World Telecommunication Development Conference 1998

International Telecommunication Union

**Valletta, Malta
23 March – 1 April, 1998**

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International
Telecommunication
Union

BDT
TELECOMMUNICATION
DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU

Hon. Dr. Alfred Sant
Prime Minister of Malta

Message from the Prime Minister of Malta

The dawn of the new millennium is heralding in the Global Information Society, fueled by the rapid convergence of Telecommunications and Information Technology, and the equally rapid developments in the telecommunications regulation regimes.

Malta has long sought the role of a hub in the Mediterranean not merely in Telecommunications, but also in transport, services etc, and as a broker of peace bridging the North/South and East/West divides.

For ten days next year we will be honored to be the hub of your global telecommunications development endeavours.

You face a challenging task – that of granting all the peoples of the world irrespective of creed, color and wealth, citizenship of the Global Information Society. The technological instruments to achieve this noble aim are available, optical fibres on land and at sea; and the growing canopy of satellites above our heads.

Your task then is to orchestrate the regulatory machinery to create wealth in the developed, developing and least developed countries of the world, and to resolve that the Global Information Society does not breed a new cast of global society misfits; the information "have-nots" of the third millennium.

I augur that the Valletta World Telecommunication Development Conference will be successful and that at the end of a memorable stay in Malta, every nation, every people in the world will feel that they now have the passport to enter the Global Information Society.

Prime Minister

Dr. Pekka Tarjanne
Secretary-General of the International
Telecommunication Union

Message from the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union

Although it has only been four years since the last World Telecommunication Development Conference, in many ways it seems like twenty. Since the last conference, some of the events the communication industry has witnessed include the launching of the first phase of global mobile satellite systems, the signing of the World Trade Organization agreement liberalizing trade in telecommunication services and the explosive growth of the Internet and mobile cellular. At the same time, a great many countries around the world have significantly restructured their telecommunication sector.

These changes have not only significantly altered the telecommunication landscape but also imply that ongoing, rapid change has become a fact of life in the industry. Thus governments and telecommunication regulators and operators will have to learn to deal with change and be prepared to continually fine-tune their policies, regulations and operations. This will be a great challenge, particularly for many developing countries.

Thus the second World Telecommunication Development Conference opens against a background of change and in an environment when liberalization, privatization and competition are increasingly the rule rather than the exception. The Conference provides a framework for ITU Member States and Development Sector Members to devise strategies for dealing with these issues. Specifically, the Conference will guide the ITU Development Sector in how it can most effectively use its resources to assist countries to deal with the rapidly evolving changes in the telecommunication industry.

When evaluating the changes taking place in the telecommunication sector, it is important not to confuse the ends with the means. A fundamental outcome of these developments should be to enhance global communication access. While the Global Information Infrastructure has evolved rapidly in the period since the last conference, there are still billions of people around the world who do not have affordable access to communications. I am confident that this Conference will emphasize this issue and suggest appropriate answers for enhancing access.
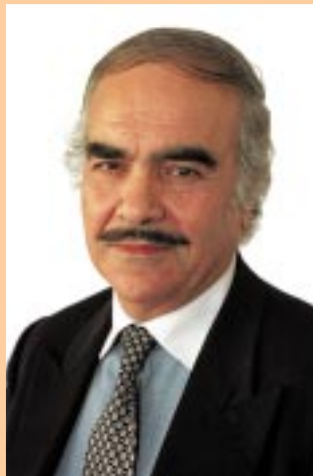
Ahmed Laouyane
Director, BDT

Message from the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

The present telecommunication environment is characterized by a combination of technological advancement, convergence and globalization. This has placed considerable pressure and strains on the organizational and management structures of service providers, manufacturers and regulators alike. As a result, many countries are facing the on-going reform of the sector, with restructuring, liberalization and privatization being forced upon them by unprecedented forces from within and without the sector. The new face of the telecommunication sector forcefully leads us to a new vision of our role in telecommunication development.

At the same time, ten years after the publication of the "Missing Link" report, the concept of the Global Information Infrastructure (GII), launched by United States Vice-President Al Gore at the WTDC-94 in Buenos Aires, aiming at the establishment of a New Global Information Society and Economy, might lead to another gap between the "information rich" and "information poor" if we do not take the initiative to integrate the establishment of a truly Global Information Infrastructure in a truly Global Development Mission of the ITU.

That is why since 1995 we took major initiatives such as the large scale project AFRICA ONE to connect Africa into the Global Information Infrastructure by the year 2000, SPACECOM project to bring the benefit of space technology to all countries of the world, including the introduction of GMPCS as well as the various application projects like Telemedecine, Interactive TV for Education, Environment Protection and Community Telecenters in rural areas.

While continuing to assist in capacity-building at the governmental level, we should assist more and more in capacity-building of the variety of emerging local private entities and national private sector, which are the real "enzymes" of social and economic development. The ascendance of the private sector in the new development process requires a complete rethinking of our development policy from the old concept of technical assistance to a new partnership philosophy involving entities and individuals, including non-governmental organizations, engaged in mutually agreed programmes, collaboratively implemented on the basis of full commitment by the partners for the benefit of all parties.

