbours about 60 per cent of the world's population, but accounts for only 5 per cent of the telephone lines. The huge potential communications market of China and India, and the growth of cellular systems in the Asia-Pacific region, make this region attractive for investors as well as communications vendors.

In view of the importance of the Plenipotentiary Conference for the region, the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT), the leading telecommunication entity of the region has been assisting its members in making appropriate preparations for the event.

APT was formed twenty-three years ago to serve as the focal telecommunications entity in the Asia-Pacific region. The APT membership stretches from the Islamic Republic of Iran in the West to New Zealand in the South, and Mongolia in the North to Cook Islands in the East. APT is a unique amalgamation, consisting of developed, developing and least developed countries. The region has the two most populous countries in the world, as well as some of the nations with the smallest populations.

There is a variety of languages and cultures, as well as landlocked and island countries.

Despite all of these difficulties and diversity, the spirit of cooperation has always shone brightly amongst the APT Member countries.

Since its establishment, APT has been serving its members and the region in all areas of telecommunications, ranging from technology to policy matters, financing to regulatory aspects, domestic and regional networks to international cooperation in telecommunications, and technology transfer to human resources development.

APT, in its role as the premier regional telecommunications organization in Asia and the Pacific, has had close relationship with ITU. For example, APT pioneered the concept of regional consultation and common regional views for the World Radiocommunication Conference in 1997 (WRC-97).

APT Preparatory Meetings for PP-02

APT held three meetings to prepare the region's common proposals for the Marrakesh Plenipotentiary Conference.

The first Preparatory Meeting was held in Bangkok (Thailand) on 1 and 2 June 2001, and set up six Correspondence Groups to look at a number of ITU issues as follows:

- Correspondence Group 1: Finance and Budget.
- Correspondence Group 2: Structure and organization of the Union.
- Correspondence Group 3: Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU–T).
- Correspondence Group 4: Radiocommunication Sector (ITU–T).
- Correspondence Group 5: Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU–D).
- Correspondence Group 6: ITU TELECOM and other issues.

These groups worked electronically, through websites and e-mail reflectors, to discuss and develop common APT positions.

The second Preparatory Meeting was held in Sydney (Australia) on 29 and 30 October 2001. This meeting elected Richard Thwaites, International Manager at the Australian National Office for the Information Economy, as Chairman of APT's preparations for PP-02, along with three Vice-Chairmen, namely: Augustin R. Bengzon, Undersecretary for Communications in the Department of Transportation and Communications (Philippines); Tsegmed Tsengel, State Secretary of Infrastructure in Mongolia's Ministry of Infrastructure; and Javad Hamed Rouhbakhsh, Director General of Telecommunications in the Islamic Republic of Iran's Ministry of Posts, Telegraph and Telephone.

The Asia-Pacific Telecommunity headquarters in Bangkok (Thailand)

Participants in the first APT Preparatory Meeting for PP-02, held in Bangkok in June 2001. From left to right: Messrs Ron Box, Bob Horton and Alan Ashman of the Australian Communications Authority (ACA)

APT Common Proposals

The third and final Preparatory Meeting was held in Tehran (Islamic Republic of Iran) on 6 and 7 May 2002. After extensive discussions at this meeting, nine proposals in the areas highlighted below were circulated to APT Members for endorsement:

- Election procedures.
- Structure of the Union.
- Council composition.
- Council observer status.
- Improving the ITU–T environment and bridging the standardization gap between developing and developed countries.
- Improvement in the efficiency of the Radio Regulations Board (RRB)

Opening session of the third APT Preparatory Meeting for PP-02, held in Tehran (Islamic Republic of Iran) in May 2002. From left to right: Messrs Ali Kermanshah, Deputy Minister for International Affairs, Ministry of Posts, Telegraph and Telephone (Islamic Republic of Iran); A. Narayan, Executive Director, APT; and Javad Hamed Rouhbakhsh, Director General of Telecommunications, Ministry of Posts, Telegraph and Telephone (Islamic Republic of Iran)

- Bridging the digital divide.
- Role of Member States in the management of internationalized domain names (IDN) and addresses.
- Enabling and assisting developing countries to stage regional ITU TELECOM exhibitions and forums.

All nine proposals received the required support from the APT membership, and were submitted to ITU on 23 May 2002 (see Document 25 entitled *Asia-Pacific Common Proposals*).

Structure and organization of the Union

The APT membership is of the view that the Plenipotentiary Conference, which meets every four years to chart out the strategic and financial plans of the Union, should be utilized more effectively and efficiently so that more concrete results are achieved.

To ensure that this happens, APT supports the move towards more stable, and less time-consuming, election procedures, leaving more time for delegates to concentrate on the main issues of the Conference. Another area where time could be saved is in the policy statements delivered during the Conference. While the inter-governmental nature of the Union requires such statements, a time-limit needs to be enforced.

Another option that could save time would be to have a separate event for ministers outside of the Conference. This would help in cutting down on the time spent for policy statements, while still giving importance to the attendance of ministers to the Conference.

The APT membership is of the view that a thorough study of changing the current electoral systems and number of elected officials, as well as their tasks and responsibilities, should be conducted for the Union to adapt to the changing global information and communications environment.

Collaborating with regional telecommunication organizations to hold regional and/or interregional consultative meetings for plenipotentiary conferences will greatly assist in limiting the submission of documents with similar content that require unnecessary presentation and discussion.

Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

The Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) has been very efficient. However, the lack of participation of developing countries in the process of standards development is a major cause for concern. Some of the issues

that have been raised express the sentiments that:

- Lack of understanding is leading to different interpretations of ITU–T Recommendations (standards).
- The majority of meetings are held in Geneva.
- Standards-making bodies do not take into consideration the concerns of developing countries when developing standards.
- The telecommunication services gap between developed and developing countries is widening.

APT has, therefore, put forward a resolution aimed at bridging this telecommunication services gap with better coordination between TSB and the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), particularly in organizing regional standardization training courses and workshops, as well as through the development of Web-based/on-line programmes.

Radiocommunication Bureau

Like other regional organizations and ITU Member States, APT has a keen interest in the activities of the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR). The composition and working of the Radio Regulations Board, satellite filings and allocation of spectrum are some of the major issues the APT membership will be looking at during the Marrakesh Plenipotentiary Conference.

Telecommunication Development Bureau

As the majority of the APT membership consists of developing countries, the strategic plan and activities of BDT are high on its agenda. APT will be looking forward to a strategic plan of the BDT that will help the developing countries to understand new technology, build their human resources and receive assistance in their projects.

APT has also put forward proposals on "Bridging the digital divide" that recognize that few countries have the necessary basic infrastructure, long-term plans, policies and regulations in place for the development of information and communication technologies. In these proposals the APT membership endorsed the Resolution adopted at the World Telecommunication Development Conference in Istanbul in March 2002 on the issue of bridging the digital divide, and called for its immediate implementation.

Management of internationalized domain names and addresses

The APT proposal in this area recognizes the existing role and sovereignty of ITU Member States with respect to allocation and management of their respective country code numbering resources. It also recognizes that the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) has policy control over the Domain Name System (DNS) and that ITU has policy control over the E.164 numbering plan. But notes that the current DNS mapping does not reflect the growing language needs of the people of the region. According to the APT proposal, there needs to be a greater effort on the part of Member States, ITU, private and non-governmental organizations towards an equitable and acceptable internationalized domain name system.

Furthermore, the proposal emphasizes the need for ITU to assist its Member States to guard

ITU 004733/A. de Ferron

The APT membership will be looking forward to a strategic plan of the BDT that will help the developing countries to understand new technology, build their human resources and receive assistance in their projects

against misuse of intellectual property rights on the use of their languages for domain names and addresses. ITU is also called upon to:

- Take an active part in all international discussions and initiatives on the management of Internet domain names and addresses.
- Take any necessary action to ensure that the sovereignty of Member States with regard to country code numbering plans, and addresses, will be fully maintained as enshrined in Recommendation E. 164, in whatever application they are used.
- Promote effectively the role of Member States in the internationalization of domain names and addresses of their own languages.
- Report annually to the Council on the activities undertaken on this subject.

ITU TELECOM and other regional exhibitions and forums

While recognizing the fact that the revenue generated from ITU TELECOMs are being used for BDT projects for least developed countries, the APT membership is of the view that those countries capable and willing to host regional exhibitions and forums should be given a chance to do so.

To ensure that developing countries with the capability and willingness to host and stage regional TELECOMs are given due consideration and assistance, APT proposes that decisions on the venues of these events, in particular, should be conducted in a more transparent manner. ITU should introduce measures that offer more flexibility in implementing its space requirements and pricing regimes for regional TELECOMs. Establishing a rotation system in deciding the venue of regional TELECOMs is seen as one way of giving priority to countries that have not had the opportunity to host these events, but that are willing and capable of doing so.

Establishing a rotation system in deciding the venue of regional TELECOMs is seen by the APT membership as one way of giving priority to countries that have not had the opportunity to host these events, but that are willing and capable of doing so

ITU 004729/A. de Ferron

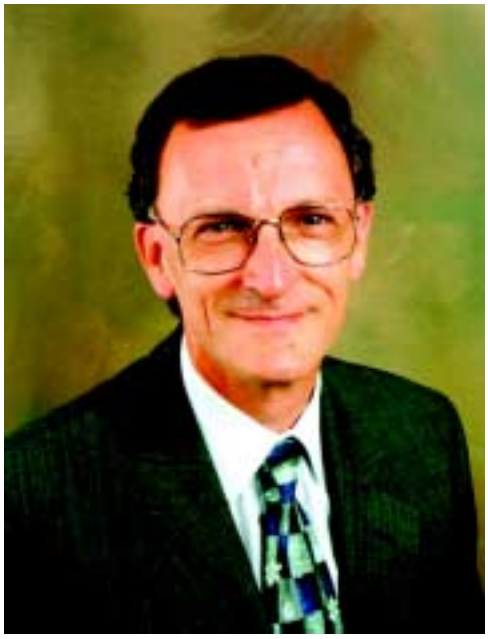
Conclusion

APT is looking forward to a very successful Plenipotentiary Conference at Marrakesh, and offers all possible cooperation to this end. Furthermore, APT will do all it can to assist in reaching a conclusion that meets the requirements of all nations. ■

Europe Prepares for PP-02

Streamlining ITU to stay relevant

by
Mike Goddard
Chairman of CEPT Working Group ITU



Overview

European preparations for ITU plenipotentiary conferences and Council meetings are coordinated through Europe's regional telecommunications organization, the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT).

