



INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BUREAU

**WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE (WTDC-98)**

**Document 174-E
26 March 1998
Original: English**

Valletta, Malta, 23 March - 1 April 1998

For action

Agenda item: 1.2

COMMITTEE A

New Zealand

USE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

Question 1/1 - WTDC Buenos Aires 1994

Background

The existing Question 1/1 on the Role of telecommunications in economic, social and cultural development has been considered over the past study period. To date the studies have considered a number of aspects, particularly the relationship between telecommunications and overall economic development.

The role of telecommunications in social and cultural development is also important and needs to be recognized appropriately. This is a related, but somewhat different issue to social and cultural cohesion. Telecommunications and broadcasting facilities can play a major role in promoting the cultural development and cultural identity of all peoples within a country. The use of broadcasting is well recognized in development and protection of a country's cultures and as new types of services and facilities are available these new facilities will also have a role to play. For example, the use of the Internet for broadcasting, information sharing and Web sites, etc. will be an important tool for cultural development.

Comment

The role of telecommunications in cultural development needs to also recognize the position of indigenous peoples and their specific needs. In a similar way to the role of telecommunications in improving the position of people in developing countries, telecommunications has the potential to greatly improve the position of indigenous people in many countries, particularly where the indigenous culture is not the dominant culture.

As well as ensuring access to telecommunications facilities, it is important to ensure that there is full participation by all peoples, including indigenous people, in the overall telecommunications development of a country.

ITU-D Study Group 1 proposes in Document 73 (page 3, English text) that Question 1/1 should be concentrated primarily to cover economic development. If this approach is agreed to by this WTDC,

this therefore raises the question of how the studies in the social and cultural development areas should be continued and whether it is necessary to either:

- modify an existing question, or
- agree a new question,

to cover these social and cultural development aspects presently included in Question 1/1.

Proposal for consideration

A draft text of a new question to be considered is attached as Annex 1. This draft could be adopted directly or used as material to be merged into other related questions. The draft question draws out the importance of telecommunications to the economic, social, and cultural development of indigenous people. These aspects are of particular importance where the indigenous people are not the majority or dominant culture in a particular country.

A draft Recommendation on the topic is also attached as Annex 2.

ANNEX 1

NZL/174/1

DRAFT NEW QUESTION

1 Question for study

The role of telecommunications in social and cultural development, including the protection and promotion of indigenous culture and identity.

2 Statement of the situation

The development of telemedicine and distance learning facilities are already recognized as providing significant social benefits. In a similar way access to and participation in improved telecommunications facilities can provide significant benefits in the cultural development of a country. This is particularly so when indigenous people are not the majority culture of a country.

3 Question or Issue for study

What are the barriers to access telecommunications systems and facilities by indigenous peoples.

4 Description of output expected

Identification of any existing barriers, together with a recognition that policies and development activities will need to take account of any barriers.

5 Timing

Study period 1998-2002.

6 Project sponsors

WTDC2-Malta.

7 Sources of input

Member States, NGOs and other organizations representing indigenous peoples, UNESCO.

8 Target audience

Policy-makers, telecom regulators, national planning authorities, wherever cultural development of indigenous peoples are being considered.

9 Methods of handling question

Within study groups - over study periods and within all regular BDT activity.

10 Coordination

With regular ITU-D studies, other study group questions and regional organizations.

ANNEX 2

NZL/174/2

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

**THE ROLE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN ECONOMIC, SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Valletta, 1998),

considering

- a) that telecommunications is a basic tool for the economic, social and cultural development of countries;
- b) that the cultural development of a country needs to recognize both majority and minority cultures within the population;
- c) that access to, and participation in, telecommunications systems by indigenous peoples has a particular set of issues associated with it,

noting

- a) that access to modern telecommunications facilities for all peoples is a basic ingredient of a successful economy;
- b) in order for indigenous peoples to benefit from telecommunications there is a need for:
 - education and information to ensure that the benefits of telecommunications are recognized by indigenous peoples,
 - identification of any barriers to access telecommunications systems and the overcoming of these barriers;
- c) that the overall success of any telecommunication development programme will be dependent on, amongst other things, identification and addressing the needs of any indigenous peoples served by the programme,

recommends

that BDT pay particular attention to the role of telecommunications in meeting the needs for economic, social and cultural development of indigenous peoples in their work programmes and activities.
