



Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)

Ninth Meeting of the Telecommunication Development  
Advisory Group (TDAG)  
Geneva, 21-23 January 2004

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## Note by the Director of BDT

# SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS OF THE NINTH MEETING OF THE TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP (TDAG)

GENEVA, 21-23 JANUARY 2004

## 1 Opening of the meeting

1.1 The **Secretary** opened the meeting at 0940 hours on Wednesday 21 January 2004 and welcomed participants to Geneva. He said that it was proposed that Mr N. Kisrawi (Syrian Arab Republic) should chair the meeting until a new chairman had been elected to replace Mr Tony Zeitoun (ob. 5 May 2003).

1.2 It was so **agreed**.

## 2 Tribute to Mr T. Zeitoun

2.1 The **Director** and numerous other participants paid tribute to the late Tony Zeitoun, who had chaired TDAG until his death in May 2003.

2.2 **The meeting observed a minute of silence in memory of Tony Zeitoun.**

## 3 Opening remarks

3.1 The **Secretary-General** outlined the results of the very successful first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003. The Summit had realized its two main objectives, of establishing a vision shared by all major stakeholders and identifying the action to be taken to realize that vision. Eight of the eleven key principles established by WSIS in its Declaration of Principles were directly related to ITU's mandate, and that of BDT in particular, and ITU's key role was explicitly referred to in § 64 of the Declaration. Other United Nations organizations were positioning themselves aggressively to take advantage of the Summit's success, and ITU must ensure it was not bypassed and left behind.

3.2 The **Director of BR** said that excellent cooperation continued between ITU-D and ITU-R, which both faced similar challenges in the face of budgetary constraints. He eagerly awaited the

results of TDAG's discussions on subjects like the four-year rolling operational plan, and working methods, as RAG would address the same matters later in the year. With regard to preparation of the operational plan, he was convinced that a harmonized approach should be adopted by the three Sectors and General Secretariat.

3.3 The **Director of TSB** endorsed the points made by the Director of BR, adding that multilateral cooperation was essential between all Sectors and the General Secretariat. He highlighted the efforts he was making to promote ITU-T activities in the Regions, and said that TSAG would be analysing the results of phase one of WSIS to identify the areas that concerned ITU-T and how best to contribute to phase 2. He counted on the entire membership's contribution to ensure the success of WTSA-03, to be held in Brazil in October.

3.4 The **Director of BDT** said that 2003 had been a very busy year, with *inter alia* the additional session of the Council and phase one of WSIS. The latter had provided an excellent opportunity for ITU to make itself known. TDAG's advice would be particularly welcome concerning BDT's positioning vis-à-vis the Declaration of Principles and WSIS Plan of Action, the four-year rolling operational plan, preparations for WTDC-06, etc. Very good cooperation existed between all Sectors of ITU and the General Secretariat, and he thanked the Secretary-General and the Directors of BR and TSB for their ongoing cooperation.

#### **4 Election of Chairman**

**4.1 Mr D. Mellor (Cable & Wireless plc) was unanimously elected Chairman by acclamation.**

4.2 The **Chairman** thanked participants for the confidence thus placed in him. He said he took great pride in the courses he had designed and scholarships offered by Cable & Wireless, which had benefited over 2500 students from over 180 administrations, including all LDCs, over the past decade. He thanked all those who had helped him over the years, and committed himself to serving TDAG to the best of his ability.

#### **5 Address by the Director-General of CTO**

5.1 The **Director-General of CTO** stressed the close collaboration that had existed between CTO and ITU for over a century, their areas of common interest, CTO's participation in United Nations activities, and in particular the fact that CTO had restructured and was looking to work closely both with the Commonwealth countries and with all other countries and partners with shared interests.

#### **6 Address by the Director-General of ATU**

6.1 The **Director-General of ATU** said that he had very recently assumed his functions and would particularly rely on cooperation with ITU/BDT and regional organizations in order to fulfill his mission. Africa intended to be fully involved in building and forming part of the Information Society, which he stressed must be characterized by real solidarity.

#### **7 Approval of summary of conclusions of the eighth meeting of TDAG (Document TDAG-9/2)**

7.1 The summary of conclusions of the eighth meeting of TDAG (Document TDAG-9/2) was **approved**.

7.2 The **Secretary**, referring to § 12.6 of Document TDAG-9/2, said that BDT had drawn up a list of cost-cutting measures and submitted it to the relevant Council group. Regarding § 13.5, details on reallocated costs were provided in relevant documents. Regarding § 16.4, an inventory of BDT activities had been submitted to the Council via its Working Group on WSIS, and that information had been made available on BDT's stand at the Summit. An interview of the Director

of BDT relating to telemedicine had been broadcast on EuroNews. Regarding §§ 6.2, 6.3 and 6.7, relating to the establishment of priorities, a forum had been opened on the web to solicit the members' views, but few responses had been received. It could be reactivated.