In order to deal effectively with the continuous programme of specialized work and tight deadlines imposed by the four-yearly cycle of plenipotentiary conferences and yearly Council sessions, a permanent and largely autonomous body, known as the Working Group ITU (WG-ITU), has been established within the CEPT framework to plan and coordinate European preparations. The main tasks of WG-ITU are to develop formal European Common Proposals or ECPs, in short, and comprehensive briefing material for plenipotentiary conferences. I have the honour of chairing this group for the Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-02) to be held in Marrakesh from 23 September to 18 October 2002.

The European Commission and other European bodies with an interest in telecommunications participate in WG-ITU. In particular, the European Union has recognized CEPT as the competent body to carry out European preparations for ITU conferences. The result is that most European countries now rely extensively on WG-ITU preparations to determine their national positions for plenipotentiary conferences.

Strategy for PP-02

The underlying theme of the European Common Proposals for PP-02 is to continue the process of reforming the International Telecommunication Union so as to increase efficiency and promote greater autonomy in its three Sectors, namely: Radiocommunication (ITU–R), Telecommunication Standardization (ITU–T) and Telecommunication Development (ITU–D). This will not only allow these Sectors to be more responsive to the concerns of Member States and

Sector Members, but will also help maintain the solidarity of the Union. Europe's proposals are based, to a large extent, on the recommendations of the Working Group on ITU Reform (WGR) and of the Group of Experts established by the Council at its session in 2001 to prepare draft amendments to the ITU Constitution and Convention for the review of the Marrakesh Plenipotentiary Conference. The proposals acknowledge that each Sector has its own particular imperatives and that each needs greater flexibility to work effectively.

In developing its proposals, Europe has also taken account of the coordinated views of other regions. Europe welcomes the move towards comprehensive regional preparations and attaches great importance to discussions between regional organizations. Early interaction between regional organizations is seen as essential to reducing divergences between the various proposals to conferences and avoiding any misunderstandings as to the objectives of such proposals.

The guiding principle behind Europe's approach to the reform of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector is to make it effective and more responsive to the needs of the industry

Europe's main objectives at PP-02

Streamlining ITU–T

The guiding principle behind Europe's approach to the reform of ITU–T is to make this Sector effective and more responsive to the needs of the industry. CEPT takes the view that the management of ITU–T should be under the control of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA). However, the ITU Constitution and Convention contain many detailed provisions on ITU–T that would more appropriately fall within the remit of WTSA. This would give WTSA greater flexibility to review and enhance the operations of ITU–T for two key purposes. One of them is to ensure that ITU–T meets the requirements of those participating in its work. The second is to maintain ITU–T as a viable organ for efficient standardization.

ITU 992266/A. de Ferron

Europe, therefore, proposes to transfer much of the detailed provisions related to ITU–T from the Constitution and Convention to non-treaty text under the control of WTSA. The basic mission and functions of ITU–T would remain in the Constitution and Convention. The proposal is certainly not intended to make any changes to the current structure, organization or working methods of ITU–T, particularly as regards its basic tasks. These would remain as defined in No. 104 of the Constitution in respect of the Sector's general study areas, its aim to be involved in standardization and its task to prepare Recommendations (standards).

Action on the International Telecommunication Regulations

Resolution 79 of the Minneapolis Plenipotentiary Conference instructed the ITU Secretary-General to conduct a review, in consultation with the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) and a balanced group of experts, of certain aspects of the International Telecommunication Regulations (ITR). These Regulations were adopted in 1988 in Melbourne and appear in the Final Acts of the World Administrative Telegraph and Telephone Conference (WATTC-88). They have not been reviewed since their adoption.

One of the purposes of the review called for in Resolution 79 was to advise the Council "of any action that the Union could decide to take, including the convening of a world conference on international telecommunications, in order to define further the relations between Member States and recognized operating agencies as regards the regulation and operation of international telecommunication services".

The Council is required to report to the Marrakesh Plenipotentiary Conference on any actions taken or recommended as a result of the review.

CEPT accepts that the current International Telecommunication Regulations are anomalous and should be re-examined in order to attain ITU purposes in promoting the development of telecommunication services and their utmost efficient operation while harmonizing the development of facilities for world-wide telecommunications

However, the review was inconclusive due to the divergent views held by different ITU constituents. Further work carried out by a Group of Experts appointed by the Council was similarly inconclusive, but nevertheless provided a good basis on which to move forward.

In particular, the Group of Experts came up with the four options listed below:

- Terminate the existing International Telecommunication Regulations by integrating them into other instruments of the Union, such as the Constitution, Convention, Recommendations or Resolutions.
- Modify and update the International Telecommunication Regulations, while keeping them as an inter-governmental treaty.
- Defer decision on the matter.
- Include new topics in the existing International Telecommunication Regulations, but review the relevance of these Regulations as an intergovernmental treaty.

CEPT accepts that the current ITRs are anomalous and should be re-examined in order to attain ITU purposes in promoting the development of telecommunication services and their utmost efficient operation while harmonizing the development of facilities for world-wide telecommunications. There are clearly a number of areas where ITRs do not fully reflect current arrangements and trends in global interconnection and interoperability of telecommunication facilities and services.

Current CEPT thinking is to rationalize the provisions of the International Telecommunication Regulations by integrating them into other instruments as follows:

- Placing Articles which require to be agreed at a treaty level in the Constitution and Convention.
- Placing other relevant Articles into ITU–T Recommendations.

● Deleting other Articles which are either already covered by the Constitution and Convention or which become redundant by the integration process.

Enhancement of the role of advisory groups

Considering the importance of reacting rapidly to the changes that occur in the world of telecommunications, CEPT supports the view that the role of the Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG) and the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) should be enhanced, based on the example of the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG). It is worth recalling that the last Plenipotentiary Conference (Minneapolis, 1998) fully recognized the importance of advisory groups, but only TSAG was allowed to act on behalf of the Assembly of the Sector — the World Telecommunication Assembly — through a new provision of the Convention (No.191A). The provision states that: "A world telecommunication standardization assembly may assign specific matters within its competence to the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group indicating the action required on those matters." Based on this statement WTSA-2000, which was held in Montreal in September/October 2000, adopted Resolution 22 assigning specific matters within its competence to TSAG until the next Assembly in 2004. This Resolution proved its usefulness shortly after WTSA-2000 when in March 2001, TSAG recognized the need to review the structure of ITU–T study groups and recommended the merger of two of them.

ITU 992355/A. de Ferron

Considering the importance of reacting rapidly to the changes that occur in the world of telecommunications, CEPT supports the view that the role of the Radiocommunication Advisory Group and the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group should be enhanced

In order to align the functions of the advisory groups across all three Sectors, CEPT proposes amendments to the Convention so as to authorize delegation of authority from the Radiocommunication Assembly and the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) to RAG and TDAG, respectively.

CEPT also proposes new provisions requiring RAG and TDAG to prepare a report on their assigned tasks for the Directors of the Radiocommunication Bureau and the

Telecommunication Development Bureau for onward submission to the Radiocommunication Assembly or WTDC.

General Rules of Procedure of the ITU

This topic has two components related to the conduct of ITU conferences and assemblies. These are: the election procedures to be used at future plenipotentiary conferences; and the provisions governing the preparations and conduct of ITU conferences and assemblies in general.

The European proposals seek to implement the recommendations of the Council Working Group that highlight the need to:

- Have stable election procedures which shall be applied at all plenipotentiary conferences.
- Establish a deadline for candidatures prior to the conference.
- Hold all the elections during the first week of the Plenipotentiary Conference.
- Use electronic means for voting whenever possible.

Cost recovery and the ceiling on expenditure

The introduction of cost recovery for ITU services and products that are either delivered "on demand" or are of a quasi-commercial nature is seen by Europe as essential to strengthening the finances of the Union and providing a service that is more responsive to internal and external demand. The concept of cost recovery does not, however, sit well with ITU's traditional financial control mechanisms since budget predictions may be overtaken by rapid changes in the pattern or strength of demand.

WGR considered this problem and in its final report to the Council recommended that:

"... as a means of ensuring a timely response to unanticipated demand for services under cost recovery, while at the same time allowing the membership, through the Council, to maintain control over the expenditure and income in the budget, one of the following options should be proposed to the Plenipotentiary Conference:

- the ceiling or limit on expenditure should be removed, while maintaining the limit on the value of the contributory unit; or
- if a ceiling on expenditure is still considered necessary, activities provided under cost recovery should be considered to be outside such a ceiling."

Council 2001 decided to forward this recommendation to PP-02 for further discussion.

The United Nations Joint Inspection Unit, in its report to Council 2001, supported the abolition of the ceiling of expenditure, and observed also that "the implementation of these activities (i.e., products and services subject to cost recovery in case of unanticipated demand) may be jeopardized by the need to wait for a decision of the Council. To counter this, it will be necessary to give the Secretary-General certain flexibility to increase the budget for activities under cost recovery, within specified limits..."

The introduction of cost recovery for ITU services and products that are either delivered "on demand" or are of a quasi-commercial nature is seen by Europe as essential to strengthening the finances of the Union

Following its own consideration of the impact of unexpected demand on activities, CEPT has concluded that the financial limits set by plenipotentiary conferences should no longer include the ceiling on expenditure set by the ITU Constitution (Provision No. 51). Suppression of the ceiling of expenditure for the future ITU budget is seen as the better option for effective and flexible management of the budget because:

- It will cover not only income from cost recovery, but also income from assessed contributions and all other kinds of income, for example, support cost expenditure for United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) projects.
- It will allow a single consolidated general budget for the Union, which increases transparency.

As a consequence, the financial limits set by the Constitution (Provision No. 51) should, in future, only take account of the value of the

annual contributions from Members and the budget balance.

CEPT proposes to achieve these objectives by modifying Decision 5 (Minneapolis, 1998) on the expenditure of the Union.

Cost recovery for satellite network filings

The situation regarding the administrative procedures applied to cost recovery for satellite network filings remains unsatisfactory. Council 2001 modified Decision 482 so that the fixed fee component of the processing charges has to be paid shortly after their receipt by the Radiocommunication Bureau in respect of notices received after 1 January 2002. In contrast, the flat fee component for notices received prior to that date does not have to be paid until after the publication of the filing. This would take place some two to three years after the submission of the filing and is not considered to be an equitable situation, even though part of the delay is attributable to the present backlog in processing satellite filings.

CEPT takes the view that invoices should be sent out as soon as possible after PP-02, for payment within a period of six months, in respect of the flat fee component of the processing charge for those notices received between 7 November 1998 and 1 January 2002.

CEPT has also considered the unsatisfactory situation that, although the World Radiocommunication Conference, which took place in Istanbul in the year 2000 (WRC-2000), adopted several footnotes to the Radio Regulations dealing with the consequences of non-payment of the processing charges, the date of implementation of these footnotes was left open pending a decision by PP-02. CEPT proposes that these provisions should be applied with the date of effect set at 1 May 2003.

