



INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BUREAU

**WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE (WTDC-98)**

Valletta, Malta, 23 March - 1 April 1998

**Document 82-E
5 March 1998
Original: English**

For information

Agenda item: 2.4

PLENARY MEETING

Telecommunication Development Bureau

SUMMARY REPORT ON THE SECOND WTPF

Background

1 The ITU World Telecommunication Policy Forum (WTPF) was established by Resolution 2 of the Plenipotentiary Conference (Kyoto, 1994). Its purpose is to provide a forum where ITU Member States and Sector Members can discuss and exchange views and information on emerging telecommunication policy and regulatory matters arising from the changing telecommunication environment. Although the WTPF shall not produce prescriptive regulatory outcomes or outputs with binding force, it shall prepare reports and, where appropriate, opinions for consideration by Members and relevant ITU meetings.

Objective

2 By Decision 475, the 1997 session of the ITU Council decided to convene the second WTPF in Geneva from 16 to 18 March 1998, immediately before the World Telecommunication Development Conference, in order to discuss and exchange views on the theme of trade in telecommunication services, with the following agenda:

- "a) *the general implications of the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on trade in basic telecommunication services for the ITU membership with respect to:*
 - *the telecommunications policies, regulations and regulatory structures of ITU Member States;*
 - *the implications of the WTO agreement for developing countries, particularly with respect to policies, regulations and financial strategies to promote the development of telecommunication networks and services, as well as on their national economy;*
- b) *actions to assist Member States and Sector Members in adapting to the changes in the telecommunications environment including analysing the current situation (e.g. by case studies) and formulating possible co-operative actions involving ITU Member States and Sector Members to facilitate adaptation to the new environment;*

- c) *the evolution of the international telecommunications environment, particularly the accounting and settlement system, having taken into account activities being undertaken by ITU-T Study Groups*";

and that

"the Forum shall draw up a report, and, if possible, opinions for consideration by ITU Members and relevant ITU meetings".

Secretary-General's Report

3 In accordance with Decision 475, it is intended that *"discussions at the Forum shall be based on a report from the Secretary-General, incorporating the contributions of ITU Member States and Sector Members, which will serve as the sole working document of the Forum, and shall focus on key issues on which it would be desirable to reach conclusions"*.

4 The first draft of the Secretary General's report was distributed on ***** . The second draft report was distributed in December 1997, revised to incorporate comments from the membership, with an invitation to provide further comments by 31 January 1998.

5 To assist with the drafting process, and in accordance with *decides* 3c) of ITU Council Decision 475, *"the Secretary-General shall convene a balanced, informal group of experts, each of whom is active in preparing for the Policy Forum in his/her own country, to assist in this process"*. This group met twice during the consultation process. The first meeting took place on 2 December 1997 and the second meeting on 5-6 February 1998. Invitations to participate in the informal group of experts were sent out by the Secretary-General to those who contributed to the initial consultation process plus others who he feels can make significant contributions and can assist in achieving the desired balance. At the second meeting draft opinions, on the basis of work carried out by rapporteur drafting groups, along with the comments of member states, were discussed.

6 A third draft report, including draft opinions, will now be circulated for consideration at the second WTPF.

(Current versions of draft opinions and Secretary-General's report.)
