Global Trends in Telecoms: Introduction to the work of ITU

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The views expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of ITU or its Membership. The author can contacted by e-mail at tim.kelly@itu.int.
“The goal of the 20th Century was to achieve “anywhere, anytime, anyone” communications. The goal for the new century should be to achieve “everywhere, always-on, everyone” communications.”
Increasing level of competition

Countries with competitive mobile markets (%)

High rate of technological changes: Some examples

- From analogue to digital networks
- From circuit-switched to packet-switched networks
- From voice to data
- From narrowband to broadband
- From 1G, to 2G to 3G mobile

Broadband subscribers per 100 inhabitants, September 2002

Source: ITU.
Telecoms reinvented: (Part 2)
Over-investment + hyper-competition + Technological change = over-capacity

- Trillions of US Dollars lost in shareholder value
- Leading companies in heavy debt or bankruptcy
- Thousands of jobs lost
- What does it mean for telecoms development?
  - Falling investment
  - No demand for privatisation share issues
  - Overcapacity

Source: Economist, 18 July 2002
In 1865, the founders of ITU had already lived through the first cycle of boom and bust in telegraphy.
ITU in brief

• UN specialized agency, concerned with the development of telecommunication networks and services worldwide
• 138 years old
• 189 Member States; 650+ Sector Members
• Around 790 staff / 83 nationalities
• 2002 budget = circa CHF172m (USD 115m)
• Secretary-General: Yoshio Utsumi (Japan)
• Deputy Sec-General: Roberto Blois (Brazil)
• Website: http://www.itu.int
ITU structure

Plenipotentiary Conference

Council

World Conferences on Int’l Telecoms

Radiocommunication

- World/Regional Radiocommunication Conference (WRC)
- Radiocommunication Assembly (RA)
- Radio Regulations Board (RRB)
- Advisory Group
- Study Groups

Telecom Standardization

- World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA)
- Advisory Group
- Study Groups

Development

- World/Regional Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC)
- Advisory Group
- Study Groups

Secretariat

- Secretary-General
- Deputy Secretary-General
- TELECOM
- Director
  - Radiocommunication Bureau (BR)
- Director
  - Telecom Standardization Bureau (TSB)
- Director
  - Telecom Development Bureau (BDT)
Who pays what?

- ITU has 189 Member States plus 650+ Sector Members and Associates
  - Each chooses to pay a certain number contributory units e.g. US = 30, Malawi 1/16
  - For Member States, 1 unit = CHF 315’000
  - For Sector Members, 1 unit = CHF 63’000
  - For Associates, 1 unit = CHF 10’500

- Main budget = CHF 172m in 2002, of which:
  - CHF 113m (65.7%) from Member States
  - CHF 22m (12.8%) from Sector Members & Associates
  - CHF 14m (8.1%) from sale of publications
  - CHF 15m (8.7%) from cost recovery, interest, etc
  - CHF 4m (2.3%) from funds-in-trust (for dev’t)
According to the International Telecommunication Constitution (Minneapolis, 1998), the role of ITU is:

- International cooperation in telecommunications
- Technical assistance to LDCs
- To promote technical development
- To extend the benefits of telecoms
- To promote telecoms for peaceful use
- To harmonize national policies
- To promote telecoms in cooperation with other national and regional bodies
But what does ITU actually do?

- Spectrum allocation and registration
- Coordination of national spectrum planning
- International telecoms standardization
- Collaboration in international tariff-setting
- Cooperation in telecoms development assistance
- Measures for ensuring safety of life
- Policy reviews, information exchange
- Extension of universal access
International Treaties

- Constitution and Convention of ITU
  - Two complementary treaties, containing mainly housekeeping details but also some longstanding international commitments (e.g. common carrier tradition)

- International Telecommunication Regulations
  - Thin (10 Articles) treaty concerning mainly accounting practices. Last update 1988 – under review in 2002

- Radio Regulations
  - Thick (>10’000 pages) treaty governing use of radio spectrum. Updated every WRC
• World Telecom Development Conference (Istanbul, March 2002)
• Study Groups
• Telecommunication Indicators reports and databases
• Regulatory assistance
• Technical cooperation
• Regional offices (11)
• Director: Hammadoun Touré (Mali)
• World Radio Conference
  ➢ Geneva, June 2003
• ITU-R Recommendations
• Stewardship of radio frequency & satellite orbits
  ➢ Radio Regulations
  ➢ Master International Frequency Register
• Safety of life services (Maritime, Aeronautical, etc.)
• Director: Valery Timofeev (Russia)
World Telecom Standardization Assembly

- Montreal, Sept-Oct 2000

ITU-T Recommendations

- Stewardship of international numbering plan
  - Country codes
  - Universal International Freephone
  - ENUM

Collaboration with the Internet community (e.g. IETF, ICANN)

Director: Houlin Zhao (China)
• Plenipotentiary Conferences
  ➢ Marrakesh, Sept-Oct 2002
• World Telecom Policy Forum
  ➢ March 2001, IP Telephony
• ITU Council
• ITU News: www.itu.int/itunews/
• Support services (e.g. IS, languages)
• ITU TELECOM (WORLD 2003)
• Policy, research and workshops (SPU)
**ITU New Initiatives Programme**

- Launched in 1999, under the Strategy and Policy Unit
- Workshops
  - Electronic Signatures and Certification Authorities
  - IP Telephony
  - Fixed-to-Mobile Interconnection
  - Regulatory implications of Broadband
  - Licensing of 3G Mobile
  - Internet diffusion in ASEAN
  - Multilingual Domain Names (ITU/WIPO)
  - IP connectivity in LDCs
  - Critical Network Infrastructures
  - Competition Policy in Telecoms
  - Promoting Broadband (April 2003)
- Country case studies

Website: [www.itu.int/osg/spu/ni/](http://www.itu.int/osg/spu/ni/)

“.. New topics of a regulatory, policy or other nature of high-current interest …”

_Council Decision 496_
A world summit in two phases
- First Phase, December 10-12, 2003, Geneva
- Second Phase, November 16-18, 2005, Tunis

What are the key issues?
- Addressing the digital divide
- How can ICTs help to achieve the Goals of the Millennium Declaration?
- Pervasive computing and communications

Outputs = declaration and action plan

Website: www.itu.int/wsis/
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