

Opening address at the ITU-T Workshop on IPv6
H. Zhao, Director of TSB
Geneva, 22 June 2005

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

I am glad to see many old friends, not referring to their ages, and to see many new friends. As we announced, this workshop is organized in cooperation with the European Union IPv6 Task Force-Steering Committee (EU IPv6 TF-SC) and the IPv6 Forum. On behalf of the organizers, we are very pleased to welcome you all to this workshop. I am also grateful to Mr. Brian Carpenter for joining me at this opening session. As a matter of fact, he and I both delivered a keynote speech at a Workshop on NGN jointly organized by IETF and ITU-T, held in Geneva on 1-2 May 2005. Today is the second time we are both on the podium.

ITU supports the implementation of IPv6. At several high-level conferences during the last decade, including the last two ITU Plenipotentiary Conferences, the last two World Telecommunication Standardization Assemblies and the last World Telecommunication Development Conference, ITU addressed IPv6 related issues, and some relevant Resolution(s) were adopted by each of those conferences. ITU commits itself to this important work. Study Groups from both ITU-T and ITU-D have created study questions specific to IPv6. IPv6 workshops have been organized by ITU-T, ITU-D and ITU Regional Offices. ITU has also expressed its support for IPv6 at international conferences organized by industries or NGOs, etc. In its latest efforts on standardization of NGN (Next Generation Networks), reference to IPv6 is also included. In addition, ITU has worked with SDOs and forums on IPv6. For example, ITU has worked with the European Union (EU) Task Force responsible for creating roadmaps for the deployment of IPv6 in all business sectors within the EU.

ITU has noted voices and opinions from the developing world as well as from the developed world, from academic and research institutes as well as from industry members. Often these voices focus on the issue of the management of internet resources, including IPv6 addresses and that it may be appropriate to consider systems that would avoid some of the problems that have arisen with IPv4 allocations. The World Summit of Information Society (WSIS) highlighted the importance of Internet governance, in which concerns related to IPv4 and IPv6 were also raised. As Director of TSB, I have noted, and from time to time I have been asked to take care of, the request for a better system of management of IPv6 addresses, which could overcome the problems and lessons we have learnt from the deployment of IPv4 system. I expressed an opinion in my paper "ITU and Internet governance" issued in November 2004 in reply to the request of ITU Council Working Group on WSIS, that in addition to the current arrangements for allocation of IPv6, one could reserve a portion of the large IPv6 address space for country-based assignments, that is, assign a block to a country at no cost. With this "dual-system", we will enable any user to choose their preferred source of addresses: either the country-assigned ones or the regionally/internationally-assigned ones. The details of the dual system need to be studied. Hopefully, concerns over sovereignty connected to the registration of addresses as raised during the WSIS process will be safeguarded by this new approach with some mechanism, as will operational efficiency, if properly implemented.

Since the publication of my paper in November 2004, I have received some comments, including those from the Number Resource Organizations (NROs) and others from the private sector. Although some comments seem to be based on the incorrect assumption that I am proposing to allocate all IPv6 addresses through national authorities, I find them very valuable, and very useful as a basis for further study. I attached all comments that I received on time to my paper which is

available on the ITU-T website. I prepared a presentation on IPv6, which was delivered at China Global IPv6 Summit in April, as well as in Moscow in March 2005. This presentation is also available on the ITU-T website. Since then I have exchanged views with experts on this issue. In the meantime, I have noted the other papers on the web, whether for or against. I would like to assure you that ITU and myself will continue our efforts to work on this issue. We welcome contributions on any possible solutions or improvements. As an intergovernmental organization, ITU has put the role of the government and the role of private sector high on its agenda, including its discussion on IPv6. And last but not the least, we pay high attention to the stability of Internet, which is very important for all of us.

As a matter of fact, this workshop was planned to provide an opportunity for participants to exchange views and opinions on various important issues, including resource management. However, I do not want to turn it into a platform in favor of my proposal. As IPv6 is still in its early stage of market development, ITU would prefer, if we can use this word, to facilitate all possibilities to promote IPv6, which is the end goal of this workshop. We have prepared a tightly scheduled programme for the next two days. The speakers and session chairs are all well-known and competent experts in their fields, most of them enjoy a leading or a coordinating role at a global level. The presentations are very rich in information and in brilliant ideas. I believe that, not only the participants of this workshop, but also the general public will find the presentations very useful and of high value.

If you allow me, I would like to share with you a personal wish, that since it is not easy to organize a meeting like this, and it is very important to keep our top experts together to discuss the relevant issues on IPv6, it would be great if there is an expressed wish to continue the dialogue and to envisage an arrangement to talk to each other as I have done with some experts. ITU would be more than pleased to support further dialogue, if so requested.

To conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the speakers, session chairs, as well as to the workshop organizers. Finally, I would also like to express my appreciation to the participants for your efforts to join us and for your advice that will help us.

I hope you will enjoy this workshop.