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PLENARY MEETING

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The following texts are submitted to the Plenary Meeting:

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| | | Recommendation COMB-A1 Role of telecommunication and information technologies in the protection of the environment |
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RESOLUTION COMB-1

TELECOM AFRICA

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Valletta, 1998),

considering

- a) the critical importance of telecommunication infrastructure and industrial capacity for modern development;
- b) the great strides that have been made in the globalization and liberalization of the telecommunication industry in the last few years;
- c) that globalization cannot fulfil its promise without reasonable capacity for global competitiveness on the part of all players;
- d) the absence of industrial capacity in telecommunications in Africa, for instance in manufacturing and software development, and Africa's great need to acquire such capacity, as a matter of priority, for its sustainable development;
- e) that such local capacity is crucial if Africa is to develop global competitiveness in telecommunications in the foreseeable future,

considering further

- a) that the first World Telecommunication Development Conference (Buenos Aires, 1994), in its Plan of Action, called for special efforts to be made to facilitate the development of manufacturing capacity in developing countries through international industrial cooperation for the benefit of such developing countries;
- b) that several United Nations initiatives, such as the Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade for Africa and the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa, have called for special efforts to build an industrial base for Africa's telecommunication infrastructure needs;
- c) that the African Regional Telecommunication Development Conference (Abidjan, 1996) (AF-RTDC-96) specifically called for a concerted effort to develop industrial telecommunication capacity in Africa, and this is spelt out in detail in the African Green Paper adopted at that Conference;
- d) that the African Telecommunications Applications, Manufacturing, Research and Development Project (Telecom Africa) was formally presented and discussed at AF-RTDC-96 as a comprehensive initiative to bring about the desired industrialization in Africa,

noting

- a) that many African governments and scientific, subregional and regional organizations, including the Organization of Africa Unity (OAU) and the Southern African Transport and Communications Commission (SATCC) of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), have endorsed the Telecom Africa project as being of critical significance to Africa's hopes of telecommunication industrialization;
- b) specifically, the endorsement of the Telecom Africa project by the SATCC Council of Ministers at its meeting of 3 July 1997 held in Mauritius and subsequently reaffirmed at its meeting in Maputo, Mozambique, in January 1998;
- c) SATCC's directive that the SADC region should facilitate further development of the Telecom Africa project through the provision of access to information required for feasibility and viability studies and through business-to-business contacts,

mindful

- a) of the progress made to date on the Telecom Africa project;
- b) of the dialogue that has taken place between BDT and Telecom Africa subsequent to AF-RTDC-96;
- c) of the commitment of ITU, especially BDT, to actively promote and support serious efforts for telecommunication industrialization in Africa as embodied in the Telecom Africa project;
- d) of the vast resources of ITU/BDT in expertise, information, partnerships and lessons learned;
- e) of the importance of a sound feasibility and viability study to the success of major initiatives such as Telecom Africa;
- f) of the positive impact that Telecom Africa could have on Africa's telecommunication capacity and on Africa's industrialization in general,

resolves

- a) that ITU/BDT should provide material and other support for development of the Telecom Africa master plan;
- b) that ITU should encourage telecommunication and other related industrial and scientific organizations to support the Telecom Africa project, through the promotion of global partnerships.

RECOMMENDATION COMB-A1

**ROLE OF TELECOMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGIES IN THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Valletta, 1998),

recalling

- a) Resolution 8 of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (Buenos Aires, 1994) (WTDC-94), on telecommunication support for the protection of the environment;
- b) Resolution 35 of the Plenipotentiary (Kyoto, 1994) on the same matter;
- c) Resolution 8 of the African Regional Telecommunication Development Conference (Abidjan, 1996) on the role of telecommunication and information technologies in the protection of the environment;
- d) Resolution 11 of the Regional Telecommunication Development Conference for the Arab States (Beirut, 1996) on the same matter,

taking into account

the results of the study undertaken by ITU-D Study Group 2 under Question 7/2 assigned by WTDC-94 and in collaboration with the competent international and regional organizations, as well as the results of the international Symposium on the role of telecommunication and information technologies in the protection of the environment (Tunis, 1996),

recommends

- 1 that the respective telecommunication authorities should take the initiative in providing all possible support, directly or indirectly, in collaboration with the respective environmental authorities, to promote applications devoted to the protection of their environments;
- 2 that space technologies be considered for use in environmental protection activities such as monitoring air, river, harbour and sea pollution, remote sensing, wildlife studies, forestry development, monitoring locust invasion, land loss, etc.;
- 3 that the need for national environmental protection policies be taken into account, with due emphasis on the role which telecommunications can play in providing relevant assistance;
- 4 that special awareness be created among policy/decision makers so that they gain a better understanding of the issue of telecommunications and the environment;

5 that the importance of an integrated network for collecting, processing and disseminating environmental information at the national, regional and international levels be recognized and all necessary steps be taken towards implementing such networks;

6 that the basic telecommunication needs of small communities be satisfied in order to help them establish industries, thereby minimizing migration to urban areas which causes urban congestion;

7 that telecommunication networks and services be utilized in situations where reductions in energy consumption could be achieved, such as substituting telecommunications for travel, teleconferencing and reduction of paperwork, thereby ultimately saving environmental resources,

requests the Director of BDT

1 to implement the plan of action of a global operational telecommunication-environment project on the development and use of telecommunication and information technologies for the protection of the environment and sustainable development, which will be an interregional project with regional and/or subregional components, and will take account of the specific characteristics and needs of the different regions/subregions concerned;