The World Telecommunication Development Conference in Valletta will pick up the baton from the last conference held in Buenos Aires as well as from the recent Regional Development Conferences and Financial Colloquia. It will relay our experience and success to what promises to be an exciting new era. New arrangements guiding the work of the ITU's Development Sector have been proposed. There will be greater focus on core activities and an emphasis on the catalytic role of the BDT. Strategic Partnership for Development in this era of restructuring will be our flagship as we guide the destiny of telecommunication development into the next millennium.

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World Telecommunication Development Conference 1998

Overview

23 March - 1 April 1998

The World Telecommunication Development Conference is organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). The Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) of the ITU carries out the Conference preparations and organizes its work.

The Second World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-98) will be held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valletta, Malta from 23 March - 1 April 1998.

The main aims of the WTDC-98 are to:
- study policy, organizational, operational, regulatory, technical and financial aspects of telecommunications
- mobilize resources to stimulate telecommunications development
- establish objectives, strategies and programmes of work for the ITU Development Sector.

The Conference is expected to adopt:
- a shared vision of the future of telecommunications worldwide
- a strategic plan for the ITU Development Sector
- global goals and strategies, adapted to regions and countries at different levels of development, translating the vision into objectives, priorities and a medium-term work programme for the period 1999-2003.

Organizers

The ITU is a worldwide organization within which governments and the private telecommunication sector coordinate the establishment and operation of telecommunication networks and services. It is responsible for the regulation, standardization, coordination and development of international telecommunications as well as the harmonization of national policies.

The Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) is the administrative arm of the ITU Development Sector. Its duties and responsibilities cover a variety of functions that range from programme supervision and technical advice to the collection, processing and dissemination of information relevant to telecommunication development.

The Conference is hosted by the Government of Malta acting through Telemalta, the country's national telecommunication operator.

Who should attend?

The Conference is intended for:

- high level representatives of governments (e.g., ministries of communications, planning, economic development and finance) including national regulatory agencies
- senior executives of telecommunication operators, service providers and equipment vendors
- regional and international development and telecommunications organizations
- multilateral and bilateral funding agencies.

Objectives

The first World Telecommunication Development Conference took place in Buenos Aires (Argentina) in 1994. That Conference approved the Buenos Aires Action Plan which set the scene for four years of activity of the ITU Development Sector.

The Valletta Conference will review progress made worldwide, including the latest developments in the Global Information Infrastructure. The Conference will examine and evaluate the implementation of the Buenos Aires Action Plan and approve as appropriate Recommendations prepared by the ITU-D Study Groups.

On the basis of its findings and the proposals received, the Conference will establish objectives and strategies for the next four years of worldwide telecommunication development, as well as priorities, work programmes and guidelines. These will form the Strategic Plan (1999-2003) for the Development Sector, to be submitted to the Plenipotentiary Conference for inclusion into the Strategic Plan of the ITU.

The output of the conference is expected to be:

A Strategic Plan for telecommunications development worldwide. The output of the Conference will be a Strategic Plan for the ITU Development Sector for consideration by the Plenipotentiary Conference in Minneapolis, USA (October 1998).

Resolutions. The Conference will adopt Resolutions establishing agreed goals that participating countries are committed to achieve. Resolutions will also define the role of development partners and provide guidelines for the work to be carried out by the ITU Development Sector.

Recommendations. The Conference will also adopt Recommendations which have been developed by the two Study Groups of the ITU Development Sector. Recommendations are expressions of broad objectives for promoting telecommunication development.

Telecommunication Development: an overview

At the first World Telecommunication Development Conference, held in Buenos Aires in March, 1994, Al Gore, the Vice-President of the United States described the Global Information Infrastructure (GII) as the key to economic growth for national and international economies. This information infrastructure would harness the technologies of the telecommunications and computer industries to bridge the gaps between peoples of the world.
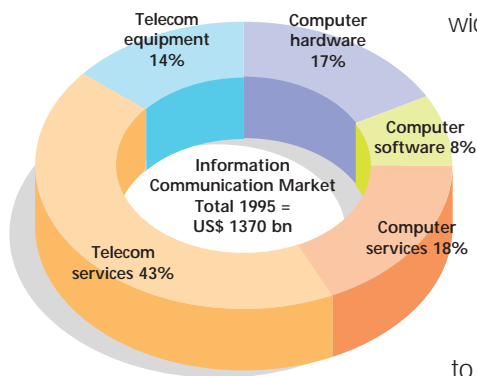
The telecommunication sector is clearly the major player in the creation of the GII, accounting for over half of the Information Communication industry. Since 1994 three trends have influenced the evolution of the telecommunication sector: regulatory reform, the shift toward an information society and the emergence of a multilateral trade framework.
Regulatory reform has progressed at an even faster rate than in the years leading to first World
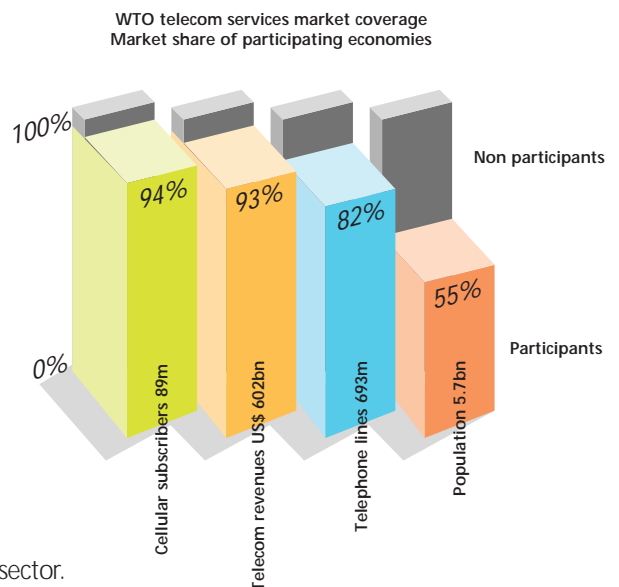
Telecommunication Development Conference. This has been due in large part to the introduction of new technologies and services and growing awareness of the importance of telecommunications. The evidence is striking: more than 50 countries have modified or introduced new telecom legislation since 1994.