7.3 The **Deputy-Director** added that for preparation of the operational plan the regional offices had asked countries what their specific needs were, and proposals for regional projects had been established accordingly.

7.4 The **representative of the Syrian Arab Republic**, referring to § 6.5, stressed that the Arab States considered that Internet governance came within the purview of governments.

## **8 Election of Vice-Chairman**

8.1 The **Chairman** announced that, following consultations in CEPT, it was proposed that Mr Tony De Bono (Malta) be appointed Vice-Chairman to fill the vacant post.

### **8.2 Mr De Bono was unanimously elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.**

## **9 Report by the Chairman of the Working Group on Working Methods**

9.1 The **representative of Germany** recalled that he had been mandated by the eighth meeting of TDAG to chair a working group on working methods, working electronically. A forum had been opened on the web in June 2003, relevant information had been sent to all TDAG participants, but no contributions had been received, notwithstanding the importance of establishing effective working methods to offset the fact that TDAG now met only once annually, and the fact that the Convention referred specifically to TDAG's establishment of its own working methods. He noted nevertheless that the TDAG Working Group on Private Sector Issues (WGPS) had presented a proposal to TDAG's eighth meeting relating to the on-line approval of TDAG's recommendations in between meetings (Document TDAG-8/23). He further noted that TDAG might draw useful inspiration from the working methods of RAG and TSAG, and, to the extent practicable, from OECD regarding the electronic publication of documents and working electronically. He went on to identify various topics for consideration under working methods. The timing of meetings should allow TDAG, like RAG and TSAG, to consider the operational plan properly prior to its implementation. The question of whether a rotation system should be applied in respect of the TDAG bureau had been broached; in his view such a system would prevent the continuity required to ensure that TDAG worked effectively. With regard to working on-line and documentation for meetings, he wondered whether TDAG was ready to go paperless. Lastly, the agendas of TDAG meetings should be limited to the extent possible.

9.2 He concluded by saying that he was not prepared to shoulder the responsibility for TDAG's working methods on his own.

9.3 In the ensuing discussion, it was recognized that under the Convention TDAG was responsible for reviewing both the draft operational plan and subsequently the results of the plan's implementation. Although general support was expressed for establishing working methods of some kind for TDAG, and for grouping all working methods in a single Resolution 1, as in ITU-R and ITU-T, views were divided as to whether those of the other Sectors should be used for ITU-D: those for said that there was no point in drawing up new rules where applicable rules could be taken from elsewhere; those against pointed to the differences between the Sectors: the other Sectors had more study groups, TSAG had more powers than TDAG, and so forth.

9.4 With regard to paperless meetings and on-line work, discussion focused *inter alia* on why difficulties were encountered by some parties and not others and the successful experiences of organizations like CITELE and OECD. It was recognized that consideration would have to be given to whether a paperless approach could ultimately be applied to the entire documentation process or

only to parts thereof; and whether an absence of reply in an electronic approval procedure could necessarily be taken as approval.

9.5 It was **agreed** that paperless work should be a medium- or long-term objective, and that TDAG could usefully await the output of a TSAG group which was studying the subject and whose results were expected in 2007. Meanwhile, registration forms for meetings could be used to ascertain participants' requirements with a view to producing fewer paper copies.

9.6 With regard to timing, it was **agreed** that the example of the other advisory groups should be followed, i.e. TDAG should meet at a time that allowed it to review the draft operational plan effectively prior to its adoption, have a proper say in preparations for the WTDC, etc., it being recalled that agreement had been reached previously that TDAG meetings should not be held in conjunction with the study group meetings.

9.7 The **representative of Germany** said that if the views expressed at TDAG meetings were to be taken as recommendations to the Director, thought should be given to how they should be presented, perhaps as a formal output document from the meeting.

## **10 Report on gender mainstreaming in ITU-D activities (Document TDAG-9/12)**

10.1 The **representative of the Youth and Gender Unit of BDT** introduced Document TDAG-9/12, which reported on progress made in gender mainstreaming since TDAG's eighth meeting. She paid tribute to Tony Zeitoun's contribution to the activity, and to that of Ms P. Faccin, who had now retired. Noting that over 60 per cent of the world's population were women, she stressed that gender mainstreaming at all levels of society had been proven to have a positive impact on all sectors, such as education, the economy, new technologies, etc.