2 to organize seminars, regional workshops, training and research programmes, exhibitions and other activities in order to study the matter in greater depth and heighten awareness among all those concerned of the value of implementing multilateral and bilateral projects within the framework of international cooperation and to consider, if necessary, holding an international conference with the aim, *inter alia*, of identifying and carrying out pilot projects in this area at the regional, subregional and national level, in cooperation with international organizations and with the support of international telecommunication operators;

3 to envisage the establishment of a framework for international cooperation which will enable all those concerned (governments of developed and developing countries, manufacturers and consumers of technology, private sector, international organizations, United Nations specialized agencies, etc.) to carry out, promote and develop projects to ensure optimum use of the most appropriate telecommunication and information technologies for the protection of the environment and sustainable development;

4 to develop and disseminate appropriate course material for conducting training programmes on the subject and disseminate information on telecommunication and information technology applications for the protection of the environment and sustainable development;

5 to provide ITU-D Study Group 2, under Question [7/2], with updated information relating to the activities carried out by BDT in this field.

RESOLUTION COMB-3

APPLIED RESEARCH AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Valletta, 1998),

recognizing

- a) that many countries would benefit from technology transfers in a wide range of fields, from basic telecommunication technology to new technology, such as the maintenance and operation of telecommunication networks, network management, ISDN satellite technology and optical fibre technology;
- b) that, in order to be effective, technology transfer must first be carefully assessed for its suitability with the existing telecommunication infrastructure;
- c) that joint ventures can be an effective means of technology transfer;
- d) that the transfer of management know-how and tools is an essential part of the transfer of technology;
- e) that seminars and training conducted by various countries as well as by international and regional organizations have contributed to the transfer of technology, and hence to the development of telecommunication networks in the region;
- f) that purchasing new equipment offers opportunities to include the transfer of the manufacturer's know-how in equipment procurement contracts;
- g) that the providers of telecommunication equipment and services are important partners in ensuring the flow of technology to developing countries and countries in transition to a market economy and that they are ready to enter freely into such arrangements,

resolves

- 1 that developed countries should consider transferring to developing countries and countries in transition to a market economy, on a voluntary and/or a sound commercial basis, the necessary technology in the field of telecommunications, not only conventional technology but also new technologies and services;
- 2 that developing countries and countries in transition to a market economy should cooperate with other developing countries by exchanging experts, organizing seminars and meetings, networking of telecommunication research institutions by means of e-mail, teleconferencing and computer conferencing facilities, etc.;

3 that recipient countries should systematically and fully utilize technology transfers in their countries,

requests BDT

in cooperation with other international, regional and subregional organizations concerned

1 to continue to hold seminars, workshops or training in the field of telecommunications to raise the technological level in developing countries and countries in transition to a market economy;

2 to promote the exchange of information among international organizations, donor countries and recipient countries on the transfer of technology, *inter alia*, by assisting them to set up cooperative networks between telecommunication research institutes in developing countries and countries in transition to a market economy, and developed countries;

3 to coordinate the submission of regional and subregional project proposals in this field and the mobilization of resources for these projects;

4 to continue to develop handbooks in the area of transfer of technology;

5 to ensure that these handbooks are disseminated to developing countries and countries in transition to a market economy and that users are properly initiated in their use,

invites

providers of telecommunication equipment and services to make the relevant new technologies and know-how available to their customers in developing countries and countries in transition to a market economy on a voluntary basis and/or in accordance with sound commercial principles,

appeals to international organizations and donor countries

to assist the developing countries and countries in transition to a market economy in exploring ways and means of improving transfer of technology, including technical and financial assistance.

RECOMMENDATION COMB-A2
INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Valletta, 1998),

considering

- a) Resolution 31 of the Plenipotentiary Conference (Kyoto, 1994), "Telecommunication Infrastructure and Socio-Economic and Cultural Development", and particularly the paragraph to the effect that "the recent spectacular progress, and particularly the convergence of telecommunication and computer technologies and services, has transformed telecommunications into an agent of change for the information age";
- b) the growing number of informatic initiatives and projects taking place in the developing countries,

recognizing

the growing strategic importance of information infrastructures and their potential for improving quality of life for every citizen of the developing countries, promoting economic integration in the developing countries and improving trade and other linkages with the global community,

urges administrations

to note the critical importance of telecommunication networks for the exchange of multimedia information and to facilitate and promote the development of electronic communications and networks such as the Internet, by adopting the appropriate regulatory, tariff and service provision policies, and by making available appropriate infrastructure,

requests ITU/BDT

- 1 in collaboration with other development partners, to make the governments of the developing countries aware of the importance of information infrastructures, and to assist in the establishment of national information infrastructure policies in the developing countries;
- 2 to establish an appropriate mechanism for coordination among the administrations and the various partners involved (UNESCO, etc.) which will draw up an inventory of service requirements and associated constraints and formulate an action plan for the development of information technology in the developing countries;

- 3 in collaboration with the parties concerned, to take the necessary steps in order to produce a thought-provoking document offering the developing countries possible approaches for the development of their information infrastructure;
- 4 to establish an environment that encourages the private sector to invest in the development of the information infrastructure;
- 5 to assist in constructing the global information highway which includes, as an essential element, service to remote and rural areas;
- 6 to build an information infrastructure that will connect all ITU Member States;
- 7 to establish partnership arrangements with public and private organizations and institutions;
- 8 to address issues associated with electronic commerce.
