REPORT

Of ITU Regional Workshop on *Cooperation with ITU:*
Opportunities for Member-States, Sector Members and Academia
ITU Structure and Working Methods Explained
Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan, 28-30 November 2017

The ITU regional workshop on *Cooperation with ITU: Opportunities for Member-States, Sector Members and Academia. ITU Structure and Working Methods Explained,* organized by the Telecommunication Development Bureau in cooperation with the Ministry for Development of Information Technologies and Communications of the Republic of Uzbekistan, was held in Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan from 28 to 30 November 2017**.**

The workshop was attended by **58 participants from 9 countries, including 8 countries of CIS region** (Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Belarus, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, and Republic of Uzbekistan). The participants represented communication administrations, telecommunications companies, scientific and research institutions, ICT-specialized universities, as well as the Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC). The International Telecommunication Union was represented by: Mr. Kirill Oparin, Head, Area Office; Mr. Farid Nakhli, Programme Officer, Area Office; Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Chief, Strategic Planning and Membership Department; Mr. Karlis Bogens, Head, Fixed and Mobile Services Division, Radiocommunication Bureau; Mr. Denis Andreev, Advisor, ITU-T Study Group 11, Telecommunication Standardization Bureau.

The workshop was conducted in Russian and English with simultaneous interpretation.

Within the framework of the opening ceremony, greetings were delivered by: Mr. Ibrohim Djuraev, Deputy Minister, Ministry for the Development of Information Technologies and Communications of the Republic of Uzbekistan; Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Chief, Strategic Planning and Membership Department; and Ms. Natalya Zorya, Deputy Director General, RCC Executive Committee.

Mr. Djuraev, in particular, presented some areas of the Communication Administration activities and noted that the current year had been successful, considering the raise of Uzbekistan's rating in the ITU Measuring Information Society Report by 8 points.

Ms. Bogdan-Martin, among others, quoted some figures referring the CIS region, and noted that the entire region was under digital transformation, and the ITU was very encouraged by the region. Also, Ms. Bogdan-Martin informed of the forthcoming upgrade do the Area Office to a Regional Office.

Ms. Natalya Zorya greeted the participants on behalf of the RCC and expressed gratitude to the ITU Secretary-General for the cooperation and efforts which contribute to building the information society. Ms. Zorya also thanked the ITU and the Communication Administration of Uzbekistan for organization of the event, noting as a very successful the practice of organization of RCC events in conjunction with ITU events to minimize the costs.

The workshop continued 3 days and was divided into 5 sessions, during which 30 presentations were

Bodies; ITU Radiocommunication Sector; ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector; ITU Telecommunication Development Sector and Opportunities for Academia and Research and Development Institutions; ITU Regional Activities.

Within the framework of **Session 1**, moderated by Mr. Farid Nakhli, Programme Officer, ITU Area Office, several presentations were delivered by Mr. Alexander Vassiliev, ITU expert, Chief Research Associate, FSUE NIIR, who presented the ITU history, purposes, structure, governing bodies, main documents, rights and duties of the Member States, procedure of election of elected officials, membership contribution scale, procedure of convocation of international conferences etc.

As suggested by the speaker, the session was organized as a dialogue: before presentation of a piece of information, Mr. Vassiliev gave an opportunity to the participants to demonstrate their knowledge of the facts. Also, after the presentation, the participants had an opportunity to pose questions to the speaker. Thanks to this interactive form of the session, the workshop participants were fully engaged in the process of the workshop. Some comments on meeting chairmanship procedure were made by Vladimir Minkin, Mr. Yury Grin, Deputy Director General, Intervale, and Mr. Denis Andreev, Advisor, ITU-T Study Group 11, Telecommunication Standardization Bureau.

During the coffee break, several group photographs were taken.

Session 1 was continued with a presentation by Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Chief, Strategic Planning and Membership Department, who presented in more detail: ITU structure, governing bodies, key roles and achievements of the 3 Sectors and functions and structure of the General Secretariat, ITU strategy within the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, as well as areas of actions, such as: climate change, IoT: Smart Cities, emergency telecommunications, cybersecurity, ICT accessibility, Gender, Youth. Also, Ms. Bogdan-Martin presented the procedure of organization of key events, such as WSIS and ITU Telecom, as well as activities of UN Broadband Commission and areas of action, such as new technologies and AI. Ms. Bogdan-Martin also acquainted the participants with the work of Plenipotentiary Conference. After the presentation, Ms. Bogdan-Martin answered the questions of the workshop participants. In particular, answering the question regarding gender balance in the ITU headquarter, Ms. Bogdan-Martin provided some figures.

Session 2, moderated by Alexander Vassiliev, was dedicated to the Radiocommunication Sector. The Sector functions and structure were presented by Mr. Karlis Bogens, Head, Fixed and Mobile Services Division, Radiocommunication Bureau, who, in particular, acquainted the participants with the ITU-R activities for elaboration of standards, radio frequency spectrum management, as well as objectives of World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRCs) on update of the Radio Regulations, spectrum allocation, functions of Radiocommunication Assemblies (RAs), the Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG), mandate of the Radio Regulations Board (RRB), activities of 6 ITU-R study groups, including 21 Working Groups, as well as areas of actions of 4 Department of the ITU-R: IAP, SGD, SSD, TSD.

