

Telecommunication Development Sector



**Regional Preparatory Meetings for the Arab States
(RPM-ARB)
Damascus, Syria, 17-19 January 2010**

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Report by the Chairman for the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Europe Region for WTDC-10 (Andorra-la-Vella, Andorra, 1-3 December 2009)

**Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Europe
Region for WTDC-10
Andorra la Vella, Andorra, 1-3 December 2009**

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Report by the Chairman

Part I: RPM Proceedings

1. Introduction

The ITU Regional Preparatory Meeting for Europe (RPM-EUR) was organized by the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in Andorra la Vella, Andorra, 1-3 December 2009, at the kind invitation of the Government of Andorra.

The objective of the RPM-EUR was to identify priorities, at the regional level, for the development of telecommunications and information and communication technologies (ICTs), taking into account contributions made by Member States and Sector Members from the region. The meeting arrived at a set of proposals on the priority issues for the region to serve as a basis for the formulation of contributions to the World Telecommunication Development Conference to be held in 2010 (WTDC-10) which will determine the future of activities of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) over the next four-year period.

This report gives an account of the work and results of the meeting.

2. Participation

The meeting was attended by forty-six participants representing 17 countries, 3 operating agencies, scientific/industrial organizations and other entities dealing with telecommunications and 2 regional and international organizations. The list of participants can be found [here](#).

3. Meeting of Heads of Delegations

Following ITU's long standing practice, the meeting of Heads of Delegations recommended that the host country Andorra nominate the Chairman of the RPM. Mr Jaume Salvat from Andorra was nominated as the Chairman of the RPM. The meeting also agreed to propose two Vice-Chairmen from France and Poland respectively.

The Heads of Delegations endorsed the proposed agenda and the time management plan.

One contribution from WebForce International Federation, an ITU-D Sector Member, was discussed at the Heads of Delegations meeting. The document was seen as slightly

controversial as it proposes solutions that are not technology-neutral and even critical towards other technologies in use. The Heads of Delegations proposed that the document be considered by the RPM if revised to be more technology neutral and with a link to more detailed information. The Heads of Delegation meeting recommended that a meeting be organized with the WebForce representative, the BDT Director and the Head of the French Delegation to discuss the matter.

4. Opening Ceremony

The Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), Mr Sami Al Basheer Al Morshid, welcomed all participants to the meeting and thanked the host country for their excellent arrangements. He emphasized the importance of the RPM for bringing to the attention of BDT the issues, priorities and needs of European countries for ICT development. He stated that discussions held here would provide input for WTDC-10 which would shape the future of the ITU Development Sector's work in Europe and globally. The BDT Director highlighted that since the last WTDC in 2006 the world has seen many changes including a financial crisis that has affected all the world's regions, countries, private sector entities, and individuals. New telecommunications providers have emerged as was clearly demonstrated at the recently concluded ITU World TELECOM 2009. New telecommunication networks, devices, and services have emerged bringing better choice and new opportunities for all. It is, therefore, of key importance that the ICT needs and priorities of all regions of the world are reflected in the outcome of the 2010 WTDC in the light of the changing environment.

Mr Al Basheer said that he was counting on contributions from and continued support provided by European countries in implementing BDT projects and initiatives. He noted that there is no contribution that is too small when assisting countries with addressing the global issues that they face. He noted further that these efforts are very appreciated by the BDT and the recipient countries. Mr Al Basheer cited examples of ITU's successful work in Europe during the last few years, and requested participants to express their views on where BDT should focus its attention during the next four-year period for the region. The full text of his speech is available [here](#).

ITU Deputy Secretary-General Mr Houlin Zhao thanked the Government of Andorra for hosting the meeting. After highlighting the successful outcome of a series of key ITU events having taken place in 2009, Mr Zhao focused on the importance of ICTs in mitigating climate change. He referred to ITU's active role in formulating ICT standards that lead to energy efficiency as well as in coordinating spectrum for climate monitoring and disaster prediction, detection and relief. He added the efforts deployed by ITU to ensure that the role of ICT is recognized in the output document of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change, to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark later in 2009. He encouraged European countries to take up the opportunity offered by this RPM to assess how the future development activities of ITU can best serve the interests of members in the Region. The full text of his speech is available [here](#).

In his remarks, Andorra's Minister of Territorial Planning, Environment and Agriculture, Mr Vicenç Alay Ferrer, noted that it was a pleasure for Andorra to host this ITU RPM for Europe and thanked ITU and the European countries for trusting Andorra with the organization of the event. In this regard he highlighted the need for European countries to play an active role in the preparation for the WTDC-10.