A further problem causing concern within Europe is that the fee schedule for the satellite processing charges, as adopted by Council 1999 and modified by Council 2001, is not based on full cost recovery. CEPT is of the opinion that Council 2003 should be instructed to implement full cost recovery in accordance with the cost allocation methodology.

All these changes are covered by proposals to amend Resolution 88 of the Minneapolis Plenipotentiary Conference that deals with the implementation of processing charges for satellite network filings and administrative procedures.

Satellite network filings and the backlog

CEPT supports the decision of Council 2001 in Resolution 1182 in which it requested the Radio Regulations Board (RRB) and the Satellite Backlog Action Group (SAT-BAG) to take some specific actions to help eliminate the backlog in the processing of satellite network filings. At present, neither RRB nor SAT-BAG have concluded their work. Europe has put forward a general common proposal supporting

the need to find means to solve the backlog in satellite filings, and expects to prepare more specific proposals once RRB and SAT-BAG have given further consideration to the matter.

Preparatory process for plenipotentiary conferences and world radiocommunication conferences

CEPT supports the introduction of a preparatory process for plenipotentiary conferences similar to that adopted for the preparation of world radiocommunication conferences. This process, which is being implemented through Resolution 72 of WRC-2000, encourages the organization of interregional consultative meetings to improve the level of preparations prior to conferences to ensure their success. Therefore, CEPT proposes that PP-02 adopts a resolution instructing the Secretary-General to organize interregional consultative meetings for plenipotentiary conferences, and is pleased to see a similar proposal from the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL).

Regarding preparations for WRCs, it is apparent that the duty placed on a WRC through the Convention (Provision No. 126) to provide an estimate of the financial implications of the proposed agenda of the next WRC in line has been largely ignored. CEPT therefore proposes to modify Resolution 80 (Minneapolis, 1998) to reinforce this duty by requiring administrations to include some indication of the resource and financial implications of each new agenda item they propose.

RRB matters

Europe has a great interest in improving the quality of the decision-making processes of the Radio Regulations Board, and has identified several areas where action is required.

The present situation regarding eligibility for election to the RRB is confusing and could disqualify many excellent candidates. CEPT will propose amendments to the Constitution so that the only restriction on the nationality of the RRB members is that they cannot be nationals of the same Member State as that of the Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau.

Concerns have become apparent with regard to the ability of RRB members to meet all the logistical requirements of their post as individuals. CEPT wishes to ensure that RRB members who are not working for an administration or another employer are given the necessary support in terms of access to computers and the Internet. It is proposed that this be achieved by placing an obligation on Member States to commit themselves to providing the necessary logistical support when proposing a candidate for RRB.

All 12 members of RRB are presently required to participate in meetings of the Radiocommunication Assembly. However, based on the experience at recent radiocommunication assemblies, CEPT has come to the view that this practice is no longer cost effective, and therefore proposes to remove this specific duty.

In addition, the Working Group on ITU Reform noted, in one of its recommendations (WGR R4c), the need for greater transparency in the development of RRB's Rules of Procedure on the application of the Radio Regulations. CEPT will therefore propose some specific changes to the Constitution to meet the objectives of this recommendation by further stressing the need for transparency in the work of the RRB.

Summary

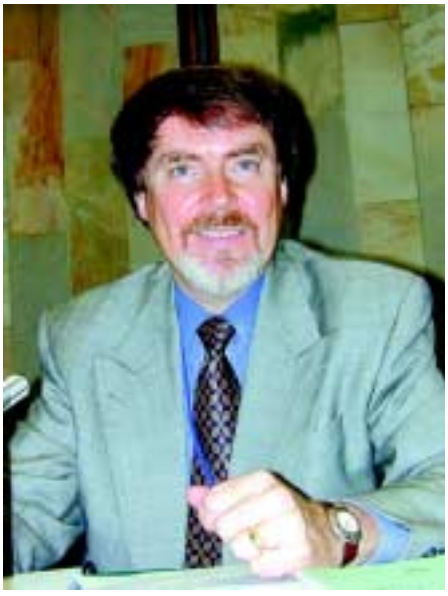
The European proposals for PP-02 are intended, as a whole, to achieve the following improvements to the structure and operations of the Union:

- Improve the efficiency of ITU in general and of its conferences and meetings in particular.
- Introduce flexibility in working methods that enable ITU to respond effectively to a rapidly changing environment.
- Delegate decision-making to the Sectors and their advisory bodies, where appropriate, and subject to the overall policy and financial framework set by the Plenipotentiary Conference and the Council.
- Address the needs of Sector Members, recognizing that such needs and the scope for action will vary throughout the organs of the ITU.
- Strengthen the financial base of the Union. ■

Hard times, bold strategies

A perspective from the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission

by Bruce Gracie
Senior Advisor, International Organizations at
Industry Canada, and Rapporteur for Finance Matters within the CITEL
Working Group for PP-02



The 34 Member States of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL)* welcome the opportunity to provide views and comments on the preparations for the Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-02), to be held in Marrakesh in September and October 2002. CITEL's preparations were undertaken in a working group of the Permanent Executive Committee, chaired by José Vivanco of Ecuador. A principal objective of the preparations has been to ensure that the requirements and interests of all of the countries of the Americas region are reflected in the positions and proposals developed and advanced within the working group itself. The approach adopted by CITEL in preparing for PP-02 is consistent with that used for other ITU conferences and meetings, particularly the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-02) held in Istanbul in March 2002 and the upcoming World Radiocommunication Conference in 2003 (WRC-03).

An additional impetus for CITEL in formulating approaches and positions to be presented to PP-02 has been the follow-up activities to the Summit of the Americas held in Quebec City in April 2001, and attended by Heads of State and Government in the region. The Action Plan adopted by that Summit highlighted the issue of "connectivity" which culminated in the adoption of a Plan of Action by the Third Regular CITEL Assembly held in Washington, DC, in August 2002.

In particular, the Heads of State and Government recognized that the technological revolution taking place has profound social, economic and political consequences, and that

*CITEL is one of the constituent bodies of the Organization of American States (OAS).

a new economy and society are being defined by an increasing capacity to access and disseminate information, and by the need and challenge of transforming such information into knowledge for the benefit of all citizens of the Americas. It is the promotion of an Agenda for Connectivity in the form of national strategies that the countries of the region expect will facilitate the process of addressing and closing "the digital divide", and accelerate the integration of the hemisphere into a knowledge-based society. To fulfil the Plan of Action of the Quebec Summit, CITEL was instructed to work with regional organizations and agencies to develop a cooperative and collaborative programme to support an Agenda for Connectivity in the Americas.

The link to PP-02 lies, to a large extent, in the Connectivity Agenda that was presented and discussed at WTDC-02 and forms part of the Istanbul Action Plan.

Recognizing that ITU has the capacity and mandate to bring together all regional initiatives to achieve connectivity in a global context, WTDC-02 decided to:

- Include in the Istanbul Declaration and Action Plan the principles expressed in the "Agenda for Connectivity in the Americas and Quito Action Plan" (see box for these principles).
- Include, among the high priorities of the ITU, support for initiatives of the "Agenda for Connectivity in the Americas," recommending the use of mechanisms to help to achieve the necessary results for each country and region, and promote the exchange of information on the development of connectivity activities globally.

Another important link can be found in the region's on-going preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held in 2003, and in 2005 under the coordination responsibility of ITU.

Inter-American Proposals

CITEL's Working Group for PP-02 has come up with a number of common proposals, most of which have been coordinated by different countries of the region. In most cases, the recommendations of the Working Group on ITU Reform (WGR), as well as proposed draft amendments to the ITU Constitution and Convention, prepared by the Group of Experts appointed by the Council in 2001, have been used as a basis for the work of the region.

Principles of the Agenda for Connectivity

The Agenda for Connectivity was drawn up in accordance with the following principles:

- *Each country should develop a national vision and an agenda for connectivity appropriate to its circumstances, initiated by the highest levels of government, and, where appropriate, under direction from the Head of State.*
- *National connectivity agendas must be conceived and executed with the active and ongoing participation of society's fundamental players — government and civil society including the private sector.*
- *National connectivity agendas should be developed around three fundamental components: infrastructure or access, applications for the use of the infrastructure, and high quality content to be delivered via the infrastructure.*
- *Recognition of the importance of promoting the development of national and regional content to promote countries' respective cultural identities, to encourage the use of each country's languages, including indigenous languages, without excluding or restricting access to international content.*
- *Ongoing monitoring and performance measurement of elements of the connectivity agenda, adapted to national realities, to ensure the success and updating of the agenda for connectivity as it develops.*

Strengthening the ITU regional presence

Argentina coordinated views on regional presence — an issue of on-going importance to the countries of the region. Resolution 25 (Rev. Minneapolis, 1998) was used as a basis. It calls for regional presence to be strengthened and kept under review in the interests of meeting the evolving requirements and priorities of each region, the first objective being to maximize the benefits of the regional presence for the whole of the Union's membership. CITEL's proposal seeks to amend Resolution 25 in a way that captures the priority to:

Aerial view of Buenos Aires (Argentina), the "Paris of the South"

ITU 020005

- Identify functions which could be decentralized in order to expand and strengthen regional presence.
- Provide the regional offices with increased autonomy, specifically in terms of their ability to disseminate information, provide expert advice, and host meetings, courses, or seminars.
- Identify functions related to the implementation of the budgets of the regional offices that may be delegated to these offices, with a view to enhancing their participation in preparing the budget.

Financial and budgetary matters

Canada coordinated views on financial and budgetary matters, including those associated with the concept of cost recovery. A recommendation of the Working Group on ITU Reform (WGR R12) states that: "As a means of ensuring a timely response to unanticipated demand for services under cost recovery, while at the same time allowing the membership, through the Council, to maintain control over the expenditure and income in the budget, one of the following options should be proposed to the Plenipotentiary Conference:

- the ceiling or limit on expenditure should be removed, while maintaining the limit on the value of the contributory unit; or
- if a ceiling on expenditure is still considered necessary, activities provided under cost recovery should be considered to be outside such a ceiling."

CITEL Member States support the second option and propose that the Plenipotentiary Conference adopt, in the Financial Plan for 2004–2007, both a ceiling on the contributory unit and a ceiling on expenditure. CITEL further proposes to exclude activities associated with cost recovery from the ceiling on expenditure in order to ensure a timely response to unanticipated demand for services under cost recovery.

Telesat Canada launched the world's first domestic geostationary satellite in 1972

ITU 910037/Telesat

The removal of the expenditure ceiling is, however, not supported. The CITEL membership holds the view that the flexibility given to the Council in its biennial budget-setting exercises under Decision 5 (Minneapolis, 1998) can serve to provide ITU with the means to deal with such unanticipated increases in the budgetary requirements of the Union. This involves taking into account such factors as the effects of

inflation, currency fluctuations and changes in the United Nations common system. It is further argued that Decision 5 gives the Council the prerogative to exceed the ceiling on expenditure by up to 1 per cent in order to accommodate unforeseen and urgent activities.

