

GSR-23: Regulation for a sustainable digital future

REGIONAL REGULATORY ASSOCIATIONS (RA) MEETING

Monday, 5 June 2023 (9:30-11:00 CEST)

RA Meeting Chair: H.E Mr. Mohammed Al Tamimi, Governor, Communications, Space and Technology Commission (CST) of Saudi Arabia, and Chairman of the Arab Regulators Network of Telecommunications (AREGNET), represented by Eng. Abdullah Almubadal, Deputy Governor

REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Regional Regulatory Associations (RA) meeting, held as a pre-event to GSR-23, was chaired by Eng. Abdullah Almubadal, Deputy Governor, on behalf of H.E. Mr. Mohammed Al Tamimi, Governor, Communications, Space and Technology Commission (CST) of Saudi Arabia, and Chairman of the Arab Regulators Network of Telecommunications (AREGNET).

In his opening remarks, Eng. Abdullah Almubadal emphasized the rapid impact of ICTs on economies and daily lives, highlighting the challenges faced by regulators in keeping pace with these changes and maximizing the benefits of digital communications. He stressed the commitment of regulatory associations to adopt strategies and policies that incentivize local and international markets and emphasized the need for them to remain up to date in the digital ecosystem. He also underscored the importance of creating an enabling environment that promotes ICT development and fosters creativity for the benefit of all. Collaboration and integration among all sectors were highlighted as crucial for establishing a favourable regulatory environment.

Dr Cosmas Zavazava, BDT Director, emphasized the importance of collaboration at regional, inter-regional, intersectoral and global levels. He noted the wave of digital transformation globally and the need for national regulatory authorities (NRAs) from various sectors to collaborate. Beyond the national level, regional regulatory collaboration across economic sectors and regulators with mandates in digital services, he noted, is fundamental to enhance the inclusiveness, competitiveness and innovation drive of digital markets. Consistent regional, inter-regional and global strategies should always underpin national regulatory strategies.

Following a detailed presentation on the initiative, the BDT Director formally launched [The Digital Regulation Network \(DRN\): The Collaborative Network of Networks](#), noting that this initiative will benefit Regional Regulatory Associations and NRAs globally, and aims to provide increased cross-regional and sectoral collaboration. This initiative, he said, will include twinning efforts to facilitate exchange of experiences and information and enrich collaboration among regulators. He called for support and commitment of partners to achieve impactful and tangible results. On behalf of H.E. Dr Al Tamimi, Eng. Abdullah Almubadal expressed Saudi Arabia's pleasure in supporting ITU on this DRN initiative.

The 2023 members of the Board of the Digital Regulation Network (2020, 2021 and 2023 RA Chairs as well as the GSR-23 Chair) consisting of: Mr Konstantinos Masselos, Chair Body of European Regulators

for Electronic Communications (BEREC); Ms Bridget Mphatso Linzie, Executive Secretary, Communications Regulators' Association of Southern Africa (CRASA), Eng Hossam El-Gamal, Executive President National Telecom Regulatory Authority (NTRA) Egypt (Arab Republic of) and GSR-23 Chair, expressed their support for the Digital Regulation Network (DRN).

Participants emphasized the importance of collaboration and the need to consider multiple perspectives in order to align policies and regulatory approaches for global and regional consensus on addressing common issues related to digital transformation and the delivery of digital services.

Regional Regulatory Associations present at the RA meeting, in particular APT/SATRC, EaPeReg, CRASA, CTU, FRATEL, REGULATEL and WATRA highlighted ongoing activities and priorities that could be taken into consideration for DRN activities, including:

- Innovative regulatory approaches;
- Regulatory issues including infrastructure sharing, quality of service, consumer protection, OTT services and applications, digital platforms;
- Emergency preparedness and responses and protection of critical infrastructure (e.g.: submarine cables);
- Development of policies to support the 5G ecosystem and rollout of 5G infrastructure;
- Spectrum-related issues including, for example, spectrum buy-ins for 5G, spectrum sharing, trading, harmonization and governance, affordable access to spectrum, cross-border coordination issues; and satellite requirements and challenges related to NGSO (Non-Geostationary Orbit) constellations;
- Digital literacy.

To conclude, Regional Regulatory Associations congratulated ITU for launching the Digital Regulation Network (DRN), noting the importance of collaboration, cooperation and exchange of ideas among regional regulatory associations and regulators everywhere.

At the end of the meeting, two agreements were signed. Such agreements will contribute to and are important building blocks thereof. The agreements are:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between ITU and the European Mediterranean Regulators Group (EMERG) to establish a high-level framework of cooperation in the area of electronic communication and introducing more structured way of cooperation aiming at translating policy aspirations into concrete actions.
- Joint Declaration between ITU, EMERG and the Eastern Partnership Electronic Communications Regulators Network (EaPeReg) on National Broadband and Infrastructure Mapping Systems.