10.2 Document TDAG-9/12 was **noted**, it being agreed that TDAG supported gender balance in all ITU-D activities.

## **11 World Summit on the Information Society: Impact on ITU-D's role and strategy (Documents TDAG-9/6, TDAG-9/INF-1, TDAG-9/INF-3 and TDAG-9/INF-9)**

11.1 The **Secretary** introduced Document TDAG-9/6, whose purpose was to solicit TDAG's recommendations on the Director's input to the Council Working Group on WSIS under Council Resolution 1207 in respect of: 1) ITU actions to accomplish the goals set forth in the WSIS Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action; 2) a vision of how ITU could prepare itself for the newly emerging Information Society paradigm; 3) ITU participation in phase two of WSIS. With regard to 1), a stocktaking exercise had been conducted to identify how the three Sectors and General Secretariat could contribute, and the four-year rolling operational plan constituted BDT's first response. Annex 1 to Document TDAG-9/INF-1 identified ways of responding to 2) and 3). Document TDAG-9/INF-3 contained details of the partnerships established between BDT and various parties during phase one of WSIS.

11.2 The **former WSIS Executive Secretariat** presented an overview and assessment of phase one of WSIS (see Document TDAG-9/INF-9), at which ITU's key role in the Information Society had been recognized by all stakeholders, including the world's leaders. The Declaration of Principles was linked to the Millennium Declaration Goals, many of the objectives of the Plan of Action directly concerned BDT, and there were numerous synergies between the Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action, ITU's Strategic Plan and the Istanbul Action Plan (ISAP) in particular. He would be chairing an internal ITU working group to draw up a strategy for ITU to implement those areas of the WSIS output that concerned it; the group would work closely with the Council Working Group on WSIS, with a view to providing input to Council-04.

11.3 He confirmed that the Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action incorporated synergies with the outputs of other world summits. The Secretary-General of the United Nations had been

mandated to head a working group on financing mechanisms as he was obviously well placed vis-à-vis other summits.

11.4 The **Director of BDT** recalled that 21 agreements were signed with a range of partners from the World Bank, UNESCO, WHO, private sector and individual governments.

11.5 In the ensuing discussion participants pointed to the need to examine the IsAP and WSIS Plan of Action to establish areas of common interest where ITU-D had expertise, and stressed that ITU should assert itself firmly in areas where its expertise was recognized. The identification of areas of overlap between the IsAP, WSIS Plan of Action and any other world summit action plans could obviate any duplication of effort. Activities should be properly costed. Information on ITU and its activities should be distributed to all WSIS players. With regard to financing, advantage should be taken of experience gained by ITU and BDT in the implementation of programmes. Consideration should be given to why some initiatives succeeded while others failed to get off the ground or sustain themselves. The most appropriate mechanism should be adopted to make immediate headway in preparing clear proposals to the Council, so that it could establish what the different Sectors and General Secretariat should be doing in relation to the WSIS Plan of Action.

11.6 It was proposed that clear plans be established in relation to WSIS for all Sectors, and that ITU should be given 'WSIS status' to lead coordination programmes at global level for all of its recognized areas of expertise, working with other United Nations organizations. A project team or rapporteur group should be established immediately for WSIS preparations within TDAG, to cooperate closely with and provide input to the Working Group on WSIS, which awaited input from all parties.

11.7 The **Chairman of WGPS** said that her Group had set up a programme group on WSIS, and would probably submit suggestions to the Working Group on WSIS and Director of BDT based on information gathered in the Regions. The private sector was obviously very interested in the potential for partnerships under the WSIS Plan of Action.

11.8 With regard to preparations for phase two of WSIS, one participant stressed that efforts should be made to avoid the confusion that had resulted in phase one from the creation of numerous groups and floods of documents, thus a clear process must be established identifying the roles of the different stakeholders and the output expected from phase two.

11.9 It was proposed that BDT should implement the WSIS Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action with appropriate support from Member States. Accordingly, within two months BDT should draw up a plan of the actions to be implemented and proposals as to how they should be implemented, submit the plan to Member States, and report on its implementation every one to two months. The **Director of BDT** said that he had requested the former WSIS Executive Secretariat to draw up a plan of all that could be expected of BDT under the WSIS Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action, with a view to establishing, by the end of February, a consolidated proposal on strategies and measures to be implemented.