Results-based budgeting

Still under consideration by the CITEL Member States is a proposal that the Plenipotentiary Conference take a decision to implement, expeditiously, the results-based budgeting concept which has, as one of its key components, the uniform and consistent application of performance measurements and performance indicators throughout ITU. In this regard, several countries of the region have expressed the need to enhance the evaluation functions and mechanisms in ITU, in order to increase transparency and accountability at a time when financial resources are constrained. Moreover, the Member States and Associate Members of CITEL have particular interest in following the debates concerning the development of the Financial Plan for 2004–2007, given an apparent gap between income and expenditure.

Satellite television dish antennas in Bogota, Colombia

ITU 940025/A. de Ferron

Telecommunication Development Sector

Brazil coordinated views on the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU–D). CITEL's proposal to PP-02 focuses, in part, on the review of the results of WTDC-02 in terms of the implementation strategies to be employed in relation to the Financial Plan (budgetary resources available) and the Strategic Plan (priorities within ITU–D and in relative terms against the full list of activities requiring approval by the Plenipotentiary Conference).

The Radiocommunication Sector

Colombia was responsible for matters related to the Radiocommunication Sector (ITU–R). One proposal from CITEL deals with the definition of certain terms used in the ITU Convention and the Administrative Regulations. One example that has caught the attention of the CITEL membership is a definition of radiocommunication that states: "Radio waves are electromagnetic waves of frequencies arbitrarily lower than 3 000 GHz, propagated in space without artificial guide." It is proposed to delete the words "of frequencies arbitrarily lower than 3 000 GHz" from that definition (Note 1 of CV 1005). Although the definition is currently used within ITU–R, it is recognized as arbitrary, and may require additional future revision for practical reasons.

Already, systems utilizing the electromagnetic spectrum above 3 000 GHz for telecommunication in free space have been deployed in terrestrial applications and in the geostationary satellite orbit and non-geostationary satellite orbit. It appears then to CITEL that the authority of ITU–R to deal with rights and responsibilities is currently limited to 3 000 GHz. It is important to extend that authority.

The proposed modification is considered essential to manage electromagnetic spectrum use for telecommunication in free space without restrictions on frequency limits, and without requiring additional modifications to the Constitution and the Convention.

A recent addition to the list of Inter-American Proposals supported by the requisite number of CITEL countries concerns Resolution 83 (WRC-2000), which calls upon PP-02 to consider the

administrative procedures for cost recovery for satellite network filings and the date at which they will enter into force.

Radio Regulations Board (RRB)

There are currently twelve members on the Radio Regulations Board from all regions of the world. CITEL Member States do not support the recommendation of the Working Group on ITU Reform (WGR R5a), which suggests that: "the number of Board members should be reduced and that such reduction should be consistent with principles of efficiency and geographical distribution".

On the other hand, CITEL supports the recommendation that highlights the need for the role and tasks of RRB to include the principle of ensuring that the Rules of Procedure are developed in a transparent manner and approved without possible adverse effect on Member States (WGR R4c). This support is in line with the constitutional principles (Article 14), which indicate that the Radio Regulations Board, in the exercise of its functions, shall not request or receive instructions from any government, government official or organization, or public or private person. Furthermore, Member States and Sector Members shall respect the exclusively international nature of the functions of the Board members and shall abstain from influencing them in the exercise of those functions.

Antennas of Camatagua III earth station, Venezuela

ITU 860099/Administration of Venezuela

CITEL supports two other recommendations from the Working Group on ITU Reform. The first suggests that the Board should continue to function on a part-time basis (WGR R5c). The second seeks to prevent the election of an RRB member from the same Member State as the Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau (WGR R5b). CITEL agrees with the draft amendments to the Constitution (Nos. 62 and 63c), proposed by the Group of Experts to reinforce this recommendation, on the grounds that such modifications would also preserve the concept of equitable geographical distribution; ensure that a Member State can only propose its own citizens as candidates to the Board and; through reference to the Constitution (No.93), confirm that, at the time of the election, technical qualifications and independence will be guiding principles for the election of RRB members.

Telecommunication Standardization

Venezuela coordinated views on the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU–T). During discussions in the Working Group on ITU Reform, various options were put forward for changing the way standardization activities are carried out. One option concerned the creation of a forum, possibly outside the structure of the Union. Looking at the recommendations of the Working Group on ITU Reform (WGR R6a and R6c), CITEL Member States are strongly of the view that ITU–T should not be "spun off" into a separate entity but should remain as part of the current structure of ITU.

They argue that with the increasingly rapid development and proliferation of telecommunication technologies within the existing global information infrastructure, international standardization must also take place in an increasingly efficient manner. And ITU–T has taken steps to improve the efficiency with which these global telecommunication standardization activities take place. For example, recent implementation of the alternative approval process (AAP) by ITU–T has greatly reduced the time it takes to approve technical Recommendations.

ITU Strategic Plan and related matters

Mexico coordinated positions on this topic. CITEL Member States are of the view that ITU must enhance its responsiveness to changes in the telecommunications environment and improve its capabilities in strategic, operational and financial planning. To this end, CITEL supports a recommendation of the Working Group

on ITU Reform (WGR R15) and a corresponding draft amendment to the Convention (Article 4). Both seek to provide authority to the Council to review and update the Strategic Plan in the interval between plenipotentiary conferences and to inform Member States and Sector Members accordingly. The proposed amendment is also expected to make the Strategic Plan less rigid.

Allocation of time to policy statements

To streamline plenipotentiary conferences in order to save financial resources and time, CITEL Member States support the recommendation of the Working Group on ITU Reform (WGR R22), according to which policy statements should be made during the first week of the conference and should be as short as possible (a maximum of five minutes).

Policy statements that are not delivered during the first week may only be made available in writing. Delegations should be encouraged to submit their policy statements in written form. All written policy statements should be made available on the website of the conference.

Election procedures

CITEL supports a recommendation from the Working Group on ITU Reform (WGR R23) proposing that:

- There should be clear, stable procedures in accordance with the basic instruments of the Union for all elections, and these must be adhered to.
- Elections should be such that they take a minimum amount of time during the period of the conference.
- Elections should be held during the first week of the conference.
- Elections should be organized in a manner that makes it easier for delegations to concentrate on other issues of the conference.

Telmex antenna in Merida, state of Yucatan, Mexico

ITU 980047/Jean-Marie Micaud

Electoral system and the minimum number of elected officials

The feasibility of changing the current electoral systems and "the number of elected officials should be studied with a view to identifying advantages and disadvantages, taking into account the intergovernmental nature of the Union, while maintaining the need for expertise and competence as well as the principle of equitable geographical representation and distribution among all regions of the world," states a recommendation of the Working group on ITU Reform (WGR R25).

CITEL Member States propose that the current electoral system and the minimum number of elected officials should be maintained to allow for the most democratic participation in the administration and management of ITU matters.

Preparatory process for plenipotentiary conferences

CITEL has put forward a proposal on the role of regional organizations in the preparatory process for plenipotentiary conferences. During its preparations for PP-02, CITEL participated in meetings of other regional bodies such as the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) and the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT). CITEL found this experience very positive believes it can serve as a useful basis for achieving common understanding and possible harmonization of views on selected issues. The countries of CITEL are interested in participating in the meetings of other regional bodies, such as the African Telecommunications Union and the Arab Group as well, and are prepared to welcome representatives from these organizations to attend meetings on a reciprocal basis. CITEL also welcomes the opportunity to continue dialogue throughout the Plenipotentiary Conference to ensure a successful outcome. ■

Great expectations from Marrakesh

Unlocking ICT potential for development in Africa

by
Jan Mutai
Secretary-General
African Telecommunications Union

Overview

From Minneapolis in 1998 to Marrakesh in 2002, Africa has reached several milestones in regional integration and international cooperation. Some of the principal ones include the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU), the restructuring of the Pan African Telecommunications Union (PATU) into the African Telecommunications Union (ATU) and the launch of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative, which was adopted by the Assembly of OAU Heads of State and Government in Lusaka (Zambia) in July 2001.

Underpinning all these changes in the continent has been the growing realization that information and communication technologies (ICT) are the foundations of all cultural and socio-economic infrastructures, and that they play a critical role in the integration of Africa into the global information society.

What PP-02 means for Africa

In spite of the impressive growth and expansion in info-communication services recorded in Africa since the Minneapolis Conference, many areas of major concern still exist, and considerable disparities in the distribution of these services pervade the region. Of significant concern is the continuing growth of the digital divide. Africa is taking a large number of fundamental issues well and truly by the horns. Our great expectations lie in the decisions that the Marrakesh Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-02) will take to add strength and speed to the on-going efforts in the continent to bridge the digital divide.

Africa, therefore, looks forward to the global debate on the reforms that will determine what role ITU will play in shaping the telecommunication sector and meeting the changing needs of the telecommunication marketplace of the 21st century. The World Summit on the Information

Society, strengthening ITU's regional presence, and reinforcing ITU's leadership role as a focal point for strategic decisions in global ICT affairs will be of particular interest. It is necessary for PP-02, while concerning itself with the development of global networks, to give particular attention to the development of new ICT infrastructures in the developing countries.

This article looks at some of Africa's restructuring and transformation efforts, and highlights the reasons why the outcome of PP-02 will be so important for the future of the region.

Restructuring everywhere

From PATU to ATU

Global trends of liberalization of telecommunication markets, privatization of incumbent operators and technology convergence have made it necessary to reform and restructure national, regional and global institutions. The regional organization in Africa with the mandate for coordinating and fostering the development of telecommunications, took a step forward in opening its doors to the private sector in December 1999. It changed its name from Pan African Telecommunications Union to African Telecommunications Union to signify its dual roles of inter-governmental organization and private-public partnership between governments and industry. ATU now has 46 Member States and 10 Associate Members (private sector) cooperating to find solutions for bridging the digital divide. Since 1998, they have shared a common vision and programme of action titled "African Connection", which was adopted that year by the Ministers of Communication at the PATU Plenipotentiary Conference in Lusaka.

ATU's efforts to increase African participation in international conferences, such as the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-2000), held in Montreal in September/October 2000 and WTDC-02, give hope that the region is beginning to take its rightful place in the global community of nations.

Programmes for deeper integration using regional economic groupings as building blocks for creating larger common markets for ICTs are a top priority within the cooperation agreements that ATU has entered into with these organizations, which include the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

ATU is forging ahead to enter into cooperation agreements with other regional telecommunication organizations in the world in order to share knowledge and exchange information on global issues and accelerate treaty-making at global conferences.

From OAU to AU

On 9 July 2002, the African Union was launched to replace OAU. This was the culmination of a process that started at the Extra Ordinary Summit of the OAU Heads of State and Government of 9 September 1999. AU will be Africa's principal organization aimed at political and socio-economic integration of the continent.

