

**Opening Speech by François Rancy, Director of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau
27 May 2011, Ha Noi, Viet Nam**

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON TRANSITION TO DIGITAL BROADCASTING AND DIGITAL DIVIDEND



Excellency,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is both a particular honour and a pleasure for me to be here with you for these two days to discuss issues relating to the transition to digital broadcasting and the digital dividend.

Over the past ten years, the world has changed considerably, with virtually all of its inhabitants now having the opportunity to be connected with one another.

These far-reaching changes have been nothing short of revolutionary, and yet we are now about to witness an even greater revolution that will encompass not only telephony but also broadband Internet access, bringing an incredibly broad range of applications and opportunities to people the world over.

This revolution has to succeed, and the key to its success lies in access to spectrum for mobile communications.

From a spectrum efficiency standpoint, the opportunities afforded by the transition of terrestrial broadcasting from analog to digital technologies are providing a valuable means of fulfilling spectrum requirements for the mobile service, firstly because the frequency bands currently used by terrestrial broadcasting provide the best propagation conditions, and secondly because the amount of spectrum that stands to be released by this transition – referred to as the digital dividend – is considerable.

At the same time, spectrum managers and political leaders are faced with the fact that terrestrial broadcasting is a very specific usage with which virtually everyone is closely associated. Any change in this regard therefore has to be carefully weighed, discussed, prepared and advertised, not only at the national but also the international level. Decisions on the transition to digital broadcasting and the digital dividend are not only difficult at the national level, but also have to involve all neighbouring countries. They are by their very nature international decisions.

Over the next two days, we shall be identifying and discussing all the factors that have to be taken into account before any such decisions can be taken.

For this I welcome the participation of people from Viet Nam and other countries of the Asia Region, and should like to express my wholehearted thanks to the Ministry of Information and Communication of Viet Nam for having organized this workshop jointly with ITU and for hosting it in the beautiful city of Ha Noi.

This workshop will, it is hoped, be the first of many similar events to be held in all the regions of the world under the auspices of ITU, in the interests of paving the way towards a harmonized and successful transition to digital terrestrial television and the successful deployment of broadband communications to every citizen of the world.

I shall not now go into the details of the programme, but can tell you that we have developed it in such a way that it covers all relevant issues that need to be addressed regarding the transition to digital broadcasting and the digital dividend.

Once again I thank you for being here, and wish you every success for this workshop.
