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Mr Eric Fournier, Chairman of ECC and Co-President of CEPT

The Vision of Spectrum Regulators on the role of ITU

Excellences, Director of the Bureau, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am proud to present my vision about the role of ITU in the wireless ecosystem, as co-President of CEPT, the Regional Organization representing Europe in ITU.

In a nutshell, for each country, the ITU Radio Regulations are the first source of rights for spectrum use. It is the basis for all national tables of allocations. It is the basis for the regional harmonization that we are carrying out within CEPT. Of course, it shapes the worldwide harmonization.

As you know, usages in radiocommunication evolve at considerable pace. And spectrum regulations have to follow the same pace.

The more obvious recent revolution in radio is mobile cellular communications, anecdotic in the 80s and which is now so important that children cannot imagine a life without smartphones. Since 1992, spectrum regulators have constantly changed their frequency plans to provide the necessary frequency resources to industry and to mobile operators. At the World Radio Conferences of 1992, 2000, 2007, 2015, ITU and spectrum regulators have harmonized the spectrum for cellular mobile communications. All of these conferences were preceded by intensive preparatory work in the study groups of the ITU radiocommunication sector so that these conferences could identify suitable frequency bands and include in the radio regulations the associated technical conditions to ensure spectrum efficiency and protection of other important radiocommunication services such as broadcasting, scientific services or satellites. Again, the launch of 5G in the next few years will rely on the successful outcome of WRC-19 for identifying spectrum above 24 GHz for 5G. At WRC-15, it was striking to see the unanimity of all regional organizations and ITU member states in putting this item with the highest priority in WRC-19 agenda. This is the consequence of the unanimity of industry to claim for harmonized spectrum for 5G. Now, experts are meeting regularly in ITU until WRC-19 to carry out compatibility studies and all other technical and regulatory studies for identifying new spectrum in higher bands for 5G

Not only spectrum is harmonized by ITU, but also standards. Who is defining what is 3G, 4G, 5G? Who is defining what is IMT-2000, IMT-Advanced, IMT-2020 ... and what is not ? The standard harmonization process inside ITU has offered to industry the tool for ensuring the best of harmonization for mobile cellular technology. The spectrum regulators, while not defining or picking up technologies themselves, have put all efforts in the ITU work to ensure

harmonization inside the IMT family. The key words: "Consensus building", which is part of the ITU process for defining IMT and which has succeeded in reaching the right balance between harmonization and innovation.

The cellular ecosystem deserves much to ITU. Today, if consumers can buy cheap and performant handsets, if they can travel around the world with seamless communications, this is owing to harmonization, this is owing to ITU.

One second major revolution is the TV digitalization. From the beginning of television, ITU has defined television standards, from program production to broadcasting delivery. So, when industry and spectrum regulators have decided to move broadcasting to digital in the end of the 90s, ITU study groups have been successful in adopting an impressive list of standards which have paved the way for the introduction of digital TV.

For a spectrum regulator, as important was the development of new plans for digital terrestrial TV. In Region 1, ie. Europe, Africa and Middle East, the outcome of the 2006 conference in Geneva, has guided administration in the migration from analogue to digital TV and has resulted in a massive move towards digital TV.

We also have to recognize that the GE-06 agreement has shown its inherent flexibility. It has allowed Member states to evolve their TV digital plan to introduce the first and second digital dividend as a result of the decisions taken at WRC07, WRC-12 and WRC-15. These digital dividends were both the result of the high improvement in terrestrial TV spectrum efficiency and of the high demand for large mobile coverage that can only be achieved in this spectrum, so that it is called gold spectrum.

In this respect, the Radiocommunication Bureau has provided to all regions an efficient and very appreciated support in this complex cross-border coordination and re-planning of television in the remaining TV spectrum. The bureau is gathering all the necessary technical expertise and has play the role of a trusted third party for all ITU Member states. What they achieved could not have been done by anybody else.

As a spectrum regulator, I cannot forget to stress the key importance of ITU for the satellite ecosystem. As you know, the outer space treaty states as a principle that "Outer space shall be free for exploration and use by all States without discrimination of any kind, on a basis of equality and in accordance with international law". In terms of spectrum and orbit use, international law means ITU. In practice, the rules for accessing spectrum and orbit resource, are governed by the procedures for coordination and notification of the Radio Regulations and are managed by the Radiocommunication Bureau of the ITU. All satellite operators, all national space Agencies know the importance of ITU in securing rights for satellite, in ensuring equitable access among ITU member states and in avoiding spectrum and orbit hoarding owing to the BR active policy. This is ITU which provides the necessary investment security which has been key in the satellite industry development.

As concluding remarks : spectrum regulators are facing more and more requests from all part of the industry : cellular, satellite, WiFi, IoT, transports. More spectrum, which means shared spectrum. Worldwide Harmonized spectrum, which means spectrum regulators have to talk to each other. I have no doubt that, the work in ITU, the decisions of world radio conference, the activity in the study groups, the assistance from the BR will be more and more essential for the development of usage, for the innovation, for the investment in radio communications.

Thank you.

Eric Fournier