NEPAD is already providing a common African platform from which to engage the international community in a dynamic partnership that holds real prospects for creating a better life for all…

…Africa has great expectations in the measures that PP-02 will take in support of NEPAD

ITU 010050/PhotoDisc

It will be based on a common vision of a united and strong Africa and on the need to build partnerships between governments and all segments of civil society in particular women, youth and the private sector.

NEPAD

The birth of AU goes hand in hand with the launch of NEPAD. This new African initiative is a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty in the continent and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development and thus halt the marginalization of the continent in the globalization processes. NEPAD also defines the relationships between Africa and the international community. In a way, NEPAD is the region's recovery and development plan, providing as it does a vision for Africa, a statement of the key problems facing the continent and a programme of action anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves from the malaise of underdevelopment and participate actively in the new world economy.

NEPAD has been enthusiastically received and endorsed internationally as Africa's principal agenda for development within the institutional framework of AU. Already, NEPAD is providing a common African platform from which to engage the international community in a dynamic partnership that holds real prospects for creating a better life for all. It has been endorsed widely by global and regional organizations, including the United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank and the third ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-02), held in Istanbul in March 2002. WTDC-02 adopted a resolution for engaging ITU in the NEPAD initiative. Africa has great expectations in the measures that PP-02 will take in support of NEPAD.

Policy and regulatory reforms

The pace of reform in the continent is gathering momentum in order to create the enabling environment for the participation of the business and voluntary sectors in deploying information and communication technologies and services. These reforms are taking place at national, regional and global levels.

At national level, changes in telecommunication market structures have seen the entry of independent regulatory agencies in more than two-thirds of the countries of the region. They have in turn created competitive marketplaces for the provision of information and communication technology services. These reforms have resulted in an explosive roll out of mobile and Internet networks in urban areas. Although all the licensed operators had universal obligations to meet, the approach has failed in outreach to rural and remote locations. A way forward now being considered is the establishment of Universal Access Funds in all the countries to provide financial incentives to the business sector in the deployment of communication networks to rural communities, whose purchasing powers are still low.

At the regional level, ATU is promoting, along with other partners, the creation of larger markets for ICTs. This is expected to attract more investors to enter those markets and to roll out the much-needed networks in a competitive environment that would make access more affordable to more people. A number of mechanisms are being used in pursuit of these goals, including the formation of regulators' associations at the regional economic community level. So far, the Telecommunication Regulators' Association of Southern Africa (TRASA) is off the starter block and delivering value to SADC through joint frequency spectrum planning and model policies and legislation.

A number of these models have been used to draw up national legislation that is in harmony with the economic community. The associations for West Africa and East and Central Africa have made much headway, and discussions have started in the other regional economic communities. When fully operational, it is expected that the associations will facilitate sharing of resources for education and training to build the needed skills for the sector; sharing of facilities for type approval; and "one-stop-shop" capacity for licensing cross-border network operators, for example, those using very small aperture terminals (VSAT).

At the global level, reform of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Internet

Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) are being followed keenly, especially by the more financially capable countries in the continent.

Unless there are deliberate efforts to build capacity for the majority of developing countries to participate and table their concerns and priorities, the marginalization that has been witnessed in the last decade will continue.

Globalization policies, agreed at international forums, have had a negative impact on small- and medium-sized enterprises in the rural areas, leading to serious rural-urban migration and "brain drain". Reforms that increase private sector roles in ITU only widen the representation of the industrialized world, unless there is political will to bring on board a matching number of business sector players from developing countries. The allocation of global, finite and scarce resources, such as spectrum and orbital slots, locks out resources for future generations of people currently residing in poorer countries, unless there is prudence and care to include all humanity in the globalization processes.

Infrastructure investment

ATU continues to highlight the priority of information and communications technology infrastructure to ensure effective interconnectivity within and between countries, regions and continents. The lack of infrastructure has been identified as the fundamental problem and key barrier to ushering in the information society in Africa. However, some progress has been made using mobile and pre-paid technologies. With a few base stations, vast areas have been covered, and with pre-paid card access and affordability, barriers have been lowered. By year-end 2001, more than half of the African countries had more mobile than fixed-line subscribers.

The strategic priority is improved access for communities and firms with the short-term objective of doubling teledensity in sub-Saharan Africa to two lines per 100 people by the year 2005. In this context, affordability will be addressed to ensure lower costs and higher service reliability for productive sectors in order to make them more competitive in their export markets. Besides creating a competitive climate for multiple operators and service providers, another approach that will be pursued is building a standardization culture within the small- and medium-sized enterprises. With standard-setting processes for public access points, such as multipurpose telecentres and public call offices, access costs will be reduced through price competition by multiple vendors.

ITU 020148/R. Wooldridge

At the global level, reform of ITU and ICANN are being followed keenly, especially by the more financially capable countries in the continent

Deployment of infrastructure in rural and remote locations is very much dependent on public, private, and voluntary sector partnership. The private sector cannot venture unaided because of the low purchasing power of rural communities. The voluntary sector is composed mainly of non-governmental organizations and private foundations, which have mandates to deliver content (information), *inter alia*, on governance, health, education and economic empowerment to poor communities. However, these entities lack infrastructure. A framework for pooling resources into Universal Access Funds for the purpose of smart financing the much-needed information infrastructure is being drawn up and implemented in most countries, but the support of the international community is still needed to make a significant difference.

Since the rural communities also need energy and other infrastructures, such as roads and waterways, an initiative of integrating investment programmes for rural infrastructure is under consideration. The success of a power company in providing backbone

telecommu-nication services in Ghana is a success story worthy of replication throughout the continent.

For faster cross-border infrastructure deployment, inter-country cooperation on policy reform and standards-setting processes will be needed. Furthermore, trade treaties and protocols may be required to enable such cross-border investment. These needs and requirements are being addressed through the frameworks of the African Union, NEPAD and the African Telecommunications Union.

With regard to technologies, Internet infrastructure is a priority for investment opportunities. For connectivity in urban centres the use of broadband fibre-optic platforms will be preferred, whilst for rural communities wireless broadband and solar-powered platforms are the focus. To stimulate regional trade and research cooperation, all African countries are being encouraged to establish national Internet exchange points which would subsequently be interconnected; firstly, at regional economic community level grid; and secondly, on a continental peering grid. This approach would foster collective self-reliance on Internet traffic in the light of the huge cost burden imposed on developing countries by the current international Internet connectivity arrangements.

Lack of infrastructure has been identified as the fundamental problem and key barrier to ushering in the information society in Africa. For connectivity in urban centres, the use of broadband fibre-optic platforms will be the focus...

Human resources development

ATU reaffirms the centrality of human resources development in the development process. It encourages cooperation between countries regionally, as well as globally in ICT training, knowledge management and human capacity development where scarce skills are being affected by the brain drain phenomenon. There is an urgent need to develop and undertake a massive e-awareness campaign and the establishment of e-learning networks in Africa at school, college and university levels.

In addition to initiatives for networking training institutions, the establishment of science parks and industrial incubators, alongside technical universities, is being emphasized as a measure of reversing the brain drain. Partnership between public, private and voluntary sectors at regional and global levels is needed to finance these initiatives. Similarly, African experts should be given the opportunity to build capacity and be solution providers, given their intimate knowledge of the continent's challenges and opportunities.

With globalization and technology convergence, international debate and negotiations have grown increasingly complex. Delegates from developing countries just cannot afford the policy research backup that the industrial countries have and predictably do not get equitable share of global resources such as spectrum, orbital slots and Internet names and numbers. Initiatives to build capacity of delegates from developing countries will help reverse this trend. It is a matter of fact that technical staff (engineers, lawyers, and economists) with diplomatic skills and diplomatic staff with technical know-how are extremely scarce.

Building a standardization culture

As the practical mechanism for bridging the digital divide in rural communities is through public access communication points (for example, multipurpose telecentres, public call offices and cybercafés), it is important that cost and reliability issues are addressed through concerted standardization approaches. There are numerous initiatives with multiple technologies but these neither interconnect nor interoperate. And so, as we implement the WTDC-02 commitment of connecting every village in the

world by the time of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society to be held in Tunis in 2005, it will be essential that we use standards to integrate our international cooperation efforts.

Integrating the standardization process of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU–T) with those of other standards-development organizations of other infrastructures (electricity, water, rail, and road) will result in the evolution of collocation codes that will allow rural infrastructure investment at much lower cost, with higher reliability.

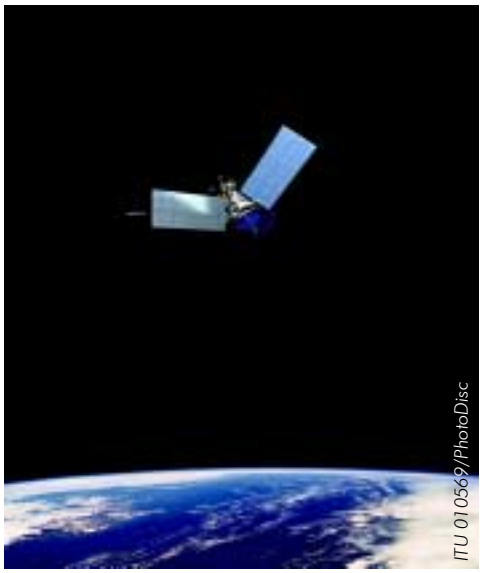
Small- and medium-sized enterprises can further be empowered to provide affordable connectivity solutions, if they receive the support of the international community to participate in, and embrace, the standardization culture.

Sharing of spectrum and satellite resources

Countries in Africa are lifeline users of spectrum and satellite resources, perhaps more than developing countries in other continents. Most of their international traffic is channelled through satellites to the rest of the world. There are a few exceptions in the north and south enjoying submarine cable access. Though the numbers may have been boosted with the commissioning in May 2002 of the West African Submarine Cable connecting a further 12 countries, developments in satellite policy and governance are of priority concern to the continent.

Given the centrality of satellite technologies, leaders in Africa have been promoting a satellite project known as RASCOM since 1992. They have had to struggle through huge impediments including processing backlogs and congestion on the equator orbital slot. However, through concerted efforts in the last two years, they now have orbital slots and frequency spectrum that should enable their launch services by the first quarter of 2004.

In reforming ITU, principles of "first come first served" on these scarce and finite resource should be reviewed. Those who are poor today and without technological power will not be so forever. Hence, principles of equity and conservation should prevail to ensure access by humankind in present and future generations.



In seeking solutions to the satellite backlog issues and increasing cost recovery in processing fees, care should be taken to ensure that new barriers for excluding the developing world are not created

In seeking solutions to the satellite backlog issues and increasing cost recovery in processing fees, care should be taken to ensure that new barriers for excluding the developing world are not created. An affirmative asymmetric approach with defined transition periods should be considered, so that the statement of transforming the digital divide into digital opportunity does not become just another slogan.

