

Date: 25 April, 2014  
Ref: SPU/0414/010

Mr. Brahim Sanou  
Director  
Telecommunications Development Bureau  
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

**Sub: Response to Consultation for Global Symposium for Regulators 2014**

Dear Mr Sanou,

With reference to your letter of 17 March, 2014 (Ref:BDT/IEE/RME/DM/413) regarding input to the Global Symposium for Regulators 2014 (GSR 14) Best Practice Guidelines, the Kingdom of Bahrain extends its thanks and appreciation to you and the ITU for the valuable efforts in the development sector.

With regards to the consultation questions, we would like to raise the following contributions for consideration:

1. As the digital world does not have geographic barriers, it may be beneficial to create regional entities to deal with matters that affect more than one country in a unified and focused manner. Issues such as VoIP, OTTs, misuse and others could be handled by such an entity. This would require fostering cooperation between neighbouring countries, international bodies and other stakeholders in a coordinated and transparent manner.
2. Privacy rights of consumers in an OTT environment need to be discussed and agreed at the regional and international level. This extends beyond just regional discussions as up to 80% of the OTT service providers are based in the USA. In addition to policy discussions, more effort needs to be made in general consumer awareness and education on different privacy and security concerns in the digital world.
3. The evolution of voice, and in particular the different types of VoIP, are providing more flexibility and features, but are also creating many quality of service problems, including but not limited to, interoperability challenges.
4. Suggested priority areas for regulators over the coming years are:
  - a. Making markets more efficient. This includes market definition (communications only, vertical or horizontal), supply models and supply quantities.
  - b. Managing scarce resources more efficiently and reclaiming unused or misused scarce resources, primarily spectrum.
  - c. Enhancing consumer welfare and ensuring the empowerment of consumers. This would address matters such as adoption barriers, security issues, privacy concerns and environmental measures.
  - d. Regulatory measures related to ICT convergence

e. Policy matters related to internet governance

We look forward to a welcoming you in the Kingdom of Bahrain and having a successful and productive GSR 14.

Yours Sincerely,

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Musab Abdulla  
Manager, Strategy & PMO  
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Kingdom of Bahrain