The potential of the information society and the rapid growth of the Internet have captured the public imagination. There is now worldwide recognition that information services based on communications technologies are an essential element of economic growth and social well-being.
Telecommunications provides the main conduit for access to these services.
The recent agreement on trade in telecommunications services, concluded through the World Trade Organization, has far-reaching consequences for the provision of telecommunication services. Sixty-nine governments have made commitments to liberalize their telecommunication sector. Revised policy and regulatory frameworks are creating open markets with private investment

encouraged. One result of this trend is that development programmes rely less on technical assistance and more on partnerships and trade agreements.

Although the gap between the developed and developing countries has narrowed slightly in terms of access to basic telephone services since the last World Telecommunication Development Conference, it has widened as far as access to information is concerned. Issues such as the development gap, the extension of telecommunications to remote and rural areas and the application of new technologies are now caught up in a wider web - the issue of access.

Telecom equipment 14%
Computer hardware 17%
Computer software 8%
Information Communication Market Total 1995 = US$ 1370 bn
Telecom services 43%
Computer services 18%

WTO telecom services market coverage
Market share of participating economies

100%
94% — Cellular subscribers 89m
93% — Telecom revenues US$ 602bn
82% — Telephone lines 693m
55% — Population 5.7bn
0%
Non participants
Participants

Agenda

1. The WTDC-98 will review the results of global telecommunication development since the last World Telecommunication Development Conference:

- Two regional conferences: Africa (Abidjan) and Arab States (Beirut) (both in 1996)
- Study Group 1 on telecommunication development strategies and policies
- Study Group 2 on development, harmonization, management and maintenance of telecommunication networks and services
- Telecommunication Development Advisory Board
- Programmes of the Buenos Aires Action Plan
- Special actions for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

2. The WTDC-98 will review current major policy issues:

- First ITU Policy Forum on Global Mobile Personal Communications by Satellite (GMPCS) (Geneva, 1996)
- Second ITU Policy Forum on Trade in Telecommunications (Geneva, March 1998)
- Repercussions of telecommunication policies at the institutional, regulatory and operational level
- Strategic Plan of the ITU Development Sector

3. The WTDC-98 will examine technologies for the future:

- Global information infrastructure
- Network developments
- New technologies
- Technologies for rural telecommunications
- Impact of World Telecommunication Standardization Conference (WTSC-96) and World Radiocommunications Conference (WRC-97) decisions
- Major regional and global projects and initiatives: Africa One, GMPCS, SPACECOM, Telecommunications and Protection of the Environment, etc.
- Achievements and initiatives of Member States and Sector Members
- BDT technical co-operation projects

4. The WTDC-98 will consider financing and partnerships:

- Tariffs and international accounting rates
- Mechanisms for financing telecommunication development
- Financing of technical co-operation projects and programmes
- Strategic partnerships

5. The WTDC-98 will take decisions on the ITU Development Sector structure and working methods:

- Results of the Reflection Group
- Role of Sector Members in the ITU Development Sector
- Role of non-governmental organizations
- Strengthening and improving the ITU Development Sector

Issues in Focus

Liberalized markets, established within the framework of multilateral trade agreements are transforming the way telecommunications are managed, funded and delivered to customers. As a result, development programme strategies need to be re-oriented to address this changing environment.

New **partnership** arrangements represent one of the most promising potential strategies for telecommunication development. Partnerships involving joint agreements between governments and the private sector can lead to innovative solutions for boosting telecommunication development. The challenge is to develop partnerships which benefit all parties, that go beyond purely commercial approaches and which focus on long-terms benefits rather than short-term gains.

New **technologies** which have matured over the past four years could do much to help developing countries leapfrog to a modern communication network. Such technologies include wireless local loop, global mobile satellite systems, the Internet and fibre optic networks. These technologies also promise to lower costs and therefore contribute to the commercial viability of rural telecommunication services.