11.10 Following suggestions that thought might have to be given to restructuring ITU, and BDT in particular, in the light of the Summit's output, the **representative of Germany** said that had doubts that WSIS should take pre-eminence over IsAP which BDT is tasked by ITU-D Members to implement. He stressed that WSIS was a United Nations event, and the ITU membership would likely be firmly opposed to any restructuring as suggested. He advised the Director to concentrate on identifying areas of the WSIS Plan of Action that fitted in with the IsAP and not undertake any major structural change.

11.11 Following various further comments and proposals, the **former WSIS Executive Secretariat** stressed that the group he could be leading was an internal ITU group which would

report to the elected officials. The objective was to establish implementation strategies to propose to the Working Group on WSIS and the Council.

11.12 The **Chairman** proposed that TDAG conclude that many elements of the WSIS Plan of Action were synonymous with the IsAP. Issues pertaining to WSIS should not therefore affect neither BDT's structure nor BDT's related IsAP activities which remained the priority for ITU-D. Should the opportunity to fulfil an obligation created by the IsAP be achievable from additional (external) funds allocated to the WSIS initiatives, due consideration would be given to using such funds. He would liaise with the Chairman of the Working Group on WSIS and reflect TDAG's views to that Group which was due to meet prior to Council-04.

11.13 It was so **agreed**.

## **12 Matters related to the ITU-D study groups (Documents TDAG-9/3(Rev. 1), TDAG-9/4, TDAG-9/5, TDAG-9/11 and TDAG-9/19)**

12.1 The **Secretary** introduced Document 3(Rev. 1), which informed the meeting that thanks to the dynamism of its Chairman the Project Group on Question 6-1/1 had completed its work after one instead of two years. TDAG's advice was sought on whether the Group should now be disbanded.

12.2 The **representative of the Syrian Arab Republic** observed that, although the Group had completed its task and has to be disbanded, much remained to be done on interconnection. Study Group 1 should decide whether the Question 6-1/1 should be discontinued or should be redefined.

12.3 It was so **agreed**.

12.4 The **Coordinator of the BDT Study Groups Unit** introduced Document TDAG-9/19, which informed TDAG that Question 12-1/2 was to be deleted.

12.5 Document TDAG-9/19 was **noted**.

12.6 The **Coordinator of the BDT Study Groups Unit** introduced Document TDAG-9/4, proposing a revised Question 20-1/2 as a combination of Questions 12-1/2 and 20/2.

12.7 Document TDAG-9/4 was **approved**.

12.8 The **Coordinator of the BDT Study Groups Unit** introduced Document TDAG-9/5, proposing a revised Question 17-1/2.

12.9 Document TDAG-9/5 was **approved**.

12.10 The **representative of the Syrian Arab Republic** noted that the deletion of a Question required approval by Member States, whereas a proposal for a new Question could be approved by TDAG. He hoped that that inconsistency would be rectified when Resolutions 3 and 4 were revised in the future.

12.11 The **Coordinator of the BDT Study Groups Unit** introduced Document TDAG-9/11, which proposed measures to be applied by the ITU-D study groups in the light of the budget approved by the Council in October 2003 and Resolution 115 of the Plenipotentiary Conference (Marrakesh, 2002) on the use of the six official and working languages of the Union on an equal footing.

12.12 In the course of a brief discussion, the **representative of the Syrian Arab Republic**, supported by other speakers, said that it was clear from Resolution 115, and in particular its footnote, that the matter dealt with by Document TDAG-9/11 fell within the purview of the Council: TDAG should not discuss it for the moment. He added that any such proposals and discussions should present all six languages on an equal footing, and there should be no further two-tiered approach, e.g. English/French/Spanish versus Arabic/Chinese/Russian.

12.13 It was so **agreed**.

### **13 Methodology for preparation of the ITU-D four-year rolling operational plan (Document TDAG-9/9)**

13.1 The **Deputy-Director** introduced Document TDAG-9/9, dealing with the methodology for preparing and updating the ITU-D four-year rolling operational plan 2004-2007.

13.2 The **representative of Canada** noted that steps were being taken in the Union to establish a streamlined approach to operational planning in the three Sectors and General Secretariat, all such work being related to Resolution 107 of the Plenipotentiary Conference (Marrakesh, 2002). The Council had set up a group to examine the Financial Regulations, and its work was to cover the entire question of linkage. Also, an external consultant was being taken on to oversee the implementation of the near-term recommendations of the Group of Specialists; those recommendations had been approved by the Council and included matters related to operational planning. Operational planning would thus be refined on the basis of the Council's examination of the work he had referred to. The approach in Document TDAG-9/9 might therefore be accepted, subject to review in the light of the Council's decisions on the subject.

