

## MEETING OF THE REGULATORY ASSOCIATIONS



Warsaw, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2013 14h00

### Chairman's report

#### Introduction

The annual meeting of Regulatory Associations that precedes the GSR took place in Warsaw, Poland, in the afternoon of 2 July 2013. The meeting provides an opportunity to discuss, exchange information and build bridges towards better and more active cooperation between the Regulatory Associations in the various regions.

More than 80 participants from 11 Associations (ARCTEL-CPLP, AREGNET, ARTAC, BEREC, CRASA, CTU, EMERG, FRATEL, REGULATEL, CRTEL, OCCUR) attended meeting.

The programme and the presentations are available at: <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/GSR/Pages/Regulatory-Associations-meeting.aspx>.

#### Welcoming remarks

The Chairman of BEREC and President of Hellenic Telecommunications & Post Commission Dr Leonidas Kanellos opened the meeting welcoming all participants.

Ms Magdalena Gaj addressed her opening remarks to all participants.

The BDT Director Mr Brahim Sanou welcomed all participants, thanked the Polish authorities and outlined the importance of the Regulatory Associations.

The agenda of the meeting was adopted with some modifications.

In the first session of the meeting all Regulatory Associations introduced their main activities, achievements and their programs for the year to come. Interventions were made from ARAGNET, CRASA, ARCTEL, EMERG, REGULATEL, CRTEL, FRATEL and OCCUR.

The second session started with a presentation by Mr Filipe Baptista from ARCTEL-CPLP. He gave a presentation on what kind of universal service for the twenty-first century? He outlined that to be or not to be connected mainly through Broad Band makes a huge difference in our days. The sector has changed along with the user needs, building the network society within a Digital Revolution. Thus a new concept or definition of Universal Service should be build upon the balance of the old and new sector reality (taking

into account the new technologies and rethinking the financing model making it fairer). At the end of the day is a question of political choice and deeply linked with a fair financial model.

Following a question of the chairman on the use of USF, several regulators responded. In particular, Morocco said that 10.000 villages are now connected to Internet thanks to the universal service on the principle pay or pay. 42.000 little villages and 10.000 schools are now all covered in Morocco by the universal service fund help. The growth of the internet service is exponential and prices are going down significantly.

The chairman noted that in Europe there are countries where the mobile penetration is 130%. The important is the revenue for client. In European countries mobile phones assure the mobility, where in other countries like Morocco they assure basic connectivity.

The representative of ITU Mr Makhtar Fall informed that this year's GSR Session 4 will be dedicated to Universal Service Funds and ITU just released a report on universal service fund and digital inclusion for all. A question was raised about infrastructure sharing and all regions said that this is a very important and useful tool.

On the **3<sup>rd</sup> Session** dedicated to roaming Mr Gustavo Pena from REGULATEL made a presentation of a study that REGULATEL made on Roaming. The presentation included a description of the different aspects of the project carried out "Plan of Action and Instruments for Regional Harmonization on international roaming funded by the Inter-American Development Bank – IDB.

The work was executed through conference calls, specific working groups to review and discuss various aspects of the problem and workshops were organized in various countries of the region. In order to create coordination mechanisms and incentives to ensure effectiveness and continuity of the proposed rules and apply them to encourage and improve the conditions of international mobile roaming in Latin America it is proposed to take a stepwise process in three phases:

Phase 1: Short-term regulatory harmonization; Phase 2: Medium Term sub regions roaming strategies; Phase 3: Long Term strategy- The region with the equivalent rates in countries for roaming services between them.

The delegate from CRASA Antony Chigaazira also made a presentation on Key Findings of Studies on Regional Roaming Regulations Conducted in Southern Africa. CRASA conducted two Regulatory Impact Assessments. Although the response rates were not very good, the key findings were that Operators needed to be compelled by regulation to supply much needed tariff information to their own Regulators. In addition, it was found that retail and wholesale tariffs in the Region were well above the underlying costs of providing the service and so too were the inter-operator tariffs and the roaming overhead mark-ups charged by most operators. Very low consumer awareness was recorded in that there was generally no tariff transparency for the end user. Accordingly, effective 1 June 2013, the Region introduced Transparency Guidelines which were duly endorsed by SADC the Ministers of ICT. The Guidelines specified the minimum information to be provided to roaming customers regarding regional roaming tariffs to avoid bill shocks. A further study was recommended in order to ascertain the appropriate cost based roaming tariffs for Southern Africa before consummating the Roam Like a Local project.

The BDT representative Mr Makhtar Fall informed that on 23-24 September ITU will hold a high level workshop on roaming matters in Geneva.

ARCTEL-CPLP also gave an update on their roaming WG results, underlining that in the beginning of 2014 they expect to have a roaming package in place within CPLP countries which would be the first transcontinental roaming agreement experience in the world.

The BDT representative Mr Makhtar Fall introduced the report of Mr Valente on mobile robbery and counterfeit, requested by the RA meeting in 2012. The chairman closed the session saying that there is no one fit all solution, but every region and country needs to find its own way.

### **Closing remarks**

The meeting thanks Mr Brahima and the ITU for inviting this yearly meeting.

Dr Kanellos thanked all participants for the very good presentations on hot and interesting issues and wished everybody a successful GSR13.

### ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

- 1) The meeting recommended to establish a regulator's chart based on a questionnaire for each region to facilitate the exchange of good practices in the domains where all Associations face the same problems: roaming, spectrum, universal service, etc.
- 2) The meeting recommended the establishment of a steering committee composed of representatives of regional regulatory associations to:
  - exchange experience, good practices and case studies ;
  - propose topics related to the agenda of the annual meeting of associations of regulators and GSR;
  - Organize workshops and trainings.