

1st frequency coordination meeting on the GE84 Plan Optimization for Africa

Virtual event

15-19 February 2021

Opening Remarks

**Mario Maniewicz
Director, Radiocommunication Bureau**

Mr. John OMO, Secretary General of ATU,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear friends, Chers amis,

It is a great pleasure for me to address you today and open our 1st frequency coordination meeting in the framework of our project for the optimization of the GE84 Plan for Africa. As part of this important exercise, we will organize two additional meetings like this one before the end of year 2021.

As you know, the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau in collaboration with the African Telecommunication Union, launched this project for the optimization of the GE84 Plan for African countries in East London - South Africa, back in July 2019. The project aims to achieve an efficient and equitable use of the 87.5-108 MHz (FM) band for analogue sound broadcasting and to identify new frequencies to FM broadcasting.

The ultimate objective is to meet the increasing need for additional frequencies in African countries for sound radio, to be used for analogue, for digital, or both.

Since its very first transmissions in 1920, radio has proven to be of capital importance in a vast variety of fields including, information, culture and entertainment.

Furthermore, radio is one of the key technologies used in emergency situations and other exceptional circumstances such as the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Another important aspect of radio is its astounding accessibility at an affordable price. Radio reaches everyone, everywhere: people in big cities, small towns and villages, in rural and isolated areas. Radio leaves no one behind!

No other technology can provide such a variety of services to such a large community at surprisingly low costs.

Radio transmissions entertain, inform, educate and save lives!

Chers amis,

Aujourd'hui, nous lançons les réunions de coordination où vos administrations soumettront des demandes de fréquence, analyseront les résultats et discuteront avec leurs voisins pour parvenir à des accords. L'objectif principal est que les administrations soient en mesure de planifier les fréquences pour couvrir leurs besoins nationaux sans causer d'interférences préjudiciables aux pays voisins.

Le Bureau des radiocommunications a fourni le logiciel d'optimisation du plan GE84 et les ateliers préparatoires ont eu lieu en septembre, octobre et janvier derniers, organisés en étroite collaboration avec l'Union africaine des télécommunications. Ce fut une immense satisfaction d'avoir eu une telle participation à ces ateliers, ce qui confirme l'importance et la pertinence de ce projet pour tous vos pays.

Before ending my remarks, I would like to remind you that Africa was the first Region to initiate the GE06 replanning. Africa was indeed, after having identified additional channels in the band 470-698 MHz, the first region that was able to free the 700 and 800 MHz bands. Today, Africa is again the first Region to launch the process of optimizing the GE84 Plan on such a scope for sound Radio.

I am fully confident that your discussions, with the support of our experts from both ATU and BR, will be smooth and efficient, and that the African spirit of collaboration and sense of negotiation will prevail and bring excellent results for the benefit of all!

Chers amis,

Je reste personnellement à votre disposition, ainsi que l'ensemble du Bureau des radiocommunications, afin de soutenir votre région dans ses diverses activités et initiatives liées aux radiocommunications, et je vous souhaite plein succès dans vos réunions et vos discussions.

I look forward to seeing you at future physical meetings!

Thank you very much. Merci de votre attention.