New **information** sharing mechanisms are also important for enabling developing countries to compete. Given the deregulation, privatization and structural reforms taking place around the world, a solid and consistent programme is needed to help developing countries introduce effective legal and regulatory frameworks. A network of resources allowing countries to find out about and learn from other experiences must therefore be put into place. The *hows, whos* and *whats* of this strategy will be an important component of the discussions at Valletta.

New **approaches**, such as a change in focus from the provision of universal service to that of universal access, are also timely. Such strategies might mean that, rather than aiming to provide a telephone line for every family, a nation could look instead at providing a number of lines for every village, and setting up community-based telecentres to provide wider access to telecommunications at an affordable price. Telemedicine and distance learning are other applications which are gradually providing real benefits, as are improved management and human resource development and restructuring in national telecommunications sectors. The Conference will examine how developing countries can benefit from these new approaches.

Key issues which are expected to be debated at the WTDC-98 in Valletta will include:

- sector reform and the regulation and legislation needed to adjust to changing market conditions
- new technologies and applications to help bridge the communication access gap and facilitate participation in the Global Information Infrastructure
- strategies to meet the obligations of universal service in a competitive world environment
- the challenges of rural development
- the challenge of coping with tariff rebalancing and reduced foreign earnings while at the same time expanding service in developing countries
- the stimulus – and threat – of foreign competition in the provision of service in emerging but fragile markets
- strategies to attract new sources of finance, including foreign investment
- the development of human resources to meet the challenges of tomorrow's new environment.

With new tools available today which can greatly benefit development efforts, along with the benefit of four years' experience since Buenos Aires, WTDC-98 represents perhaps the best chance ever to take decisions that will result in real and significant improvements in telecommunications development on a global scale.

Calendar

	Morning session	Afternoon session
Saturday / Sunday **21 - 22 March**	**Registration and collection of documents (08:00 - 18:00)**	
Monday **23 March**	**Registration and collection of documents (08:00 - 10:00)** **9:30 Meeting of heads of delegation** **10:30 Opening ceremony** **Plenary:** Election of officers of the conference; Distribution of documents	**Plenary:** Telecommunication development in the world: trends and strategies *(statements by government and industry leaders).*
Tuesday **24 March**	**Plenary:** Telecommunication development in the world: trends and strategies	**Plenary:** Results of the Buenos Aires Action Plan
Wednesday **25 March**	**Plenary:** Strategic reports	**Committees:** Policies and strategies (Structural reform) Budget Committee
Thursday **26 March**	**Committees:** Development of networks	**Committees:** Policies and strategies (Finance)
Friday **27 March**	**Committees:** Development of networks	**Plenary:** Strategic Plan
Monday **30 March**	**Committees:** Development of networks Budget Control	**Plenary:** Strategic Plan
Tuesday **31 March**	**Plenary:** Committee Reports: Policies and strategies	**Plenary:** Committee Reports: Development of networks
Wednesday **1 April**	**Plenary:** Approval of the Strategic Plan	**Plenary:** Conclusions of the Conference Closing ceremony

Structure and organization

The Conference will have five Committees:

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will coordinate the progress of the Conference and will establish the order and number of meetings, avoiding, if possible, conflicts given the size limitations of certain delegations.

Committee A:
Policies and Strategies

Committee A will examine all questions concerning policies and strategies of telecommunication development: national structures, sector reform, financing and partnerships.

Committee B:
Development of Networks

Committee B will treat all questions concerning new technologies and the development of networks including large projects and global and regional initiatives.

Editorial Committee

Text drafted by the two committees, A and B, will be sent to the Editorial Committee. It will be charged with perfecting the form without altering the sense. This text will be submitted by the Editorial Committee to the Plenary meeting for approval.

Budget Control Committee

The Budget Control Committee will determine the resources at the disposal of the delegates, examine the accounts and the estimated expenditure of the Conference.

At the end of the Conference, the Budget Control Committee will present to the Plenary meeting a report indicating, as precisely as possible, the estimated amount of total expenditure of the Conference as well as the estimated costs of implementing the decisions taken by the Conference.

Press accreditation

The press are invited to attend the Conference subject to accreditation by the ITU Press Office. To obtain press accreditation, media correspondents and contributors must complete the accreditation form available either from the ITU Press Office or from the virtual newsroom at http://www.itu.int/newsroom and return it with the required documentary evidence. The following documents are required to support each request: a photocopy of a valid press card **OR** a letter of accreditation from the Editor-in-Chief (or the News Editor for radio/TV) **OR** a recent copy of the page of the magazine/newspaper/generic of the TV/radio programme which provides the names of regular editorial staff and contributors and which lists your name.

Only editorial staff may be accredited. For TV crews, only the journalist and director will receive accreditation. Accompanying staff (sound engineers, camera operators, support staff, etc.) will receive a laissez-passer.

All others, such as management, marketing or advertising executives of newspapers/magazines, researchers, engineering staff of broadcasting/TV stations, etc. are considered visitors and cannot be granted press credentials.

