

CIS preparatory meeting for WTDC-10



- During the *Connect CIS Summit* on 23–25 November 2009 in Minsk, Belarus (see pages 10–14), a regional meeting was held in preparation for the World Telecommunication Development Conference, in Hyderabad, India from 24 May to 4 June 2010 (WTDC-10). It decided what to prioritize in promoting growth of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region.

The meeting was attended by around 200 representatives of countries in the region; scientific and industry bodies, and regional and international organizations. Ivan Rak, First Deputy Minister of Communications and Informatization, Belarus, was elected as Chairman. The Minister, Nikolai Pantelei, said at the opening of the meeting that the work of ITU is vital to implementing national ICT strategies in the region, and thus spurring economic and social development.

Sami Al-Basheer Al-Morshid, Director of ITU's Telecommunications Development Bureau (BDT), said that ITU is ready to support Member States in using ICT to further their development, and thanked CIS countries for their active participation in ITU's Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D). ITU Deputy Secretary-General Houlin Zhao thanked the government of Belarus for hosting the meeting, and identified key issues, such as cybersecurity and climate change, that it needed to consider.

The meeting received reports from BDT on the implementation of the Doha Action Plan, conceived at WTDC-06. It also considered many contributions on the status of ICT development in the CIS region, and several draft resolutions for WTDC-10. These included resolutions on strengthening cooperation among ITU-D and the other Sectors of ITU, and on improving access to healthcare services through the use of ICT. Proposals were also put forward to hold seminars on infrastructure sharing and on emergency communications, and to further the development of a Russian-language "centre of excellence" for training in ICT.

Regional priorities

After considering proposals introduced by several delegations, the meeting identified the following as priority areas for the future work of ITU-D:

ICT infrastructure

Elimination of the standardization gap, and development of infrastructure to ensure universal access to affordable broadband services; effective and harmonized use of telecommunication and ICT facilities for emergency communications.

Cybersecurity and ICT applications

Ensuring cybersecurity, with particular attention to the protection of children, including a pilot



scheme to restrict access to inappropriate online content in CIS schools; wide-scale implementation of ICT applications for all activities under Action Line C7 of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Plan of Action.

Enabling environment

Implementation of the WSIS outcomes by ensuring universal access to affordable broadband services, especially in developing countries and with particular attention to children, women, indigenous peoples and people with disabilities.

Capacity building and other initiatives

Training in sharing passive infrastructure and in implementing emergency communication systems.

Regional initiatives

The CIS regional initiatives address specific ICT priority areas through partnerships to mobilize resources. The following initiatives were proposed:

Electronic meetings

Establishment of a digital network, based at the ITU area office for the CIS countries, for the holding of videoconferences among administrations in the region.

Terrestrial digital broadcasting

Countries in the region to be helped to make the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting in television and radio; implementation of the GE06 Agreement for terrestrial digital broadcasting in the region, as well as interactive multimedia applications and single-frequency digital television broadcasting.

Virtual laboratory

Countries to be helped to train specialists in testing and implementing broadband access technologies, with a view to establishing a “virtual laboratory” for training specialists from developing countries.

Power supplies in rural areas

A pilot project to be started on alternative energy systems for telecommunication facilities in remote and rural areas, with the added objective of reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

Capacity building

Countries to be helped to increase their human resources in ICT, and the level of specialist skills.

Broadband access

Countries to be assisted to introduce broadband networks, including mobile ones.

Changes to study Questions

The meeting in Minsk also proposed changes to the Questions considered by the ITU–D study groups:

- ▶ Revision of Question 19-1/1 “Implementation of IP telephony in developing countries”, to become “Economic and regulatory aspects of the implementation of IP telephony in developing countries”.
- ▶ Merging of Questions 18-1/2 “Implementation aspects of IMT-2000 and information-sharing on systems beyond IMT-2000 for developing countries” and 20-2/2 “Examination of access technologies for broadband telecommunications”.
- ▶ A new study group Question on the development of national mobile payment systems based on wireless telecommunication networks.