13.3 It was so **agreed**.

### **14 Evaluation of implementation of the 2003 Operational Plan (Documents TDAG-9/15, TDAG-9/INF-4, TDAG-9/INF-5, TDAG-9/INF-6, TDAG-9/INF-7 and TDAG-9/INF-8)**

14.1 The **Deputy-Director** introduced Document TDAG-9/15, along with supporting Documents TDAG-9/INF-4, TDAG-9/INF-5, TDAG-9/INF 6 and TDAG-9/INF-7, which reported on implementation of the 2003 Operational Plan. He noted *inter alia* the tight financial constraints faced in the year and the considerable workload, including the world TELECOM event and first phase of WSIS. The year's objectives had nevertheless all been achieved.

14.2 Participants taking the floor welcomed the information thus provided, but said that its presentation could be simplified and if possible harmonized with that of other ITU bodies. One suggestion was, bearing in mind that results-based budgeting relied on performance measurements and indicators, that the information itself could be further improved, for example drawing inspiration from the reports of other United Nations bodies. It was pointed out that the systems and indicators used in other organizations might not be suited to ITU's activities and products, and what was appropriate for one Sector might not be for another. A further speaker said a distinction should be made between indicators used by BDT to assess its own work, and those used at country level to assess the impact of that work. The system could be further refined, but must not oblige staff to devote all their efforts to producing statistics rather than getting on with the real work.

14.3 The importance of seminars on new technologies was stressed; the speaker said that where possible they should be provided by ITU representatives rather than commercial providers.

14.4 The meeting was informed that questionnaires were issued to study group participants in order to assess the progress made.

14.5 The **Deputy-Director** said that all comments would be noted, but he mentioned that BDT had its own tools for assessing the impact of its work in the countries.

14.6 The **representative of Brazil** introduced Document TDAG-9/INF-8, relating to technical cooperation between ANATEL and other regulatory agencies from Latin American and African Portuguese-speaking countries, activities with the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries and courses held through a contract with the University of Brasilia., which was the subject of Document TDAG-9/18.

14.7 Speakers welcomed Brazil's initiative, and expressed the wish that it be exported even more extensively; others referred to similar initiatives also available.

## **15 Impact of budgetary reductions on ITU-D activities (Document TDAG-9/14)**

15.1 The **Acting Chief of the Business Development Unit** introduced Document TDAG-9/14, which dealt with the revision of working methods (team-based approach, etc.) and the mobilization of extrabudgetary resources (over 20 partnerships signed during the first phase of WSIS) in the light of the budgetary constraints faced by the Sector.

15.2 The **representative of the Syrian Arab Republic** said he welcomed the document, but hoped that figures would be available in future on engaged and implemented extrabudgetary resources.

15.3 Further to a query regarding project support income, the **Director** said that all projects had funds from other sources, with normally 3-10 per cent for administrative costs. Project support income had diminished for several reasons beyond the control of BDT: for example, UNDP was sometimes now competing with ITU for projects rather than providing funds, the political situation in countries sometimes meant funds promised were no longer available, etc. On the positive side, new projects had been signed or were likely to be signed, for example with the European Union representing a potential total of 3 million Euros.

15.4 The **representative of the Syrian Arab Republic** warned that if administrative and operational support (AOS) costs fell below about 10 per cent it would simply not be possible to implement a project without drawing on BDT's own budget. The **Secretary** said that that point would be borne in mind, but in some cases organizations set administrative costs at a percentage that could not be negotiated, and that in all case the marginal cost of new activities is the key factor to take into consideration while setting AOS lower limit.

15.5 Document TDAG-9/14 was **noted**.

## **16 Report of the TDAG Working Group on Private Sector Issues (WGPS) (Documents TDAG-9/16 and TDAG-9/20)**

16.1 The **Chairman of WGPS** introduced Documents TDAG-9/16 and TDAG-9/20, which reported, respectively, on her Group's activities since its meeting in March 2003, and its second meeting, on 19 and 20 January 2004. The Group's efforts had resulted in the signing of around 20 partnership agreements during phase one of WSIS. At its second meeting, the Group had established recommendations on criteria for selecting Sector Member representatives to participate as observers in the Council, and on the promotion of the Universal Access Regulatory Best Practice Guidelines produced by the Global Symposium for Regulators 2003. She urged participants to follow the activities related to the Youth Forum and its alumni, who now numbered around 500 from the world and regional events. The Group had noted that 82 Member States had no ITU-D Sector Members, and BDT was urged to apprise those Member States of the benefits of membership.