Accreditation is required to receive detailed information (a press kit, information on the press facilities offered, list of participants, press releases prior and during the Conference, feature stories, news and analysis, access to all the conference documents, etc).

Accreditation also gives access to the meeting rooms and to the Press Centre. In addition, accredited journalists will be entitled to, as long as stocks last, a copy of the Conference proceedings.

Accreditation will start from February 1998 via mail or online via the ITU newsroom at http://www.itu.int/newsroom. Applicants will be notified when their press accreditation has been accepted.

Press Office
International Telecommunication Union
Place des Nations
1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 730 6039
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E-mail address: pressinfo@itu.int
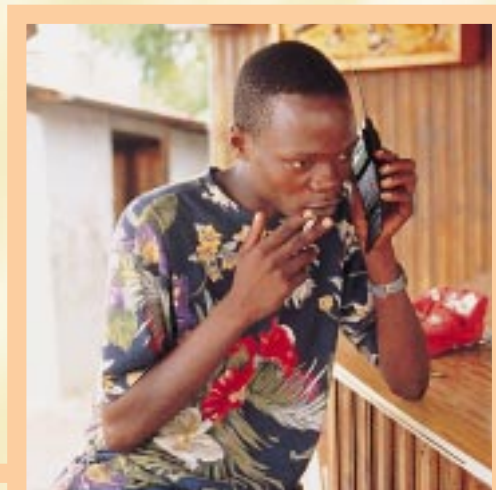
Delegate Information

Pre-Registration

Conference Registration Form: All delegates must complete and return this to the ITU *BEFORE* they travel to Malta.

Hotel Reservation Form: All delegates must also complete and return this to Alpine Travel *BEFORE* they travel to Malta.

These forms are attached to this brochure, or can be found at http://www.itu.int/wtdc-98/

Registration in Malta

Documentation and badge: On arrival at the Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valletta, delegates will receive their documentation and badge from the Registration Desk.

Official identity document: Delegates will be required to present an official identity document bearing a photograph. (e.g. passport or driving license) in order to obtain documentation and badge.

Registration fee: Representatives of ITU Member States, Development Sector Members and the UN and its specialized agencies are exempt from the registration fee. Other organizations will be requested to share in the costs of the Conference. The unit cost per participant is 600 Swiss Francs.

NOTE: Delegates who arrive in Malta without having completed the Conference Registration Form and Hotel Reservation Form in advance may have to wait longer to receive their documents and cannot be guaranteed accommodation in a hotel of their choice.

Conference Registration Desk: The Registration Desk, located at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, will be open:
Saturday 21 March   08:00 - 18:00 hours
Sunday 22 March   08:00 - 18:00 hours
Monday 23 March   08:00 - 10:00 hours

Inauguration Ceremony:
Monday 23 March   10:30 hours

Transport	*Airport transfers:* The Host Administration will provide airport transfers for delegates arriving up to 5 days prior to the conference and departing not later than 5 days after the conference.
	Airport Hospitality Desk: On arrival at the Malta International Airport, delegates will be greeted by Telemalta personnel as from Wednesday 18 March.
	Hotel to Conference Centre: Transportation will also be available from hotels to the conference venue.
Entry Visa	Every foreign national coming to Malta must be in possession of a valid passport. Please see the Visa Form (attached) for information about whether a visa is required.
Dietary Requirements and Disabled Participants	Disabled delegates who may need special assistance, as well as delegates who have special dietary requirements, are kindly requested to contact Alpine Travel.
Medical Requirements	Medical support will be available at the Conference Centre throughout the conference proceedings. Delegates who have any specific requirements should inform the host administration in writing by the beginning of March 1998.
Gozo Day Tour	Delegates will be offered a full day tour to the island of Gozo on Sunday 29 March 1998.
Accompanying Persons and Pre/Post Conference Holiday Breaks	The host administration will be organizing a programme for Accompanying Persons as well as Pre and Post Conference holiday breaks. Further details will be sent by Alpine Travel Ltd. to each delegate who returns the *Hotel Reservation Form.*
Advance Visit	Delegations who may wish to visit Malta to review the Conference site may do so during the first week of February only. The host administration must be informed in writing by 16 January 1998.
Sponsorship Opportunities	Telemalta Corporation, as host of the Conference, is offering a limited number of sponsorship opportunities. Interested organizations should contact Telemalta

The Maltese Islands – History and Culture

The Maltese Islands are an archipelago of three islands: Malta, Gozo and Comino.

As a democratic republic with a population of 360,000, the Islands enjoy a healthy economy based on a wide commercial spectrum which ranges from the manufacture of high technology components to a strong tourist industry.

Located at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, the Islands occupy a strategic position which has, since time immemorial, made them host to a succession of different nations which have contributed to a colourful historical and socio-cultural heritage. From the unique language to the friendly, passionate nature of the people, there is a distinct quality in the character of the Maltese Islands that is not found anywhere else in the world.

The Maltese Islands are known not only as prime tourist destinations, but also for their pivotal part in history, particularly in the Mediterranean region.