Mr Alay further highlighted the importance of ICTs for job creation and to increase the quality of life for citizens in countries around the world. For Andorra, he continued, ICTs constitute a very important component of national economic development. In this regard he expressed the need for the same quality of service, at the same price, for all parts of the country. ICTs and telecommunications need to be innovative, affordable and available to all. In addition to boosting policies for universal services, especially broadband, and intensifying capacity building, he noted the need for administrations to play the role of an effective facilitator when deploying ICTs, while keeping in mind the need for building cybersecurity and protecting children online. In closing, Mr Alay conveyed the message that Andorra remains committed to

continuing to contribute to the assistance and activities that ITU is coordinating, to help developing countries deploy ICTs and related services.

5. Agenda and Time Management Plan

Following the recommendation made by the Heads of Delegations, Mr Jaume Salvat, Chief Executive Officer of Servei de Telecomunicacions d'Andorra, was nominated as Chairman of the RPM and Mr Richard Boidin from France and Mrs Agnieszka Zaborowska from Poland as Vice-Chairmen. The nominations were unanimously endorsed by the participants.

The Chairman expressed his gratitude for his nomination and his anticipation of a productive meeting. He also said he was looking forward to the comments and contributions to the discussions over the course of the three days.

The draft agenda ([Document 01 Rev1](#)) and the time management plan ([Document DT01 Rev1](#)) were endorsed by the meeting.

Mr Yury Grin, Deputy to the Director of BDT was introduced by the Chairman as the Secretary of the meeting.

6. ICT Development Status in the Region: Challenges and Opportunities

BDT introduced [Document 8](#) entitled Information Society: Statistical Profiles 2009 – Europe that presented an overview of current telecommunication/ICT trends, highlighted ICT and broadband status in Europe, including the rapid growth of mobile, and benchmarked telecommunication/ICT developments in and outside the region. The new ICT Development Index (IDI) was also introduced.

The meeting took note of Document 8 and thanked ITU for its excellent work in preparing the report, highlighting that while Europe is leading in ICT development there are still differences between countries in the region and also within countries.

7. Implementation of the Doha Action Plan

The following documents were presented by BDT:

Document 03: The document entitled [Report on Implementation of the Doha Action Plan – Programmes, Study Groups, Activities and Initiatives in the Europe Region](#) provided a status report on the implementation of the Doha Action Plan in the Europe region. It included a summary of the various activities undertaken by BDT in implementing WTDC-06 Programmes, Study Groups, Activities and Special Initiatives during the last two and one half years with a particular emphasis on the Europe region.

The meeting thanked the BDT for the report summarizing the main BDT achievements in implementing the DAP activities and WTDC, WTSA and Plenipotentiary resolutions, and noted that the report provides a good framework for what BDT should be doing over the coming four years. The meeting further noted that on the global level the focus and priorities of the programmes, activities and initiatives seem to be accurate.

Document 04: The document entitled [Report on Implementation of the Doha Action Plan \(WSIS Implementation\)](#) provided an overview of the activities undertaken by BDT within the context of the WSIS Action Plan and relevant Action Lines. It underlined ITU's dual role as implementer and facilitator for a number of Action Lines. In this regard, WSIS in 2005 identified ITU as the lead moderator/facilitator for Action Lines C2 (information and communication infrastructure), C5 (building confidence and security in the use of ICTs) and, as from 2008, C6 (enabling environment) of the Tunis Agenda, and as a potential partner for a number of other Actions Lines. Within this framework, WTDC-06 adopted Resolution 30 (Rev. Doha, 2006) on the *Role of the Telecommunication Development Sector in implementing*

the outcomes of the WSIS that recognizes ITU-D as a key partner in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes in view of its core competences and experiences. The document also provided a roadmap on ITU's follow-up to WSIS and invited inputs from the participants. Administrations were encouraged to provide comments on the draft roadmap for Action Line C2 and activities undertaken.

The meeting took note of the document.

Document 02: The document entitled [Report on Implementation of the Doha Action Plan \(Resolution 17 – Regional Initiatives\)](#) provided an overview of the implementation of the Regional Initiatives as per Resolution 17 (Rev. Doha, 2006), within the ASP, AFR, AMS, CIS and ARB regions. The participants were encouraged to support the proposed regional initiatives resulting from other RPMs for the next four year period and consider possible Regional Initiatives for the Europe region.

The meeting thanked BDT for the useful document and expressed its support for a regional focus for the implementation of projects, as this has proven to be an efficient and cost effective approach. In this regard the meeting also emphasised the need to work closely with regional organizations to implement projects and initiatives in the respective regions.

