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■ WTO Report Highlights ITU's Key Role

The ITU together with World Standards Cooperation (WSC) partners ISO and IEC are acknowledged as "the most important" of the 49 international standardizing bodies in the *World Trade Report 2005*, published by the WTO (the World Trade Organisation), in an analysis of "Trade, Standards and the WTO".

The report underlines the important benefits that standards can deliver in terms of information for consumers, environmental protection and compatibility of related goods and services.

"International standards help ensure technical compatibility across countries and convey information to consumers about products that have been produced abroad or processes that took place in another country," the report states, adding, "International standards thus reduce transaction costs and facilitate international trade."

■ Survey on the Impact of ICT Standards

ITU members are being asked to complete a questionnaire to assess the global impact of ICT standards. The call comes as part of a project (NO-REST) funded by the European Commission.

NO-REST aims to provide insight that will enable better standards building in the future. Additionally, it will look at standards setting organizations, such as ITU, to assess whether the developer of a particular standard influences its performance and success. The results will enable NO-REST to develop guidelines, which may assist in choosing the ideal standards setting organization for producing a particular standard.

The results of this survey will be made available at the ITU-hosted *SIIT 2005* conference in Geneva, September 21-23.

Dr. Knut Blind, the coordinator of NO-REST, was also responsible for the study – *Economic Benefits of Standardization*, published by DIN, the German institute of standardization. The project was one of the first attempts to put a monetary value on standardization. It found that Europe's economy and businesses greatly benefit from the application of standards. Blind together with other researchers has recently produced a similar paper for the United Kingdom. *The Empirical Economics of Standards* was funded and published by the British Department of Trade and Industry.

■ Meeting Reports Made Publicly Available

In a first for ITU-T, reports from a recent meeting of the Study Group which looks at mobile telecommunication networks (Study Group 19) have been made publicly available on the web. Other SG 19 documents have also been made available in the experiment and are identified by the words 'public access' in red type on the website.

The trial which will last until the end of 2006, is a result of discussion at the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSa) and meetings of the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG).

The available reports cover the May 2005 meeting in Geneva and provide both an in-depth look at the week's proceedings, and give insight into the workings of a typical ITU-T study group.

The meeting report highlights SG 19's role in the work on NGN, and in particular outlines its work in the area of fixed-mobile convergence.

The aim of the trial is to give interested parties, such as students, analysts and journalists, as well as others interested in contributing to the work of ITU-T, and SG 19 in particular, access to documents that will enable them to better understand both the nature of the technical work and the standardization process.

It will still be necessary, because of commercial, legal and other sensitivities, that some documents are restricted to ITU-T-members-only access.

■ Standards Importance Highlighted at WWW Event

Inventor of the world wide web (WWW), Tim Berners-Lee highlighted the importance of standards at a recent event held in Sophia Antipolis, France. The ITU sent a representative of its telecommunication standardization bureau (TSB), Paolo Rosa.

Berners-Lee speaking at the tenth anniversary in Europe of the world wide web consortium (W3C) said that standards allow different layers such as hardware, operating systems, browsers, connectivity and search services to evolve independently and therefore faster and better.

As part of its desire for the more efficient production of international ICT standards and to avoid duplication of work, ITU-T is keen to foster closer relations with W3C, as well as other standards making organizations.

Berners-Lee said that businesses often faced two difficult choices: either, pursue standard, commit resources, transition products, work with competitors and then encourage it to all take-off; or continue working in isolation and keep proprietary control of customers. Berners-Lee said that he believes that participation in standards making carries less risk than not doing so. In response to a question by Rosa, of ITU he said that being part of the standards making process enables companies to better respond to market needs.

Measuring the cost of not using standards is, he said, difficult. How, for instance, can you measure the cost of the US still using feet and pounds or, of power sockets being different all over Europe? He used the example of the Gopher protocol versus WWW, backed-up by figures, to illustrate how a standardized solution can achieve more success. In the early nineties Gopher and WWW were alternative ways of accessing the Internet. However following the decision of the University of Minnesota to charge a license fee for the use of Gopher, its use stagnated while WWW, which remained free, became the success that we see today.

W3C10 Europe, gave attendees the opportunity to reflect on the progress of the web, its role as a unifying force in Europe, and the policies that shape the role of the web in the daily lives of Europeans.

Among other speakers were Berners-Lee's CERN colleague Robert Cailliau, Keith Jaffrey who spoke about Grids and the worldwide Web. Also security, privacy and Internet rights were addressed by e-Government expert, Peter Brown (now working for the Austrian government) and Isabelle Falque-Pierroton, Chair of the Internet Rights Forum.