For many in Africa, the first telephone call was through a mobile phone using spectrum allocated by the new regulatory agencies. With third generation technologies on the horizon, which promise further convergence between telecommunications and broadcasting, processes for allocating required spectrum should ensure an equitable share by rural communities and public interest institutions and avoid serving the interests of the business sector alone. There are vast communities with cultural content and languages that will be marginalized if global spectrum resource allocation is based on being always present at global treating-making conferences. These communities, due to poverty and limited capacity, do not have the experts to fully articulate their needs. In this case, international cooperation should go beyond fighting for narrow national interests and seek the global good for all of humanity. ■

Common proposals*

For a 21st-century ITU

Arab States have joined forces to prepare common proposals to be tabled at the Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-02).

Among the key issues being examined in the region are the rights and obligations of Sector Members, in particular, their financial contribution towards defraying the expenses of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU); the function and structure of ITU; revisions to the International Telecommunication Regulations and the status of observers in ITU meetings and conferences. The common proposals also include the response of Arab States to a number of recommendations formulated by the Working Group on ITU Reform (WGR).

Rights and obligations of Sector Members

Arab States consider that the question of rights of Sector Members, in study for more than a decade, is definitively resolved — except if future plenipotentiary conferences decide otherwise. They highlight some of the additional rights granted to Sector Members since 1992 as follows:

- The possibility to apply directly to the Secretary-General for Sector membership when the Member State has authorized entities falling under its jurisdiction to do so.
- Full right in the adoption of questions in study group programmes.
- Full right in the appproval and adoption of any technical recommendation under the alternative approval process (AAP) and prior to the consultation procedure for other types of recommendations under the traditional approval procedure (TAP).
- Observer status in plenipotentiary conferences without the need of a green light from the Member States concerned.

The private sector has also seen its participation in ITU activities expand through the recent creation of the Associate status aimed at enabling entities that are not Sector Members to take part in any given study group.

Arab States hold the view that increasing Sector Member rights further would mean reconsidering the intergovernmental nature of the Union, that character having been confirmed by all preceding plenipotentiary conferences.

To put all these evolving rights in their context, Arab States explain that ITU made the first attempt to address the effects of the changing telecommunication environment at the Nice Plenipotentiary Conference in 1989. This attempt resulted in the creation of the High-Level Committee (HLC), which made a set of recommendations that were examined by the Additional Plenipotentiary Conference in Geneva in 1992. This conference included most of the HLC recommendations in the ITU Constitution and Convention and created the current Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU–T), the Radiocommunication Sector (ITU–R) and the Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU–D).

Then came the Kyoto Plenipotentiary Conference of 1994, which concluded that the question of rights and obligations of Sector Members, as well as the finances of the Union, needed more detailed study both from the legal and financial viewpoints. This conference adopted two resolutions:

- **Resolution 39:** "Strengthening the financial base of the Union."

* This article is adapted from Document 52 entitled "Arab States Common Proposals", submitted to ITU on 17 July 2002 for the work of the Plenipotentiary Conference.

• **Resolution 15:** "Review of the rights and obligations of all the Members of the Sectors of the Union."

Two groups were set up to implement these resolutions. Based on their findings, the Council in 1996 created the ITU-2000 Group with the mandate to pursue studies referred to in Resolutions 15 and 39. ITU-2000 developed a set of recommendations, a number of which were included in the Constitution and Convention by the Minneapolis Plenipotentiary Conference in 1998, giving Sector Members additional rights.

On the question of obligations, Arab States note that while Member States had agreed to increase the rights of Sector Members on the understanding that they would, in turn, increase their financial contribution to the Union, this has not happened. Instead, some Sector Members, regardless of their size, tend to select to pay the lowest possible contribution when exercising their free choice of contributory class. There is no means to stop the selection of the lowest class of contribution. In many cases, these members end up contributing only 10 per cent of the contributory unit (CHF 31 500 in the 2002–2003 budget).

Arab States explain that although several proposals have been made to the preceding reform groups to replace the present free-choice approach in selecting the class of contribution by an alternative scheme based, *inter alia,* on the size of the Sector Members, none of these proposals have been taken on board. They argue that the application of the free-choice principle to Sector Members has demonstrated its limitations. If this trend is left to continue, Arab States fear that the financial burden of Member States may well unduly increase.

They warn that if PP-02 does not take any action, the contribution of some Sector Members could drop to a level where it may not even cover the cost of the documentation they receive.

Consequently, they claim that a more equitable situation would result from reverting to the procedures that were in place prior to 1973 by abandoning the free choice of the class of contribution by Sector Members. They propose that PP-02 should give the Council the task of determining, on the basis of criteria which it would develop, the amount of the contribution of Sector Members.

On the proposal put forward by WGR to admit selected Sector Members to participate in the Finance Committee of the Council to give the private sector a say in decisions regarding the allocation of resources to ITU activities, Arab States take the view that this is not feasible. They explain that the two standing committees of the Council (Finance and Staff Matters) form an integral part of the governing body's machinery currently limited to Member States. Also, anticipating difficulty in devising an objective mechanism to designate selected Sector Members as representatives of this entire category of membership, they propose that only Sector Members that are chairmen or vice-chairmen of advisory groups be admitted as observers in Council sessions, once their status has been clearly defined in the Convention.

In response to the claim of the private sector that it be given the right to vote on technical standards, Arab States note that this is merely a matter of principle since, in practice, standards are adopted on an equal footing with Member States in ITU–T. The right to vote, they argue, can only formally be given to Member States who alone are Parties to the Constitution, Convention and Administrative Regulations, given the treaty-status of these instruments. Furthermore, the two entities (Member States and Sector Members) have a different status at the national level, one being under the authority of the other. As a result, they favour a complete review of the structure and functioning of ITU that would clearly separate the treaty-based activities from those that are more commercially-oriented.

Structure and functioning of ITU

In a bid to better reflect the respective roles of Member States, Sector Members and regulators, taking into account their somewhat diverging priorities, the Arab States propose a complete overhaul of the Constitution and Convention. Essentially, it is proposed to rearrange the provisions of both instruments to make a clear distinction between activities that fall within the prerogatives of Member States and regulators and those that are of interest to

Sector Members. The grouping would be along the following lines:

- Activities requiring an international treaty such as the use of common resources (frequency spectrum, satellite orbits, numbering etc) where Member States and regulators would be the main stakeholders.
- Standards-setting and other commercially-oriented activities where Sector Members and regulators would be the key players.
- Development activities where all players would cooperate and work with other organizations to help developing countries to take advantage of the benefits of information and communication technologies and enter the information society as active partners.

As this is basically the case for ITU–T and ITU–D, action to be taken only concerns ITU–R where work relating to radio conferences and to the Radio Regulations Board would be separated from the technical work and would be grouped with other treaty-making conferences.

Irrespective of the longer-term objectives, Arab States propose to replace those provisions applicable to the three Sectors by a general provision that would leave to the Assembly or Conference of each Sector the authority to adapt its structure and working methods. This would give Sectors greater flexibility to adapt to rapidly changing conditions and respond to new requirements. However, Arab States do not favour any further delegation of authority to advisory groups whose role, they say, should remain advisory. In the case of the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG), the current level of delegation would be retained on the *proviso* that TSAG decisions be subject to the possible review of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA).

In the context of such a wide-ranging review of the functioning of ITU, some Arab States wish to set up a group of Member States which, with input from Sector Members, would review the functioning of the three Sectors, consider the status of regulators and define the roles of all stakeholders (Member States, Sector Members and regulators). They also wish to see the regulatory activities strengthened with greater focus on technical assistance to help developing countries define appropriate and effective regulatory frameworks.

Revision of the International Telecommunication Regulations

The Arab States are of the view that the regulations in their countries and certainly in the majority of other countries, as well as operators of international telecommunications, urgently require the updating of the Melbourne Agreement by convening a world conference on international telecommunications (WCIT).

Since the adoption of the *International Telecommunication Regulations* (ITR) in Melbourne in 1988, the explosion of new telecommunication technologies have permitted a number of new uses, some of them being considered as 'services' with the meaning of a service as described in the Melbourne Agreement, others as value-added services. At the same time, the structure of the telecommunication sector has changed with a majority of countries having privatized their operators with, as a result, the creation of regulatory bodies whose status varies from one country to another.

Today, regulators are confronted with disputes among operators of different countries with no international framework to help address the problems. Also, the questions are being raised on the compatibility of other treaties such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Basic Telecommunication Services and the International Telecommunication Regulations. As a way forward, Arab States will be tabling a resolution which proposes to:

- Include in the programme of activities of the Union for the coming four years the convening of a world conference on international telecommunications to revise ITRs.
- Instruct the Council to adopt the agenda and exact date in the year 2007 for the convening of a WCIT.
- Instruct the three Sectors, each for matters within its competence, to undertake studies intended to assist in the preparation of the conference, and, acting jointly, to organize during the years 2003 and 2004 a series of regional meetings to identify matters to be treated by WCIT. ■

The balance of power

Industry seeks a stronger say in technical and financial decisions

by Michael Bartholomew
Director, European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association (ETNO)

Corporate governance

When future historians look back at the year 2002, they will undoubtedly see corporate governance as a major theme that emerged from the year's troublesome economic events.

In particular, the questionable managerial decisions and accounting practices of major ICT companies in Europe and the United States — including several in the telecommunications sector — have driven home the crucial importance of accountability and access to information. These two factors must be given free play if an entity and its stakeholders are to thrive and make solid, successful decisions.

But the concept of good governance is not restricted to the corporate world. It adheres to any organization — corporate, non-profit or governmental — whose decisions affect the economy and the public good.

"When future historians look back at the year 2002, they will undoubtedly see corporate governance as a major theme that emerged from the year's troublesome economic events."

Indeed, stakeholder rights and successful decision-making are at the heart of the issue as the International Telecommunication Union enters the 21st century. We all know change is in the air. ITU has been around a long time. It has had many commendable achievements in its 137 year-old history, accomplishments that we at the European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association applaud and encourage.

ITU over the years

But over the years ITU has also become weighed down with bureaucracy, divergent political agendas between Member State governments, a hierarchic management structure and a legacy of opaque budgetary procedures. Such things discourage enthusiastic participation by stakeholders such as the business-oriented

private industry. The latter's participation is especially important for the development of telecommunication standards where input from the private sector is imperative for technical excellence in a fast-moving sector.

These criticisms of ITU are not new, and great efforts have been undertaken in particular by the private sector of the ITU membership to overcome the deficiencies. Industry has achieved a number of positive results, but there is still a lot to be done within ITU.