The Maltese trace their origins back to 4,000 BC. Testimony to this are the impressive megalithic temples which still stand today. These artifacts have attracted global interest as they are probably the oldest of their kind in the world, surpassing even the Egyptian pyramids by about 1,000 years.

Standing proud as the Islands' crowning glory is the capital Valletta, a showcase of Maltese history in itself which next year will be named as the Council of Europe's European Cultural Capital. The magnificent bastions which enclose this Baroque city are a legacy of one of the most significant chapters in the story of Malta, the 16th century, when the Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem were in Malta.

Later, during the Second World War, the Islands were the focus of a major conflict when Allied fleets found refuge in the city's harbour. The valour shown by the Maltese people in the face of extreme hardship earned the Island the George Cross. Today, the Grand Harbour is acknowledged as one of the best examples of a natural harbour in the world.

Further west is Mdina, the medieval city which was Malta's capital before Valletta. Perched majestically on a hill, this fortified city, with its narrow, silent streets and magnificent palaces, immediately transports the visitor to bygone times rich in history and culture.
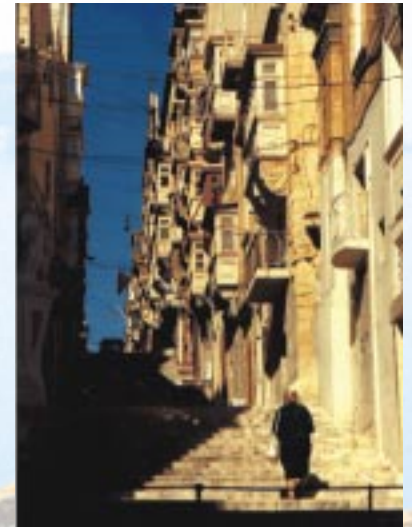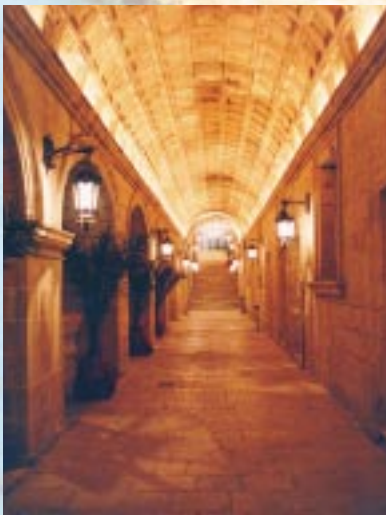
But ancient temples and historical cities are not the only attractions which lure over a million visitors to Malta every year. The Islands are blessed with an incredible climate which sees blue skies all year round, even throughout the mild winter. In summer, the rocky coastlines and sandy beaches become a mecca for sun lovers who make the best of the Islands' clean seas, warm temperatures and water sport opportunities.

Another gem is Gozo, Malta's tranquil sister island and the home of the legendary Calypso. With its idyllic scenery and highly traditional way of life, Gozo is distinctly different from Malta. Its main town, Rabat, is dominated by the Cittadella, the ancient walled city which affords a rich taste of history, as well as breath-taking panoramas of the entire island.

The Mediterranean Conference Centre

The World Telecommunication Development Conference will take place at the Mediterranean Conference Centre. The history of the Mediterranean Conference Centre stretches back to 1574, when the Knights of the order of St. John of Jerusalem constructed the building to serve as a school of anatomy and a hospital. Not only was the nursing of the highest standard, it also came to have the world's longest hospital ward which, in 1666, was described as one of the 'grandest interiors in the world'. The French, and later the British, used it as a Garrison Hospital for their troops. For twenty years it housed the Police Headquarters and later on served as an entertainment centre, children's theatre, school, examination hall and election ballot counting centre.

During World War II, four direct hits from bombs reduced sections of the vast building to rubble. It was not until late 1978 that energetic steps were taken by the government to convert the devastated building into a fully equipped Conference Centre. In February 1979 the revived building was inaugurated and its superb restoration won the Europa Nostra Architectural Award.

Since then, its distinctive blend of historic character and modern

functionality has attracted conferences, meetings and exhibitions from all over the world. Perhaps the biggest challenge which the Centre has successfully met - at very short notice - was the Malta Summit between Presidents Bush and Gorbachev in December 1989, when among other things, an army of two thousand journalists covered the event.

The complex of the Mediterranean Conference Centre covers a total area of approximately 7000 m^2. The principal meeting room is the Republic Hall. Originally a courtyard, this hall can now seat up to 1400 people. The Centre also contains five other fully air-conditioned halls with seating capacities ranging from 70 to 450, all of which have simultaneous interpretation facilities and audio-visual equipment. What was once the 'Great Magazine Ward' of the Old Hospital has been tastefully transformed into the 1000 seater 'La Valette Restaurant' whilst the 'Long Ward' is now a 160 metre long Exhibition Hall.

Mediterranean
Conference Centre

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Travel and hotel arrangements

Travel arrangement organization

Alpine Travel Ltd., the Carlson Wagonlit Travel Representative in Malta, has been entrusted with the organization of travel arrangements, accommodation and transport in Malta and other local activities during the World Telecommunication Development Conference.

Special rates for hotels, car hire and ancillary services have been negotiated.