16.2 On the understanding that the Group's recommendations would be taken up under the relevant agenda items, Documents TDAG-9/16 and TDAG-9/20 were **noted**.

## **17 Consideration of four-year rolling operational plan 2004-2007 (Documents TDAG-9/10 (version 2) and Corrigenda 1-3, TDAG-9/18 and TDAG-9/21)**

17.1 The **Deputy-Director** introduced Document TDAG-9/10 and its Corrigenda 1-3 containing the draft operational plan 2004-2007. Annex 1 to the document listed some activities requested for 2004 that could not be implemented as funds were not available; criteria had been established for identifying activities that would not be funded if funds were short. Slightly higher amounts were



budgeted for the first year of the four-year plan in order to maximize chances of attracting partners, who inevitably asked how much ITU would be contributing to projects.

17.2 In the course of the following discussion, the **Chairman of WGPS** noted that partnership cooperation meetings were to be held for all Regions save the Americas. If full information was made available, Sector Members might offer to sponsor the Americas meeting. With regard to regulatory matters, she said that the Universal Access Regulatory Best Practice Guidelines were particularly relevant to ITU-D members when it came to finding funds and creating programmes, as well as to WSIS as regards financing the Plan of Action and the Digital Solidarity Fund.

17.3 Further to requests for clarification on the tables in Part 4, which for example did not show indirect costs, it was pointed out that the figures were presented as for the Council, and that the cost allocation methodology was under review within the Union with a view to establishing a harmonized approach. Also, in BDT activities, the substantial costs for external expertise were included in the reallocated costs. BDT's direct costs in fact represented a better percentage of total costs than in the other Sectors, meaning that BDT made good use of its own staff.

17.4 Speakers requested that where possible the venue of events be shown and that a list of all workshops/seminars be provided for ease of reference. Efforts should be made to provide all figures in a single currency. Also, the overall presentation of the plan could be simplified.

17.5 The **representative of Switzerland**, recalling Resolution 21 (Valletta, 1998) on coordination and collaboration with regional organizations, said that when preparing its activities under the operational plan BDT should ascertain what could be covered by the activities of other organizations in order to avoid overlap and make savings. He cited the example of activities related to the forthcoming regional radiocommunication conference, for which various seminars and so forth were being organized within the framework of CEPT.

17.6 The **representative of Brazil** introduced Document TDAG-9/18, relating to the course on telecommunication regulation in Brazil to be organized as part of an agreement signed between ITU and the Brazilian Administration. All costs of the course were to be borne by Brazil, with the exception of the fellowships which would have to be provided under the 2004 operational plan. The agreement with ITU had been signed on the understanding that the course would be included as a regular activity under the four-year plan for 2004-2007; it should come under Programme 5 on Human Capacity Building.

17.7 The **representative of Mexico** introduced Document TDAG-9/21, relating to the organization of a second workshop on community connectivity indicators and requesting that fellowships be provided. A single workshop was proposed to compensate for the fact that separate workshops could not be organized for the Americas, Arab and Asia-Pacific Regions (see Annex 1 to Document TDAG-9/10), and would take place in 2005 rather than 2004 since funds would not be available in 2004. The Mexican Administration would bear all costs save those of the fellowships.

17.8 Speakers welcomed the initiatives and said that participants from some countries would not be able to participate if the fellowships were not provided.

17.9 Others, while welcoming the initiatives, suggested that they be placed on a waiting list as funds were not available at present; otherwise other BDT activities would have to be cancelled. A further suggestion was that it might be possible to implement the initiatives in collaboration with regional organizations, perhaps taking advantage of funds from networked universities.

17.10 Other speakers welcomed the initiatives in principle but wondered if the normal procedure had been followed for their submission through the regional offices so that they were given proper consideration for inclusion under the four-year plan.

17.11 Two participants added that the debate under way was further evidence that TDAG meetings should be scheduled to allow it to have a proper say in the preparation and consideration of the operational plan.

17.12 One speaker added that the approach to establishing the plan should allow for unforeseen projects and initiatives, including for example the output of WSIS.

17.13 The **Director** reassured the meeting that the necessary funds would be found for the fellowships requested.

17.14 The **Chairman** welcomed the Director's pledge. Making a general comment, he said that administrations should channel their proposals through the regional offices in order to ensure that the initiatives received due consideration with a view to inclusion in the operational plan.

17.15 The **representative of Germany** expressed his Administration's profound dissatisfaction with the manner in which TDAG discussed the operational plan, including the timing involved. The operational plan should constitute one of TDAG's most important topics of debate. Consideration should be given to discussing it in working groups, possibly working in parallel, prior to its discussion in plenary, during perhaps a five-day meeting, with due consideration for how WGPS would fit in with such scheduling. If his Administration considered that it had no real say in the major matters that TDAG should address. The **representative of France** endorsed those comments.

