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International Telecommunications Regulations (ITRs) and the World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT)

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What are the ITRs (1/5)

- One of the four treaties of the ITU
  - Constitution
  - Convention
  - Radio Regulations
  - International Telecommunications Regulations

What are the ITRs (2/5)

- Successor to a long line of treaties, going back to the original ITU Convention of 1865

- Current version adopted in 1988 in Melbourne, Australia, by the World Administrative Telegraph and Telephone Conference (WATTC)

- Previous version was two treaties, Telegraph Regulations and Telephone Regulations (1973)

What are the ITRs (3/5)

- Establish general principles relating to the provision and operation of international telecommunication
  - facilitate global interconnection and interoperability
  - underpin harmonious development and efficient operation of technical facilities
  - promote efficiency, usefulness, and availability of international telecommunication services

What are the ITRs (4/5)

- Contain provisions relating to
  - Purpose and scope
  - Definitions
  - International Network
  - International Telecommunications Services
  - Safety of Line and Priority Telecommunications
  - Charging and Accounting
  - Suspension of Services
  - Dissemination of Information
  - Special Arrangements

In some cases, related or similar provisions are found in the Constitution or Convention

What are the ITRs (5/5)

- Article 9: Special Arrangements
  - Enabled use of private leased lines for data networks
  - Facilitated expansion of the Internet

A related (but less detailed) provision is found in Art. 42 of the Constitution

Plans to revise the ITRs (1/3)

- Unchanged since 1988
- Significant changes since then:
  - Technologies
  - Privatization
  - Liberalization
  - Bilateral agreements between operators regarding tariffs

Plans to revise the ITRs (2/3)

- Discussions regarding review and revision at Plenipotentiary Conferences
  - 1998
  - 2002
  - 2006

Plans to revise the ITRs (3/3)

- Review processes:
  - 1999-2000: Expert Group
  - 2004-2005: Council Working Group on the ITRs
  - 2007-2009: Expert Group to Review the ITRs (ITR-EG)

WCIT and its preparatory process (1/2)

- PP Resolution 146 (2006)
  - Need consensus on what could appropriately be in treaties, standards, development activities
  - Important to ensure that the ITRs are reviewed and, if deemed appropriate, revised
  - Defined a review process (ITR-EG and WTPF)
  - Called for World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT) in 2012

WCIT and its Preparatory Process (2/2)

- World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT):
  - 2009-2012: Council Working Group to Prepare the 2012 WCIT (Council resolution 1312) – CWG WCIT12
  - Council 2010 has set dates and agenda (Council resolution 1317)
  - 2012: WCIT

Highlights of discussions (1/3)

- Are the ITRs still relevant?
- Do provisions belong elsewhere?
  - Constitution/Convention
  - ITU-T Recommendations
- Should provisions be added to cover new issues?

Highlights of discussions (2/3)

- Three main views up to 2010:
  - Provisions are still valid and required, no change needed or desirable
  - Most provisions are obsolete or are already covered adequately in other ITU instruments
  - New provisions are needed, to cover new areas and to strengthen certain areas

Greater flexibility appears to have emerged in 2010

Highlights of discussions (3/3)

- Examples of new issues:
  - Security
  - Misuse of numbers
  - Application of certain ITU-T Recommendations

No consensus on any of these, or indeed on whether any new issues should be included

Issues that have been raised

- Do provisions belong elsewhere?
  - Constitution/Convention
  - ITU-T Recommendations
- How to make it easier to revise in the future?
- Emergency telecommunications services and telecommunications for disaster relief
- Taxation
- Provisions regarding accounting (Abrogate? Revise?)

- What are your thoughts?

For more information

- CWG-WCIT12: http://www.itu.int/council/groups/cwg-wcit12/index.html

- 2007 Background document: http://www.itu.int/md/T05-ITR.EG-INF-0002/en

Thank You