

1st ITU Inter-regional Workshop on WRC-23 Preparation

Virtual event

Welcome Remarks

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Dear Chairmen of the regional groups and regional organizations,
Dear Chairman of the CPM,
Dear Chairman of the WRC-23 Informal Group,
Distinguished delegates,
Dear friends,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this first ITU Inter-regional Workshop on WRC-23 Preparation.

The successful results achieved at recent WRCs, with their busy agendas and difficult issues to resolve, have shown how important every opportunity is to meet formally and informally, exchange views, provide explanations and ideas for a better preparation of the next Conference.

The present Workshop is one of these opportunities, and I am pleased to see all of you online today and being ready to contribute to this important event.

As you know, the agenda for WRC-23 is not less complex than the one we had for WRC-19. To guarantee the same level of achievement at the next WRC, we need to continue the trend towards increasing the proportion of common and coordinated proposals, which exceeded two-thirds of the 2600 proposals submitted to that conference.

This process highlights the great spirit of international cooperation that marks the ITU tradition of consensus building. It has proved to be a powerful and increasingly successful mechanism for reaching agreement within and between the various regional groups, as foreseen and encouraged by WRC Resolution 72 since 1995.

I am pleased to see that the main regional groups are well represented today at this online workshop. I am convinced that the internal reflections and discussions that are ongoing within each regional group, as well as their long experience in their internal organization and preparation for WRCs, will benefit us all during this Workshop.

I would also like to thank you all for your support to the work of the ITU-R in general, and in particular to the WRC-23 preparatory studies within the ITU-R study groups.

I am pleased to welcome to our discussions several representatives from various entities such as sister UN agencies, international organizations and other stakeholders. I am sure they will provide important information to facilitate the understanding and resolution of the relevant topics on WRC 23 agenda.

Dear Participants,

As you know, the beginning of the ITU-R study cycle coincided with the beginning of the COVID pandemic. And for almost two years, we have been holding online meetings. With your support, we went through these difficult times. We adapted to limited meeting hours, worked in between meetings in correspondence groups, and dealt with the challenge of reaching consensus in a virtual environment.

We have successfully achieved several milestones already. Sharing and compatibility studies are being developed using the agreed characteristics and parameters of services and applications.

However, the progress achieved so far on some issues has not been as much as expected.

It is mainly for this reason that I announced on 24th November, through Administrative Circular CACE/1002, that all Study Group and Working Party meetings will be held in the ITU Headquarters as physical meetings as of the end of February 2022, starting with the meeting of TG 6/1. Now that we have the possibility of returning to face-to-face meetings, it is essential that we allow the groups to return to normal practices. This will permit them to benefit from utilizing full working days and for negotiations to be facilitated by informal consultations.

The experience gained on the technicalities of online platforms will continue to be beneficial, since the physical meetings will use remote participation, as for some time we will most probably have a portion of our delegates not being able to attend meetings in person.

I expect that being face-to-face will help further advance our work and I am confident that the ITU-R community, under the competent leadership of the Chairmen of the Responsible Groups and their subgroups, will identify good compromise solutions for all agenda items, as was the case in past Conferences.

I am also confident that all groups will be able to reflect these solutions in the draft CPM texts expected by the end of October next year, which will be an important landmark for the preparation of WRC-23.

Dear colleagues,

Your participation in this inter-regional workshop emphasizes the essential role of the WRC process:

- To maintain regulatory certainty for a multi-trillion dollars industry which plays an increasingly important role in the development of our societies, and
- To achieve economies of scale, roaming and interoperability through global spectrum harmonization.

In so doing, it is important to carry out the ITU-R studies in accordance with the WRC-19 decisions in order:

- to establish the technical conditions for the free-interference operation of all the services, and

- to provide access to frequency spectrum and orbit resources for new technologies, while protecting existing services and applications.

During this Workshop, we will discuss the most challenging items contained in the WRC-23 Agenda, which are related to:

- The IMT identification in a number of additional frequency bands between 3.3 GHz and 10.5 GHz, depending on the region;
- The use of HIBS (high-altitude platform stations as IMT base stations) in certain bands identified for IMT below 2.7 GHz to expand the capacity and coverage to provide mobile-broadband connectivity to underserved communities, and in rural and remote areas;
- The optimum spectrum uses of the UHF bands in Region 1 between the mobile, the broadcasting and other related services; and
- The use of radiocommunications in the aeronautical and maritime services, in order to improve air traffic management (ATM) over oceanic and remote areas in VHF bands, to introduce digital systems in HF bands, or to further modernize the GMDSS (Global Maritime Distress and Safety System) and the implementation of e-navigation.

Challenging items are also related to the development of radiocommunications by satellite while in motion, using either GSO network or non-GSO systems, as well as inter-satellite links; without forgetting the radiocommunications needs of the science community to collect important data on observable parameter of Earth climate evolution, or to improve weather and climate models, as well as to support the increasing space missions.

Dear friends,

The Bureau will of course continue to provide the necessary support for the timely completion of the preparatory studies, in particular in relation to agenda items 2 (incorporation by reference of ITU-R Rec.), 4 (review of WRC Resolutions and Recommendations), 7 (coordination, notification and recording procedures) and 9 (ITU-R activities and any difficulties or inconsistencies encountered in the application of the Radio Regulations).

In accordance with Resolution ITU-R 2-8, I will submit to the second session of the CPM an early version of Director's Report to WRC-23, in order to facilitate the identification of possible solutions to the issues raised in this Report, as well as the usual Director's Reports on agenda items 2 and 4.

The BR will also continue to support the efforts by the regional groups and the ITU-R membership to organize workshops for WRC-23 preparation and I would like to thank all those who have helped in this process in order to be better prepared for the Conference.

Based on the experience gained in this and previous workshops of this type, we plan to hold two additional inter-regional workshops in the coming two years; the second one prior to the second session of the CPM, and the third one before WRC-23 itself.

Before I conclude, I would like to call your attention to the well-established Network of Women for WRC-23, which continues to build gender equality in the leadership for the upcoming conference. It was launched last December during the World Radiocommunication Seminar 2020. Subsequent sessions were organized in the context of ITU-R meetings and meetings of the regional groups. A session of NOW4WRC23 will be held tomorrow to present the progress made so far in the regions and within the RAG Correspondence Group preparing for RA-23 and WRC-23.

Let me finish by wishing you a most successful workshop.