For instance, initiatives to improve ITU were launched at the CCITT* Plenary Assembly in Melbourne in 1988 before the Nice Plenipotentiary Conference in 1989. Even top ITU officials have appealed to "the spirit of Melbourne" to encourage new and better rules and procedures. But adapting ITU to a new business environment has been constantly delayed due to resistance by highly conservative Member States.

Reforming ITU — three lines of action are required

Now, as ITU launches its Plenipotentiary Conference in Morocco (Marrakesh, 23 September–18 October 2002) it is worth reiterating to delegates the reforming tasks they face. There are three lines of action required.

◆ **Goal One:** improved decision-making with a voice for industry, particularly in matters of telecommunication standards. Despite a proliferation in recent years of regional organizations, frameworks and forums developing telecommunication specifications and standards, ITU remains the only platform for addressing these issues (Internet aside) on a global basis. For that reason alone, it is and will continue to be important for our industry.

*CCITT stands for International Telegraph and Telephone Consultative Committee, the predecessor of the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU–T).

ITU offers a unique forum for all major players — administrations, manufacturers, operators, customers and scientific bodies. However, at the end of the day, it still remains a strictly intergovernmental arrangement whose decisions are susceptible to the exigencies of politics and bureaucratic inertia.

This is all the more illogical considering that 12 out of the present 13 study groups within the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU–T) are chaired by representatives from private industry. Yet formal decisions in ITU–T are subordinate to the vote of governments.

"Industry seeks a stronger say in technical decisions affecting their sector. This is the basis for a membership democracy within ITU. Our appeal for a greater participatory democracy within the organization concerns technical matters, not regulatory, which is the sole intergovernmental responsibility of ITU."

Industry seeks a stronger say in technical decisions affecting their sector. This is the basis for a membership democracy within ITU. Our appeal for a greater participatory democracy within the organization concerns technical matters, not regulatory, which is the sole intergovernmental responsibility of ITU Member States. We simply seek a more balanced arrangement in those areas where we have the competence and where we do the work.

● **Solution:** at least where technical standards are concerned, the voting rights of Sector Members from industry should be placed on equal footing with those of ITU Member State governments. Otherwise, the potential for deadlock will remain and alternative forums will continue to multiply and undermine ITU's authority. The Internet's development is a good example.

Similarly, the methods by which ITU officials are elected must be changed. The current practice is too vulnerable to the whims of politics. Indeed, efforts in general to reform ITU have been lost in divergent political agendas between developed and developing ITU Member States, between Europe and the United States and even within Europe itself. The result has been delay and stagnation.

For example, the Directors of the Union's three Bureaux, namely: the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) and the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), should no longer be elected by the Plenipotentiary Conference. They should instead be nominated and elected by the World Telecommunication Development Conference, the Radiocommunication Assembly and the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly. While this will not completely shield elections from political factors, it would at least narrow the field of candidates in each Sector.

◆ **Goal Two:** better financial accountability and stakeholder control of technical work. Every organization has to spread common shared costs across all its activities. No one disputes that. But ITU's Sectors — Radiocommunication (ITU–R) Telecommunication Development (ITU–D) and ITU–T — are funded from a general budget and these allocations are made via group decisions by those often too far removed from the work funded by those decisions.

This leaves contributing Sector Members from industry feeling they have little influence over how funds are spent. Many ITU participants feel these costs are not being equitably apportioned nor are they being exploited in the most efficient way to the benefit of ITU–R and ITU–T.

This is a continuing sore point for our member companies, for whom these two Sectors' activities are paramount. Addressing this problem requires a wholesale revision of ITU's budgetary procedures.

• **Solution:** as a first step, each of the three Sectors should be assigned its own budget, with the authority to manage these resources autonomously. This would immediately inject more transparency into the Union's accounting structure.

In our view, ITU–T must become an entity with more commercially-oriented objectives, management and financing. This would compel it to listen more responsively to the needs of its membership and react accordingly.

As for shared overhead costs, the ITU secretariat should apportion these on a "pay as you go" basis. That way, if one Sector demands more administrative support and services than another, then it pays for it. This would also have the advantage of imposing budgetary discipline on each Sector.

◆ **Goal Three:** raising public awareness of ITU. For all its shortcomings, ITU has done — and continues to do — valuable work. Yet much of the outside world is either unaware or insufficiently informed about the gamut of ITU's activities and accomplishments.

"ITU needs to equip itself to move in tandem with the momentous operational and regulatory changes sweeping across our industry. That is the trend as we head into the new century, but one that will not wait for an organization clinging to its traditional roots."

Unfortunately, some of the blame for this situation can be laid at ITU's feet. The organization needs to change and expand the ways it communicates its achievements… externally to the public at large and, more important, internally to its own participants.

• **Solution:** ITU's "deliverable" results should become just that — deliverable and accessible to all. This means making all ITU–R and ITU–T Recommendations available to Members in downloadable form on the Internet, free of charge. Currently, each Sector Member is entitled to only a very limited number of free downloads. In a world of shared technical standards in telecommunications, there is little justification for this kind of restriction.

Acting on such goals would go a very long way towards modernizing ITU's managerial structure. ITU needs to equip itself to move in tandem with the momentous operational and regulatory changes sweeping across our industry.

That is the trend as we head into the new century, but one that will not wait for an organization clinging to its traditional roots. ■

Moving forward

A private sector perspective on Plenipotentiary issues*

by Meredith Singer
Manager, ITU and Europe/NIS Programs
Telecommunications Industry Association

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), to be held at Marrakesh from 23 September to 18 October 2002, will take place in a very different environment from past years. The global telecommunications market is currently in an economic crisis — more than a million high-tech workers have lost their jobs, new network deployments in many countries have come to a halt, and investors have lost confidence in the telecommunications sector. Unfortunately, these conditions have exerted an enormous amount of pressure on large multinationals, small companies, and new entrants alike to fight for scarce resources and make their operations more efficient in order to ensure their survival. This is today's reality.

In such difficult times, ITU must recognize the market challenges faced by many of its Sector Members. These challenges will be reflected in the views of Sector Members at the Plenipotentiary Conference and will decidedly influence their future participation in ITU.

The United States' Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA), a Development Sector Member and an active participant in Telecommunication Standardization and Radiocommunication Sector issues, represents nearly 1000 companies that manufacture or supply products and services used in global communications. More than 200 TIA member companies are Sector Members of ITU's three Sectors: Telecommunication Development (ITU–D), Telecommunication Standardization (ITU–T) and Radiocommunication (ITU–R). These companies participate actively in study groups, advisory groups, world conferences and other ITU meetings and projects. Because of the deep commitment TIA and its members have to ITU, there are several issues facing the Marrakesh Plenipotentiary Conference that will have important implications for future Sector Member participation.

*Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the Telecommunications Industry Association. They do not represent the views of the United States Government.

Broad-based concerns

Among the non Sector-specific issues important to our membership is the need to focus the work of ITU more on "progress" and less on

"process." For example, during ITU meetings more time should be devoted to discussing substantive rather than procedural matters. In these difficult financial times — when corporate budgets are tight and private sector trade and investment opportunities exist outside ITU — Sector Members are looking for ways to effectively use their resources. They would like to see their annual dues produce tangible benefits, and they want meetings that are results-oriented.

The rights and obligations of Sector Members are also important issues for our Association. Our membership encourages increased transparency and participation for Sector Members and Member States alike in ITU activities. We also seek stability in the dues that we pay as Sector Members to ITU. We support maintaining the 1/5 ratio for Sector Members' dues, and we hope the Conference will provide some assurance that dues will not fluctuate annually.

TIA and its Sector Members strongly encourage ITU to use advanced technologies — such as broadband communications and webconferencing — to facilitate member participation at ITU meetings and events. Currently, much importance is placed on physically attending meetings in Geneva or elsewhere. Unfortunately, there has not been enough attention paid to incorporating electronic means of communication to facilitate the same kinds of results achieved in physical meetings. Employing such technologies broadens the scope of participation and allows more members to take advantage of their ITU Sector memberships.

A significant challenge for the Conference will be to encourage greater information sharing, coordination and cooperation among the three Sectors. Our members believe that while each of the Sectors is doing very valuable work, challenges exist in ensuring effective cross-sectoral coordination. For example, in some cases, the D-Sector is taking on work that already is being conducted in the T- and R- Sectors. This can be illustrated with a few of the new ITU–D study group Questions approved at the World Telecommunication Development Conference in Istanbul in March this year on spectrum fee calculation and the technical aspects of migration from circuit-switched to packed-switched networks. Similarly, ITU–D work on the technical aspects of IP telephony is already being discussed in ITU–T study groups. Thus, better coordination amongst the three Sectors is needed to leverage existing knowledge and expertise. Doing so will not only help the entire ITU membership, but also will enable ITU staff to more efficiently use scarce resources that are available to them.

TIA and its Sector Members strongly encourage ITU to use advanced technologies — such as broadband communications and webconferencing — to facilitate member participation at ITU meetings and events

ITU 010565/PhotoDisc

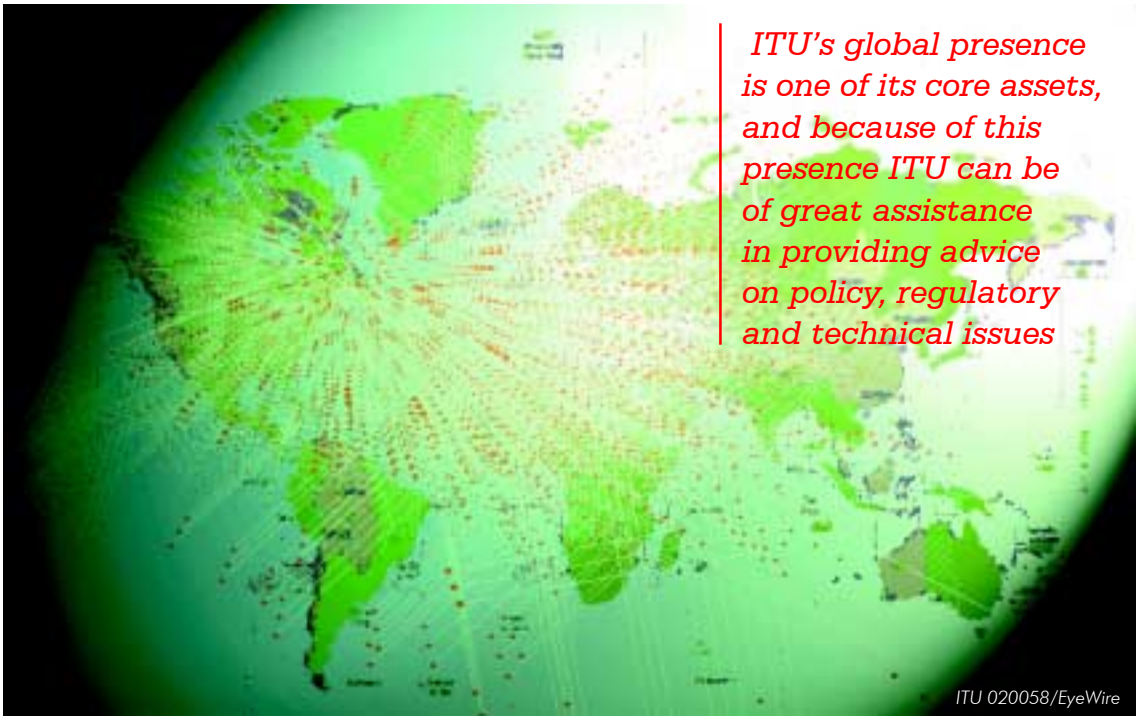
Planning for and coordinating the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) also will be an important agenda item during the Conference. We believe that ITU should do its best to ensure that WSIS includes a meaningful role for the private sector — before, during and after the Summit. The private sector should be given a chance to participate as more than just observers, and be included in the implementation of any programmes or output from WSIS.