Alpine is licensee for Europcar InterRent and IATA agents.

Alpine Travel Limited, Alpine House, Naxxar road, San Gwann SGN 08, Malta. Tel: (356) 337361/2. Fax: (356) 339627. Telex: 1883 - ALPINE

e-mail: alpinetravel@alpine.com.mt

http://www.alpine.com.mt/altrav.htm

Air travel

Air Malta, as the national airline of Malta, welcomes all delegates and accompanying persons for a special discount on its point to point scheduled services.

Delegates who wish to avail themselves of these discounts are kindly requested to contact any Air Malta office and present a copy of their WTDC-98 invitation letter (sent by the ITU in June 1997).

Air Malta's scheduled route network makes Malta accessible from over 40 cities in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and the Gulf.

A complete list of Air Malta offices and scheduled services can be retrieved from the Air Malta home page shown below.

Air Malta home page: http://www.airmalta.com/

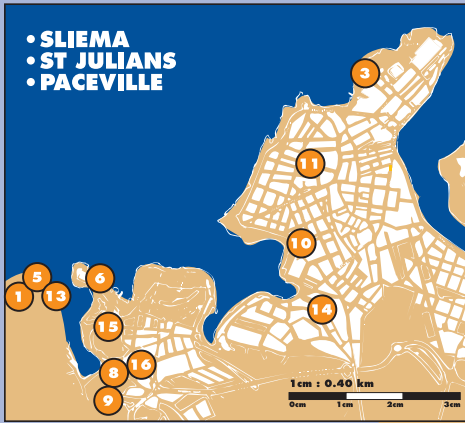Head office E-mail: info@airmalta.com

Hotels

Telemalta, through its appointed agency Alpine Travel, has negotiated advantageous prices for hotel accommodation. Delegates who wish to avail themselves of these rates must complete the attached **Hotel Reservation Form** and return it to Alpine Travel. Availability of rooms will be on a first-come, first-served basis until 2 March 1998. Thereafter, Alpine will endeavour to meet delegates' requirements but cannot guarantee your preferred hotel at the negotiated rates.

Please note that the ITU is not involved in hotel arrangements.
All inquiries regarding hotels should be directed to Alpine Travel.

Information about many of these hotels is available on the National Tourism Organization – Malta website: ***http://www.tourism.org.mt/stay.htm.***

SLIEMA · ST JULIANS · PACEVILLE

③ ⑪ ⑩ ⑤ ⑬ ① ⑥ ⑮ ⑭ ⑧ ⑯ ⑨

1cm : 0.40 km
0cm 1cm 2cm 3cm

VALLETTA

MARSAMXETT HARBOUR

Mediterranean Conference Centre

④

GRAND HARBOUR

1cm : 0.16 km
0cm 1cm 2cm 3cm

GOZO

COMINO

· XEMXIJA · BUGIBBA · QAWRA · ST. PAUL'S

⑫ ⑦

1cm : 0.30 km
0cm 1cm 2cm 3cm

Mediterranean Conference Centre

Luqa Airport

MALTA

1 : 2.21 km
0cm 1cm 2cm 3cm

San Anton Gardens

②

ATTARD

1cm : 0.13 km
0cm 1cm 2cm 3cm

Hotels (Rates in US$)	Category	Single Room	Twin Room (per person)	Junior Suite (per person)	Executive Suite (per person)
1. Radisson SAS Bay Point Resort	★★★★★	133	84	145	160
2. Corinthia Palace Hotel	★★★★★	144	89	-	238
3. Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza	★★★★★	144	89	255	383
4. Le Meridien Phoenicia	★★★★★	155	102	-	305
5. Corinthia San Gorg Hotel	★★★★★	167	100	232	261
6. Westin Dragonara Resort	★★★★★	167	104	289	464
7. Suncrest Hotel	★★★★	36	22		
8. Hotel Bernard	★★★★	42	29		
9. Eden Beach Hotel	★★★★	45	32		
10. The Galaxy Hotel	★★★★	49	32		
11. The Victoria Hotel	★★★★	66	45		
12. New Dolmen Hotel	★★★★	62	33		
13. Corinthia Marina Hotel	★★★★	62	42		
14. Imperial Hotel	★★★	28	19		
15. Alexandria Palace Hotel	★★★	28	19		
16. Ascot Hotel	★★★	22	16		

All prices in this table are on a Bed and Breakfast basis only and do not include any extra services offered by the hotel. Prices include all taxes.
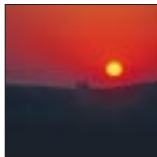
Visitor Information

Location

The Maltese archipelago consists of three inhabited islands, Malta, Gozo and Comino. They lie in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea with Malta 93 km south of Sicily and 230 km North of Africa. The total area is 316 square km. The longest distance in Malta from South - East to North West is about 27 km.

Climate

The climate is warm and healthy. There are no biting winds, fog, snow or frost. The temperature in March averages 16.5°C (62°F) during the day and 10.2°C (50°F) at night. Although not very common, it is quite possible that the weather in March includes rainy and windy days.

