

**Speech by François Rancy, Director of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau
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ICT Ministerial Forum of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)

Mr Director-General of SPC,
Mr Director of the Economic Development Division of SPC,
Mr Secretary-General of ITU,
Mr Deputy Secretary-General on behalf of the High Commissioner of New Caledonia,
excellencies,
dear colleagues,
ladies and gentlemen.

It is for me a pleasure and an honour to address you this morning.

The last ten years have seen an incredible revolution in the world through the rapid development of mobile telephony. What has been achieved in these ten years is ten times greater than what was done in the last hundred years. In most developing countries, the penetration rate of telephony, which was generally under ten per cent of the population for fixed lines, has increased to fifty per cent, and in some cases to a hundred per cent, through mobile.

This is a revolution, which is changing rapidly the way of life of practically all the populations of the world.

But what we are going to see in the next few years is, in my view, an even greater revolution, which will bring to the same worldwide population the benefits of the information society through broadband communications.

What we can expect, in particular in the Pacific Region, is that this new revolution will be made through broadband mobile communications, for the same reasons that the previous revolution was done through mobile telephony. To make it possible, we need to unite all forces as soon as possible, in all the countries of the Pacific Region.

Achieving this goal will require large investments in radiocommunication networks and backbone infrastructures. To permit these investments, it is essential to build an efficient regulatory framework that will ensure that they can be made with minimum risk. Concerning mobile broadband, this requires that a strong spectrum management framework be established in all the Pacific island countries.

For this reason, I am very happy that this week a workshop on spectrum management is taking place here in Noumea in conjunction with the PITA General Assembly. This workshop is jointly organized by ANFR and ITU, hosted by PITA with the support of the European Union and the OPT of New Caledonia. I would like to express all my gratitude to all these actors to have made this important event possible.

This workshop will address a range of spectrum management issues with particular attention on what is required to ensure the protection of investments and avoid harmful interference, and also what is required to make additional frequency bands available for broadband mobile, through the transition to digital terrestrial television and the resulting digital dividend.

This workshop is a first step to achieve the goal I mentioned. What we should try to define during this week is the way to continue this action, to continue to work together so that we can successfully address the challenges of spectrum management in the Pacific Region and build together a framework by which it will be possible to share experiences, questions, mistakes and successes of all parties involved in addressing these challenges in all the island countries of the Pacific Region.

I look forward to building on this first step in order to continue working together, and for this, you can count on the support of ITU.

Thank you very much for your attention.