Standardization Sector

The future of the T-Sector is a critical issue that will be addressed at the Conference. At issue is how the T-Sector can effectively evolve to meet the changing needs of the telecommunications industry, as well as coordination with national and regional telecommunication standardization bodies. On the positive side, the T-Sector recently has responded very well to the increased pace of evolving technical standards. The alternative approval process (AAP) for approving technical Recommendations and the increased use of electronic correspondence have led to tremendous successes for T-Sector constituents. Both have dramatically streamlined the time taken to approve Recommendations and have improved the quality and amount of work completed between meetings.

However, there is more that can be done. Sector Members need to be given the opportunity to sufficiently engage in helping move the T-Sector forward — ensuring its leading role in global telecommunication standardization approval. As such, necessary improvements to ITU–T's working methods and structures should be allowed and promoted by encouraging the use of existing mechanisms such as focus groups, as described in Recommendation A.7, or by experimenting with new approaches.

Moreover, improving the coordination between ITU–T and national and regional telecommunication standardization bodies will reduce the duplicative work that takes place in those bodies, and ITU–T can use such technical work as the basis for ITU Recommendations. Regardless of the methods, broad acceptance by both Member States and Sector Members is essential.



ITU's global presence is one of its core assets, and because of this presence ITU can be of great assistance in providing advice on policy, regulatory and technical issues

ITU 020058/EyeWire

Additionally, the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) should be further encouraged to focus on high-level strategic and financial issues, rather than on study group work programmes and methods and other working-level details. This evolution, which has already begun, should continue and be reflected in the output of the Conference.

Such changes will encourage ITU–T to prosper by attracting significant numbers of new Sector Members and strengthening and broadening its core competencies. Thus, ITU–T will be able to respond effectively to industry needs and technological changes, quickly adopting working procedures to meet the changing environment.

Development Sector

The work of the D-Sector has played an important role in assisting many developing countries in recent years. However, the Sector's future success will be determined by how well it can manage scarce resources. Hence, the issue of "regional presence" — or the use of ITU regional offices and ITU's work in areas outside of Geneva — is important to Sector Members. Moreover, it is important not only to the Development Sector, but to all three Sectors. TIA Sector Members want to see the most effective and efficient use of these offices and staff expertise. ITU's global presence is one of its core assets. And because of its global presence, ITU can be of great assistance in providing advice on policy, regulatory and technical issues. However, regional offices should facilitate the work of all three Sectors, and the costs to operate those offices should be shared accordingly.

As in all Sectors, TIA Sector Members want to see scarce Development Sector resources used most effectively. We do not wish to see a proliferation of expensive conferences and meetings in place of development projects that will help those most in need

As in all Sectors, TIA Sector Members want to see scarce Development Sector resources used most effectively. We do not wish to see a proliferation of expensive conferences and meetings in place of development projects that will help those most in need. Thus, we wish to see a Development Sector emphasis placed on project development and facilitation, technical assistance, and other concrete achievements that will make a real difference in developing countries.

In other words, we believe that the D-Sector should act more as a facilitator of project implementation — using its position to bring together Sector Members and Member States in meaningful development projects. Given the wealth of experience of the D-Sector membership, we would like to see the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) place more emphasis on creating linkages among partners in project implementation.

Radiocommunication Sector

The issue of cost recovery for Radiocommunication Sector expenses will be an important topic of discussion at the Conference. While cost recovery is a laudable goal, our R-Sector Members are concerned about the growing list of fees, which they have to pay to attend ITU–R events, as well as fees mandated by treaty obligations. Such additional fees, if not fairly and evenly applied to all participants, will diminish Sector Member participation or force them to participate primarily through Member State delegations. It may also lead to a reduction in Sector memberships, and consequently, related membership revenue. Rather than charge Sector Members for documentation, translation and similar expenses, the Sector should devote greater attention to the use of electronic documents, web-conferencing and other resource-saving means.

Way forward

In addition to those suggestions provided above, TIA would like to encourage ITU to employ more resource-saving techniques and act as a facilitator, bringing together Sector Members, regulatory and other government officials to address today's dynamically changing telecommunications environment. We wholly support ITU's continued promotion of information exchange, as well as public-private partnerships and events that provide added value to Sector Members, including regular electronic updates about Sector meetings and activities and Sector Member speaking opportunities in ITU-sponsored events. Information sharing — particularly by increasing the use of broadband technologies — is a key component to ensuring the success of ITU programmes. We hope that ITU will build on existing successes and do even more over the next four years to share information about its programmes and services with Sector Members and Member States alike.

TIA and its Sector Members look forward to the Marrakesh Plenipotentiary Conference and wish the meeting much success. For more information about TIA and its member companies, see http://www.tiaonline.org ■

From official sources

CONSTITUTION AND CONVENTION OF THE ITU (GENEVA, 1992), KYOTO, 1994 AND MINNEAPOLIS, 1998

The Government of the **Republic of Guinea-Bissau** has acceded to the above-mentioned Constitution and Convention.

The instrument of accession was deposited with the Secretary-General on 17 July 2002.

The Government of the **Rwandese Republic** has acceded to the above-mentioned Constitution and Convention.

The instrument of accession was deposited with the Secretary-General on 27 June 2002.

INSTRUMENTS AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION AND CONVENTION OF THE ITU (GENEVA, 1992), MINNEAPOLIS, 1998

The Government of **Austria** has ratified the instruments amending the above-mentioned Constitution and Convention, and has confirmed Reservations made at the time of signature.

The instrument of ratification was deposited with the Secretary-General on 26 June 2002.

The Government of the **Federal Republic of Nigeria** has ratified the instruments amending the above-mentioned Constitution and Convention.

The instrument of ratification was deposited with the Secretary-General on 19 June 2002.

The Government of the **Republic of Uganda** has ratified the instruments amending the above-mentioned Constitution and Convention.

The instrument of ratification was deposited with the Secretary-General on 27 June 2002.

The Government of the **Republic of Indonesia** has ratified the instruments amending the above-mentioned Constitution and Convention.

The instrument of ratification was deposited with the Secretary-General on 1 July 2002.

CHANGES

The *Ministry of Transport and Telecommunications* of the Principality of Liechtenstein has changed its name and is now called **Ministry of Transport and Communications.**

The *Department of State for Works, Communications and Information* of the Republic of the Gambia has changed its name and is now called **Department of State for Communications, Information and Technology.**

The *Telecommunications and Broadcasting Agency of the Republic of Slovenia* has changed its name and is now called **Telecommunications, Broadcasting and Post Agency of the Republic of Slovenia.**

The *Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros* has changed its name. The official denomination is now **Union of the Comoros.**

The *Ministry of Transports, Tourism, Posts and Telecommunications* of the Union of the Comoros has changed its name and is now called **Ministry of State for Social Affairs, Solidarity, Decentralization, Posts, Telecommunications and International Transports.**

The *Posts and Telecommunications Agency of Uzbekistan* has changed its name and is now called **Communications and Information Agency of Uzbekistan.**

Korea Telecom, which participates in the work of the Radiocommunication, Standardization and Development Sectors, has changed its name. The new denomination is **KT Corporation.**

Omnitel Pronto Italia S.p.A., which participates in the work of the Radiocommunication, Standardization and Development Sectors,

From official sources *(continued)*

has changed its name. The new denomination is **Vodafone Omnitel S.p.A.**

Orange PCS Ltd, which participates in the work of the Radiocommunication and Standardization Sectors, has changed its name. The new denomination is **Orange S.A.**

Shanghai Bell, which participates in the work of the Radiocommunication, Standardization and Development Sectors, has changed its name. The new denomination is **Alcatel Shanghai Bell.**

Siemens Information and Communication Networks S.p.A. (Siemens ICN S.p.A.), which participates in the work of the Radiocommunication and Standardization Sectors, has changed its name. The new denomination is **Siemens Mobile Communications S.p.A.**

NEW MEMBERS

Radiocommunication Sector

China Network Communication Group Corporation (Beijing), Cisco Systems, Inc. (Akron, OH), Oman Telecommunications Company (SAOC) (Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman), Warner Brothers (Glendale, CA) and *ZTE Corporation (Shenzhen, People's Republic of China)* have been admitted to take part in the work of this Sector.

Telecommunication Standardization Sector

China Network Communication Group Corporation (Beijing), Oman Telecommunications Company (SAOC) (Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman) and *ZTE Corporation (Shenzhen, People's Republic of China)* have been admitted to take part in the work of this Sector.

Telecommunication Development Sector

Bhutan Telecom (BT) (Thimphu, Kingdom of Bhutan), China Network Communication Group Corporation (Beijing), Oman Telecommunications Company (SAOC) (Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman), Philippine Global Communications, Inc. (PhilCom) (Makati City, Republic of the Philippines), Telekom Srpske (Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and *ZTE Corporation (Shenzhen, People's Republic of China)* have been admitted to take part in the work of this Sector.

NEW ASSOCIATES

Radiocommunication Sector

Proxim Corporation (Sunnyvale, CA) has been admitted to take part in the work of Study Group 1.

Telecommunication Standardization Sector

ACCA Networks Co., Ltd (Tokyo) has been admitted to take part in the work of Study Group 15.

RealNetworks, Inc. (Seattle, WA) has been admitted to take part in the work of Study Group 16.

Telchemy Incorporated (Suwanee, GA) has been admitted to take part in the work of Study Group 12.

Yokogawa Electric Corporation (Tokyo) has been admitted to take part in the work of Study Group 17.

STRUCTURAL CHANGES

Republic of Hungary

The *Ministry of Informatics and Communications* has been created.

Republic of Mauritius

Mauritius Telecommunications Authority (MTA) has been replaced by the *Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA)*, pursuant to Act ICT 2001. ■