Language
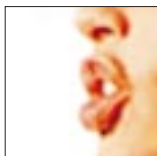
Maltese is a Semitic language written in the Roman script comprising a vast element of words of English and Italian origin. Besides Maltese, English and Italian are widely spoken.

Time

Malta is on central European Time (CET), that is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) in winter and two hours from the last Sunday in March until the last Sunday in October. Clocks will be moved forward one hour on Sunday 29 March 1998.

Electricity

The electrical supply is 240 volts, single phase, 50 cycles. 13 amp, three-pin rectangular sockets are used in Malta.

Public transport

Malta's public transport system offers an unexpensive way of touring the Island. The main bus terminus is at Valletta from where buses operate to all parts of Malta. The cost of a bus route ranges from 11 cents to 16 cents. The longest bus journey takes about fifty minutes; the average ride is between 20 and 30 minutes.

Taxis

Taxis are all fitted with meters. Should you wish to know in advance how much a trip will cost, it is best to check with the driver before the journey.

Telephone Sockets

The standard telephone sockets in Malta are the BS432 British-type Line Jack units.

Currency

Malta's currency is decimal. The Lira (Lm) is the unit of currency and is divided into 100 cents; each cent is again divided into 10 mils. There is no limit to the amount of foreign currency that may be brought into Malta, providing it is declared upon arrival. However, the maximum amount of Maltese currency that may be brought into Malta is Lm 50. Visitors may take out of Malta any unspent foreign currency but no more than Lm 25 in Maltese currency.

Exchange rates can fluctuate. Rates on 20 October 1997 were:

Currency	Exchange rates against one Maltese Lira
US Dollar	2.56
UK Sterling	1.57
Deutsche Mark	4.53
Italian Lira	4'422
Swiss Franc	3.77
Dutch Guilder	5.11
Japanese Yen	310
French Franc	15.19

Source: Central Bank of Malta

Additional information

For more information about Malta, please visit the National Tourism Organisation - Malta web site at: **http://www.tourism.org.mt**

Telemalta: Small and dynamic

Malta's geographical position, as well as its stability and long standing friendly relations with all Mediterranean countries make it a very credible partner for telecommunication traffic hubbing operations. Major global carriers are viewing Malta very positively in this respect.

Telemalta, the country's national telecommunication operator, a parastatal organisation established in 1975, has armed itself to fit the role with competent staff, appropriate infrastructure and agreements of co-operation with key partners.

Telemalta's breakthrough into the digital world occurred in 1992 when the company fully digitised its network by leapfrogging intermediate technologies. This was achieved with the full assistance of the ITU which helped Telemalta draw up its Master Plan. The remarkable way in which the transition was done earned Telemalta the honour to be promoted by the ITU as a role model for telecommunication development during WTDC-94.

At 47%, Malta's teledensity is exceptionally high when compared to its GDP per capita. Telemalta has

also built the necessary infrastructure to connect to the outside world through two international gateways, a well connected Earth Station and a fiber-optic link to Sicily. Locally, most modern data services are available, including fully digital dedicated circuits of any speed, high speed packet switching and frame relay. Telemalta will shortly be providing ISDN and has also established a team to study which broadband applications fit the customers' needs and which can be introduced successfully. The Corporation is also in joint venture with the companies which provide Cellular Mobile Telephony, Paging and Internet Services.

Despite its small size, Telemalta is adopting strategic stances which are aligned with those of the more advanced telecommunication organisations. This makes Telemalta the ideal partner for appropriate operations within the Mediterranean region.

Small is beautiful: Malta

Of the 20 countries with the highest positive difference between existing and predicted teledensity (based on per capita GDP), nine have land areas less than 1'000 square kilometres, suggesting a relationship between size and telecommunications development. Intuitively this seems right since it is easier to build a network over a small area.

Malta, a small country of 316 square kilometres in the middle of the Mediterranean, illustrates this point. It has a teledensity of more than twice what would be expected considering its per capita GDP. Teledensity more than doubled during 1983-96 from 22 to 47. At end 1992, it was one of the first European countries with a fully digital local network. The growth rate in main lines fluctuated between 5% and 17% per annum dependent on the magnitude of network expansion programmes in particular years.

A small land area by itself does not fully explain telecommunication development since there are a number of countries with limited land areas that have low teledensities.

Other factors behind Malta's success include government commitment, a commercially sound operator and international co-operation. The government has been supportive, recognising that telecommunications are important for Malta's service-oriented economy. The state-owned PTO, Telemalta Corporation, is an autonomous company run along commercial lines. Malta has been strongly supportive of international co-operation and has worked closely with the ITU. Collaboration included preparation and revision of the Telecommunication Master Plan and guidance in the implementation of the country-wide digital infrastructure.

Malta has graduated into the ranks of the telecommunications-developed economies. In the past it was a recipient of technical assistance but today it is in a position to be itself a provider of help. Maltese experts have provided technical assistance in a number of countries and there are plans to create a specialised telecommunication training centre to provide for the needs of other countries.

Contact details

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Number of Members States as per 21 October 1997: 188

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