The meeting requested additional information on the implementation of the Regional Initiatives. The administrations noted the usefulness of this kind of detailed information, indicating the content of the projects in question, progress on implementation, obstacles, possible solutions, etc. to be able to benefit from lessons learned from the implementation of these initiatives. In this respect, specific evaluation/assessment reports would facilitate decision-making by donors on further funding for such projects/regional initiatives.

The meeting also noted the need to have a good understanding of the link between the different Resolutions, how they are implemented and how this relates to the work undertaken by the different Study Groups. The outputs of the different regional initiatives could serve as valuable input to the Study Group questions.

In addition to funds for the projects from development banks and regional organizations, it was noted that individual countries could also be approached by BDT to fund projects as many of them may have additional funds to support these.

Document 05: The document entitled [Summary of ITU-T Action Plan for WTSA-08 Resolutions \(Johannesburg, 2008\)](#) includes 17 Resolutions that relate to ITU-D activities. The participants were asked to consider the content of these 17 WTSA resolutions while preparing their proposals to WTDC-10.

The meeting took note of the document and requested ITU to pay particular attention, while addressing the topics included in these 17 WTSA Resolutions, to the need to avoid duplication between Sectors' activities.

Document 07: The document entitled [Report on Implementation of WTDC-06 Resolutions \(from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2009\)](#) provided information on the implementation of WTDC-06 Resolutions through Programmes, Study Groups, Activities and Special Initiatives and in particular, on activities carried out for the implementation of each Resolution.

The meeting took note of the document and requested ITU to pay particular attention, while addressing the topics included in these 17 WTSA Resolutions, to need to avoid duplication between Sectors' activities.

8. Topics for BDT Future Work

Document 06: The purpose of the document entitled [A Fresh Look on ITU-D Activities](#) presented by BDT, at the request of TDAG, was to trigger discussion, especially on programming of BDT activities and potential for consolidation in preparation for the 2010 World

Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-10). The document proposes to consolidate and cluster activities so that resources can be allocated in a more efficient way. The BDT Director emphasized that the proposal in the document was given as an example and members were invited to submit further contributions as they deemed fit.

In addition, a presentation entitled *A Brief Overview on the WTDC-10 Preparations* was delivered by BDT to provide an overview of the outcomes of the RPMs held to date as well as the status of preparations for WTDC-10.

The meeting thanked BDT for the information presented in Document 6 and the overview of the outcomes of the four previous RPMs. The meeting generally supported the approach proposed in Document 6, emphasising that the general idea of clustering the activities into Information and Communication Infrastructure, ICT Applications, Enabling Environment and Capacity Building was in line with the approach that European countries have been discussing. For countries with special needs, least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), an approach that opens up access to several different sources of funds, in addition to the regular BDT budget, was seen to be a good one. Overall countries expressed an interest in supporting and contributing to the activities undertaken under this initiative.

The meeting also noted that the activities covered by the Study Groups are of global nature and a very useful mechanism for countries to contribute to and interact with other countries. In addition to emphasising the need for Programmes and Study Groups to work together, the meeting noted that this could now also be extended to include Regional Initiatives. The meeting further encouraged European countries to participate actively in the work of the Study Groups.

The meeting further elaborated on possible Regional Initiatives for Europe emphasising that they should focus on sharing of information and experiences with regards to the move from analog to digital broadcasting as well as ICT applications such as e-Health.

The meeting also encouraged ITU to find ways and means to better serve private sector members in the activities of all three Sectors.

Document 10: The document entitled [Situation of Persons with Disabilities in Regard to ICT Issues](#) was introduced by Bulgaria. The document is a proposal for a Regional Initiative to:

1. Facilitate the creation of national and regional specialised libraries/databases in order to provide large scale access via Internet for blind people and people with visual impairment problems;
2. Set up of pertinent facilities (hardware and software), training , implementation and execution; and,
3. Promote and foster widespread adoption of access services via digital television.

Document 12: This document put forward by Romania contains a proposal for a Regional Initiative on e-accessibility in Central and Eastern Europe: Internet for blind and for persons with visual impairment problems, in support of Document 10, submitted by Bulgaria.

The meeting considered the contributions from Bulgaria and Romania presented in Documents 10 and 12 together.

The meeting highlighted the importance of accessibility for older people, persons with disabilities, children, especially marginalized children, and other disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. To this end, and in addition to the above, other examples to enable accessibility were mentioned. The meeting also noted with appreciation the activities of the ITU Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF).

In summarizing the discussions on this subject, the Chairman emphasized the importance of accessibility for these groups in Europe, and in particular the initiative presented in Documents 10 and 12.

Document 11: The document entitled Optimization of Bands I, II and III for broadcasting (radio): what policy should Europe adopt for analogue and digital radio broadcasting, had been submitted by the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC). It notes that the allocation of the spectrum resource "by apartment" causes problems for the audiovisual industry and providers of culture, since such an arrangement favours telecommunication operators (broadband) over service providers (broadcast) to the detriment of community media. The document proposes a broad approach to allocation on the basis of strategic choices with respect cultural diversity and independence of the media.