■ Call for Papers on Fixed Mobile Convergence

A call for presentations has been issued for the upcoming workshop, *Mobile Communications and Fixed/Mobile Convergence* – the realities going forward. The event is to be held in Kiev, Ukraine, 12-14 September 2005 and will look at the current status of fixed-mobile convergence and examine what the future holds.

There are now more mobile users than fixed users globally. In many countries, the ratio of mobile to fixed users is heavily in favour of mobile. This demographic shift requires an essential re-examination of the relationship between fixed and mobile networks. 'Mobility' plays a key role in the development of next generation networks (NGN).

It is anticipated that case studies illustrating examples of convergence from around the world will help to identify the needs and action plans for the region that this event is being held in.

Presentations should highlight ongoing work in ITU and elsewhere on mobile telecommunications networks, in particular the work on IMT-2000, fixed mobile convergence and guidelines on the transition of existing mobile networks to IMT-2000 / NGN.

Submissions may be sent via e-mail: tsbworkshops@itu.int

■ Technical Tutorials Given at Recent ITU-T Meeting

Two technical sessions were given at the last meeting of Study Group 5 in Geneva. Study Group 5 is the ITU-T group that looks at protection against electromagnetic environment effects. Technical sessions are tutorials on a specific subject that aim to provide background for the preparation of new standards (ITU-T Recommendations) on these topics.

The first session was on security, and was presented by William Radasky, Chairman of IEC SC 77C (high power transient phenomena). Radasky's lectures dealt with electromagnetic threats such as high power electromagnetic phenomena and its effect on systems and mitigation methods. This will help SG5 prepare recommendations to protect telecommunication systems against malicious man-made high power transient phenomena. Radasky also detailed IEC's work which will help ITU-T experts avoid duplication of their work.

The second session was on home networking and was in collaboration with Study Group 9. The SG 9 contribution was in the areas of architecture, transport technology, security, quality of service and management of home networks. SG 5's contributions were in the areas of electromagnetic compatibility (EMC), electromagnetic security and electromagnetic emission issues in the home environment.

■ ICT in Cars Panel Meets

The advisory panel for standards cooperation on telecommunications related to motor vehicles (APSC TELEMov) met recently in Geneva.

The meeting followed up on some of the recommendations of the recent ITU-T workshop *The Fully Networked Car – a Workshop on ICT in Motor Vehicles*. Specifically this involved the developing of an action plan and a number of agreements for participation in other events as well as increased cooperation with other players in the field.

According to Paul Najarian Director of Telecommunication and Standards, for the Intelligent Transportation Society of America (ITS America), the advisory panel has already seen much success in terms of enhancing cooperation between ITU, ISO, ETSI, and others.

Importantly, Najarian said the group is already witnessing close cooperation between ITU-T Study Group 12 and ISO/TC22 on vehicles in the area of HMI (human machine interface). This cooperation will lead to the submission of a study Question to SG12. Another study Question on eCall (emergency call notification) will be submitted to an ITU-T study group, although it has not been decided which one.

Given the similarities between vehicular networks and home networks, the group has agreed to participate and provide speakers for the October 2005 workshop *Opportunities and Challenges in Home Networking*. It also expects to participate and provide speakers for the 2006 workshop on RFID. Additionally an advisory group representative will speak on ITS and multimedia at the upcoming ITU-T Study Group 16 meeting.

Participants have also agreed to cooperate with the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in order to develop a world report on ITS Standards.

■ Upcoming Events

■ ITU-T Meetings:

- **26 July-5 August 2005**
Study Group 16 – Multimedia terminals, systems and applications, Geneva
- **29 August-9 September 2005**
Study Group 13 – Next Generation Networks, Geneva
- **5-9 September 2005**
Study Group 11 – Signalling requirements and protocols, Geneva
- **5-9 September 2005**
Study Group 19 – Mobile telecommunication networks, Geneva
- **12-16 September 2005**
Study Group 3 – Tariff and accounting principles including related telecommunication economic and policy issues, Geneva

■ Workshops and Seminars:

- **22-23 July 2005**
Workshop: Video and Image Coding and Applications (VICA), Geneva
- **31 July-4 August 2005**
Advances in the Standard H.264/AVC, San Diego, California, USA,
- **12-14 September 2005**
Mobile Telecommunications and Fixed/Mobile Convergence: the realities going forward, Kiev, Ukraine
- **3-4 October 2005**
Workshop: New Horizons for Security Standardization, Geneva
- **13-14 October 2005**
Opportunities and Challenges in Home Networking, Geneva