17.16 The **representative of Nepal** expressed his appreciation for the fellowship he had received to attend the present meeting. He urged that efforts be made to provide more rather than less fellowships, so as to involve as many people as possible in work for digital solidarity.

## **18 Preparation of WTDC-06 (Documents TDAG-9/7 and TDAG-9/13)**

18.1 The **Secretary** introduced Document TDAG-9/7, with the 11 approaches it presented aimed at optimizing preparations for and the running of WTDC-06. Document TDAG-9/13 provided explanations of the two alternative organization schedules given in Annex 2 to Document TDAG-9/7. He noted that the intention was for TDAG to be consulted on all texts before they were submitted to the WTDC.

18.2 In the ensuing discussion it was suggested that the approaches presented would be better discussed outside the full plenary of TDAG; another speaker said that they could not be discussed before they had been discussed at the level of his regional organization. 18.3 One speaker expressed his administration's dissatisfaction with the way in which the informal coordination meeting of chairmen and vice-chairmen had been organized for WTDC-02 and the task it had effected. Further speakers suggested that inspiration could be drawn from the way ITU-R discussed the structure of WRCs on a very informal basis, taking advantage of participants' presence in Geneva for other meetings, or the task could be carried out working electronically; alternatively, TDAG could carry out the task of the coordination meeting. With regard to respecting deadlines for the submission of contributions, some flexibility was necessary, for example in order to allow the regional organizations the opportunity to consolidate the views of their constituents.

18.4 Two representatives having indicated that 6 regional preparatory meetings or conferences should be foreseen rather than 5, to reflect the number of regional organizations, one participant said his administration might oppose such a suggestion. The **Director** said that five regional meetings were budgeted for, and he would have to submit the question to the Council if six meetings were requested.

18.5 The possibility was evoked of organizing the regional preparatory meetings in conjunction with meetings held to prepare for phase two of WSIS.

18.6 Notwithstanding valid reasons given for calling the regional preparatory meetings RTDCs, allowance would have to be made for their attendance by ministers who would wish to address such conferences; the conferences' output would therefore have to be prepared in advance. The cost implications of holding conferences rather than meetings should be clear, and kept to a minimum.

18.7 A discussion ensued on the scheduling of the WTDC and future TDAG meetings in the light of various factors: conference facility availability; the need to take account of the output of phase two of WSIS; the duration of TDAG meetings; etc.

18.8 It was **agreed** as follows:

- TDAG supported in principle the proposals made by the **Director of the BDT** for the preparation of WTDC-06, provided that all documents proposed by the **Secretariat** are considered by **TDAG** before submission to the Conference.
- A working group of TDAG supported by the **Chairman**, led by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, would consider the draft agenda and structure of the conference, including the approaches presented in Document TDAG-9/7, and submit its findings early enough so that the Director of the BDT can further consult Members and submit the draft agenda to Council-04;
- TDAG recommended that 6-17 March 2006 be retained as the preferred period for WTDC-06;
- TDAG's tenth and eleventh (including TDAG WGPS) meetings would be held on 13-17<sup>th</sup> December 2004 and 12-16<sup>th</sup> December 2005, respectively;
- The Director will submit to the Council the question of whether 5 or 6 regional preparatory meetings should be held.

## **19 Sector Member representation at the Council (Documents TDAG-9/8 (Rev.1), TDAG-9/20 and TDAG-9/INF-2)**

19.1 The **Deputy-Director of TSB** introduced Document TDAG-9/INF-2, which was an extract of the draft report of TSAG's meeting from 10 to 14 November 2003 and contained TSAG's recommendation concerning Sector Member representation at the Council as well as advice concerning live web-broadcasting of the Council's debates to help Sector Member follow the Council's work.

19.2 The **Secretary** introduced Document TDAG-9/8 (Rev. 1), which presented four possible criteria for selecting Sector Members to attend the Council as observers.

19.3 The **Chairman of WGPS** drew attention to her Group's recommendation on the subject in Document TDAG-9/20, which she noted was consistent with but slightly fuller than TSAG's.

19.4 The **Chairman of RAG** said that ITU-D was seeking its members views on the subject by administrative circular, but the views of TDAG and TSAG would also be useful to RAG's discussions. He was surprised that Document TDAG-9/8 (Rev. 1) referred to WGR Recommendation 29, which PP-02 had rejected, and not to CV 60B, which was fully relevant. He noted that it was up to the Council to decide the matter.

