



## ***Development Symposium for Regulators***

*Roberto Blois, Deputy Secretary-General*

*ITU Headquarters, Wednesday, 22 November 2000*

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and honor for me to be asked to close a meeting that is not only the first of its kind in the world, but also a huge success. Congratulations, Mr. Toure, Mr. Lekaukau, and Mr. Kunigami.

Although I was not able to attend the first two days of this meeting, as I was in Nigeria at the African Regional Meeting of the International Chamber of Commerce, I have already heard great reports of the work you have done here.

One of your goals in holding this meeting was to launch a global dialogue among regulators. It is clear that you have accomplished this goal. Even on the first day, the Development Symposium for Regulators provided a forum of regulators from around the world to identify the key issues of concern to them. Interconnection was one of the issues raised by virtually every regulator. The next day, you devoted almost the entire day to an in-depth discussion on this key regulatory issue.

I have heard that one of the interesting findings in your discussions on interconnection is that there is a broad agreement among regulators from different parts of the world regarding the importance of proactive *ex-ante* interconnection regulation.

Such an approach would certainly reduce conflict and save the call for regulatory intervention afterwards.

You also undertook an invaluable exchange of interconnection regulatory practices from around the world covering network unbundling, mobile interconnection and Internet interconnection, to name a few of the issues you tackled. This dialogue will certainly lay the foundation for a continuing dialogue among the world's regulators.

You also had an important session on regulatory strategies to increase Internet connectivity, and in today's workshops tackled three of the other key issues regulators identified on the first day: convergence, independence and transparency.

You also agreed on the importance of exchanging views and experiences. As Chairman Verma of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India noted, using regulatory practices that have been tried and proven effective in other regimes helps to establish credibility in national markets.

I am delighted that the ITU has undertaken this initiative to hold the first regulators forum. This reflects the incredible changes in the telecommunications sector. I look at my home country, Brazil. In the past three years, we have introduced new legislation, established a regulator, privatized and

introduced competition. Brazil has not been alone. Countries from all regions of the world are engaged in a similar reform process. We now know that 96 countries have already established a regulator and many more plan to create one in the coming years.

It is clear that we have filled a pent up demand among regulators to launch a global dialogue. You have identified the most pressing issues facing regulators and you have now identified modalities in order to tackle these issues.

Let us all work together to continue the dialogue to strengthen regulators worldwide.

Thank you for your attention.