

Meeting of Study Group 5

Virtual event

23 November 2020, Start 12.00 (CET)

Opening Speech

Mario Maniewicz
Director, Radiocommunication Bureau

Mr. Chairman,

Dear Delegates,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this meeting of Study Group 5. I would like to start by acknowledging our chairman, Mr. Martin Fenton, as well as all the vicechairs of this group.

As it is my practice, I would like to thank the Chairs of Working Parties 5A, 5B, 5C and 5D – Dr Jose Costa, Mr John Mettrop, Mr Pietro Nava and Mr Stephen Blust – for the work carried out under their leadership on the various subjects assigned to their respective Working Parties.

I note that the studies on the WRC-23 agenda items assigned to this Study Group have been initiated and are currently progressing. Exchange of communications with other Study Groups and Working Parties have also been prepared and sent.

I wish to take this opportunity to highlight the importance of the exchange of information among the ITU-R groups, which allows us to get the contribution of the entire ITU-R community for each specific topic, from a wider perspective.

The last time I addressed a Study Group 5 meeting, which was back in July, I mentioned to you that I envisaged additional challenges when progressing the work of the ITU-R by the use of virtual meetings due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. This has been particularly true for the meetings of Working Parties, where the very detailed technical discussions have experienced quite frequently lack of time as well as additional difficulties in finding agreements, also due to

the missing physical interaction during coffee breaks or other opportunities for informal exchanges.

As such, we have received several proposals from many of you relating to the duration of meetings, their time schedule, and the overlaps among meetings. They were expressed at a meeting of the Chairmen and vice-Chairmen that was held earlier this year, and I have given due consideration to all suggestions and requests. Nevertheless, some difficulties are not fully solved, as our traditional working arrangements have changed in practically no time, and we are still making improvements where possible. I can assure you that what has been done up to now and what we will do in the future is the best possible to meet the needs of the ITU-R community at large.

As you know, we are facing a huge workload in ITU-R. WRC-23 agenda and the new emerging technologies opened the door to the need for better coordination/sharing among radiocommunications services and systems. The time we have in this study cycle is not changed compared to the past. However, the time to meet and exchange views, identify technical approaches, build consensus, identify solutions and, finally, reach agreement, has been drastically reduced due to the sanitary crisis the world is going through.

I am convinced that your constructive and cooperative spirit, the same that you have shown in the past, will be present again to help overcome the above-mentioned obstacles.

I know you have an increased preparatory workload, as well as a more complex management of the time during the meetings. Fortunately, the use of electronic facilities can help advance the work in between meetings. It also enables the participation of additional delegates without the need to travel abroad. In fact, since the start of the virtual meetings, the participation at virtual Working Party Meetings has increased significantly, which is a very positive consequence of the otherwise negative impact of the COVID-19.

Despite all the difficulties, I have the utmost confidence in the leadership of this Study Group, in the WP Chairs, as well as in the BR counsellors (Vadim and Uwe) that are assisting them.

Dear Chairman,

I have dedicated most of my remarks to organizational aspects, which are the issues at stake at this time. Nevertheless, I cannot leave this meeting without recognizing the huge workload of each of the WPs and the achievements they have successfully attained and that are reflected in your agenda today.

Thank you for your attention. I wish you a very successful meeting.