19.5 The **representative of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU)** stressed that the selection criteria should cover all organizations that were Sector Members, which included SIOs, regional organizations, ROAs, international organizations like his own, and others. IARU was responding to the ITU-R administrative circular to the effect that Sector Members had privileges conferred by the Member States, but not rights, and Sector Member observers should have lesser status than Member State observers at the Council and elsewhere. In the meeting room, Sector

Member observers should be seen but not heard. If a Sector Member came from a Member State that had a seat on the Council, that Sector Member should not be able to attend the Council as an observer. Sector Member observer delegations should comprise one individual only.

19.6 A brief discussion ensued during which the difference in status between Member State observers and Sector Member observers was further mentioned. So too was the need for flexibility, particularly in the light of logistical and practical considerations, and the need to learn from experience and experiment, for example the use of an additional conference room at Council sessions where Sector Members could follow debates electronically.

19.7 The **representative of the Syrian Arab Republic** proposed that the recommendation from WGPS in Document TDAG-9/20 be forwarded to the relevant Council group for consideration, along with a covering note reflecting the comments made at the present meeting.

19.8 It was so **agreed**.

## **20 Evaluation of ITU-D Sector Membership (Document TDAG-9/17)**

20.1 The **Head of the Partnerships, Promotion and ITU-D Membership Unit** introduced Document TDAG-9/17, which recapitulated ITU-D Sector membership since 1993, with particular focus on 2002 and 2003. He noted that although the net number of Sector Members had increased in 2002-2003, the income from such members had remained at roughly the same level because new Sector Members opted for the 1/16 contributory unit, the number of exemptions had increased significantly, and major contributors had discontinued their membership.

20.2 The **Chairman of WGPS** noted that 105 Member States had no fee-paying Sector Members. BDT should make efforts to rectify that situation by dispatching information to potential Sector Members, and her Group would make similar efforts through its work in the regions.

20.3 It was suggested that the Council be advised to address the question of Associate membership in so far as ITU-D was concerned.

20.4 Document TDAG-9/17 was **noted**, and the BDT and WGPS were encouraged to pursue their efforts to attract new ITU-D Sector Members.

## **21 Address by the Executive Manager of TELECOM**

21.1 The Executive Manager of TELECOM addressed the meeting, stressing the advantages that all ITU-D members stood to gain by actively participating in TELECOM events and helping to ensure that TELECOM continued to produce a surplus that could be used for the developing countries. Active participation must include paying for such participation: TELECOM was owed CHF 4 million by participants who had not paid, mainly for national pavilions.

21.2 Responding to a question, he said that the objective was to hold a Youth Forum and TDS at all regional and world events. Sponsorship had not yet been found in that regard for the forthcoming Africa event, whereas the Government of the Republic of Korea was providing it for the next Asia event.

## **22 Paperless meetings**

22.1 The **representative of Brazil** proposed that the Director be requested to ensure that at the next study group meetings participants who so wished could work without paper copies of documents, i.e. with electronic copies, as a first step towards paperless meetings.

22.2 In the course of a brief exchange, it was **agreed** that paperless participation should be an option for participants at future meetings but not mandatory, and that paperless meetings should be a medium- to long-term objective.

## **23 Youth Education Scheme (YES)**

23.1 The **Director** said that the Youth Education Scheme (YES) was proving to be very successful, owing *inter alia* to generous sponsorship from ANACOM (Portugal), the National Telecommunication Institute of Egypt and Vodafone Group Services Ltd. A donor's certificate had been created to honour such donors, but only ANACOM was represented in the meeting room.

23.2 He presented the representative of ANACOM with a donor's certificate.

## **24 Tony Zeitoun Award for Excellence**

24.1 The **Director** proposed that an award scheme be introduced, and named after Tony Zeitoun, to recognize the exceptional efforts of individuals, companies, organizations, etc., in the field of telecommunication development.

24.2 The Director's proposal received support from numerous speakers, it being recommended that the scheme be called the Tony Zeitoun Award for Excellence and that awards be presented on World Telecommunication Day.

## **25 Presentation of BDT website**

25.1 The **Secretary** gave a brief presentation of the new functions available on the BDT website, in particular more visibility on BDT projects/actions , and noted some requests for its further improvement.

## **26 Closure of the meeting**

26.1 Following a brief exchange of courtesies the **Chairman** closed the meeting at 1230 hours on Friday, 23 January 2004.

The Secretary:

P. TOURE

The Chairman:

D. MELLOR