The meeting decided not to consider Document 11 as a proposal to the RPM as it was deemed to be outside the scope of the meeting.

In addition to the above contributions submitted to the meeting there was also a request to the BDT to put together in a publication or make available on the BDT website a collection of good practices for managing ICT development projects. The resource would bring attention to the challenges that countries and organizations have come across when implementing projects in countries around the world and would be useful for both governments and private sector entities.

9. General Observations

The meeting also made the following general observations:

- it would be useful that BDT put together in a publication, or make available on the BDT website, a collection of good practices for managing ICT development projects. The resource would bring attention to the challenges that countries and organizations have come across when implementing projects in countries around the world and would be useful for both governments and private sector entities.
- the participants recalled that the programmes and activities designed for developing countries should extend to countries with economies in transition.

PART-II: Proposal for Future Work from the Europe Region

After considering the introduction of documents and interventions, the RPM-EUR identified the following as priority areas for programmes, regional initiatives and Study Group Questions for the future work of the ITU-D sector.

Priority Areas for Programmes

The participants to the RPM-EUR endorsed the prioritization of topics suggested in document RPM-EUR09/06 and agreed that these topics, which are global in nature, could be operationalized through programmes supported by the following four modes of delivery: the creation of tools, development of training materials, information dissemination through workshops and seminars as well as direct assistance.

The proposed topics could be consolidated into programmes based on the linkages or similarities between them, as follows:

Programme 1 Information and communication infrastructure

Fixed, mobile, broadband network development, including broadcast networks and spectrum management, rural communications and emergency telecommunication and disaster relief

Programme 2 Cybersecurity and ICT applications

Particular applications of the use of ICTs, including, inter alia, e-government, e-health, e-environment and climate change, etc, and promotion of security and confidence in the use of ICT, including the protection of youth and children

Programme 3 Enabling environment

Telecommunications/ICT policy and regulatory matters, including ICT economics (market analysis, cost modeling and tariffs) and statistics (indicators, measuring the information society)
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Programme 4 Capacity building and other initiatives
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To facilitate access to information and knowledge for all, in particular for the engagement of women, youth and children, indigenous people and communities living in underserved areas, and other disadvantaged groups through e-inclusion and e-accessibility activities.
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Addressing the unique needs of LDCs, SIDS and countries in special need

Objective: Provision of special assistance to LDCs, SIDS and countries in special need (countries emerging from war, struck by natural disasters etc). to meet their priority ICT requirements.

To achieve the above-mentioned objective, the following mechanisms will be used:

1. Special Programme for LDCs, SIDS and countries in special need
2. Global Initiatives for LDCs, SIDS and countries in special need

European Regional Initiatives

The European Regional Initiatives are intended to address the specific ICT priority areas through partnerships and resource mobilization to implement small- medium- and large-scale projects. Under each Regional Initiative, projects will be developed and implemented to meet the region's needs.

1. E-accessibility in Central and Eastern Europe – Internet and Digital Television – for blind people and people with visual impairment problems (Documents 10 and 12)

Objective: To provide assistance to Member States in order to provide e-accessibility (including internet and information access) for blind people and people with visual impairment problems

Expected results

1. Creation of national and regional specialised libraries/databases in order to provide large scale access via Internet for blind people and people with visual impairment problems
2. To set up pertinent facilities (hardware and software), and implement training for users and instructors
3. To promote and foster widespread adoption of access services via Digital Television

2. Digital broadcasting

Objective: To assist ITU Member States in Central and Eastern Europe towards a smooth transition from analogue to digital broadcasting, taking into account GE06 Agreement (digital terrestrial broadcasting)) as well as the work undertaken by relevant European regional organizations and entities, to avoid duplication of effort.

Expected results

1. Overview of policy and regulatory frameworks for digital terrestrial broadcasting including mobile television;
2. Appropriate mechanism for the conversion from analogue to digital archives
3. Provision of assistance in the deployment of interactive multimedia services and applications;
4. Sharing the experiences gained through the implementation of this initiative with broadcasters and service providers within and outside the Region.

3. E-applications, including e-health

Objective: To share best practises in the implementation of e-applications including e- health

Expected results:

1. Faster and easier storage, transmission and access to medical data and health-related information for healthcare providers and professionals, citizens/patients, academics, researchers, policy makers and others.
 2. Capacity building and improved delivery of healthcare services, particularly in rural and remote areas.
 3. Reduction of operational and administrative costs in implementing healthcare services.
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