Mr. Albert Nalbandian, ITU Expert, Chairman, RCC Working Group on WRC-19 Preparation delivered a presentation on *World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) and Conference Preparatory Meetings (CPM).* When starting his presentation, Mr. Nalbandian noted the importance on the workshop on cooperation with ITU in the light of forthcoming regional conference preparatory meetings for the WRC, which is along with the RA and CPM is part of ITU-R triad and which requires from the delegates knowledge of foreign languages, compromise willingness, and knowledge of procedures to be able to defend the Member State interests. Also, Mr. Nalbandian told of the reasons of choosing 4-year work cycle, the WRC organization key principles and key tasks and presented the WRC-19 agenda and preparation stages for the WRC.

Second presentation of Karlis Bogens was dedicated to Radio Regulations (RR). In particular, Mr. Bogens presented key definitions of the RR, key documents referring to the RR, including the Rules of Procedure, the Master International Frequency Register, and International Frequency Information Circular. Also, Mr. Bogens presented the issue of frequency harmonization at different levels of spectrum management, including the national level.

Second day of the workshop started with **Session 3,** moderated by Albert Nalbandian and dedicated to the Telecommunication Development Sector. Within the framework of the session, Mr. Denis Andreev, Advisor, ITU-T Study Group 11, Telecommunication Standardization Bureau presented an overview of ITU-T standardization activities and structure.

Mr. Andreev highlighted importance of ITU-T recommendations on the use of standards, which exist not only for the Internet, international telephone communication, HD video, but also for laying of a cable in non-urban area resistant to interference caused by the weather. Mr. Andreev described a new situation in the development of communications, when operators had passed to packet network, which replaced old technologies, and presented the work of the ITU-R SGs, in particular SG 13, which consented new ITU standards for network softwarization and fixed-mobile convergence, and a number of consented standards, including the ITU-T H.265 on High Efficiency Video Coding and SG16 and ISO/IEC MPEG 'Call for Evidence'. Also, Mr. Andreev presented some ITU-T recommendations referring to the IoT, big data, and smart cities. Also, Mr. Andreev acquainted the participants with the ITU-T standards referring to connected automated vehicles, smartphones, headsets, as well as the activities in the field of digital financial services. Mr. Andreev also presented a separate area of actions: conformity and interoperability testing. The presentation of Denis Andreev illustrated by examples aroused great interest in the workshop participants.

Second presentation by Denis Andreev was dedicated to the structure and methods of ITU-T. In particular, Mr. Andreev presented the ITU-T structure, the work of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), ITU-T SGs, Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG), as well as the WTSA resolutions. Also, Mr. Andreev gave a number of practical recommendations on submission of inputs.

The presentation by Denis Andreev was logically developed by Mr. Aleksey Borodin, Head, Rostelecom Representation in Geneva – Rostelecom Representative in ITU, who presented ITU-T Regional Study Groups activities. In particular, Mr. Borodin noted that the Regional Study Groups were created on the questions which are of top-priority for the region, technical or political, economic, and financial, and that the RSGs reported to relevant ITU-T Study Groups. According to Mr. Borodin, Regional SGs were created in the ITU-T SG 3, SG11 and SG 20, and 2 meetings of each Regional SG have been already conducted, as a rule in conjunction with the ITU-D events. Mr. Borodin also presented key questions considered by the Regional SGs: OTT recommendations, IoT, intellectual transportation networks, program quality services, SS7 Protocol etc. According to Mr. Borodin, 8 inputs are produced by each Regional SG. Mr. Borodin expressed the opinion, that Regional SGs were a good mechanism for those countries, where different institutions are responsible for cooperation with ITU and ITU-T.

Session 4, moderated by Denis Andreev, was dedicated to Telecommunication Development Sector. Within the framework of the session, 3 presentations were delivered by Mr. Vladimir Minkin.

First presentation by Vladimir Minkin was dedicated to the functions and structure of the ITU-D. In particular, Mr. Minkin presented the history of the creation of ITU-D, its main tasks and functions, structure, main governing bodies and ITU-D departments. Also, Mr. Minkin presented ITU-D global events, such as Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) and World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS) and a human capacity building initiative – ITU Academy. Also, Mr. Minkin covered the issue of the regional presence.

Second presentation by Mr. Minkin was dedicated to world telecommunication development conferences (WTDC) and covered the procedures of the conduct of WTDCs, regional preparatory meetings (RPM) and regional development forums (RFR). Vladimir Minkin presented in the detail the order of submission of contributions to the WTDC. The presentation also covered the WTDC working methods, and the work of WTDC committees and groups. To illustrate the above, Mr. Minkin considered WTDC-17 in Buenos Aires.

Third presentation by Mr. Minkin was dedicated to the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) and ITU-D Study Groups. In particular, Mr. Minkin presented the TDAG functions, the procedure of conduct of the TDAG meetings, preparation of reports, as well as functions of the TDAG Deputy Chairs. Mr. Minkin also presented the ITU-D SG objectives and tasks, powers, the work on the questions, appointment of speakers and deputy speakers for the questions, preparation of reports, submission of inputs etc.

As a comment to the presentation, Alexander Vassiliev noted a significant difference in the translation costs of ITU-D, where all SG materials are translated into 6 UN languages and simultaneous interpretation is used, and ITU-R, where only approved documents are translated. According to Mr. Minkin, the big volume of translation work is caused by the fact that ITU-D works for developing countries, who can deny some documents at the stage of discussion, while for ITU-R, representatives of developed countries work, so only approved documents are translated.

The session was completed with a presentation by Doreen Bogdan-Martin dedicated to ITU Membership and ITU Journal. Speaking of the membership issue, Ms. Bogdan-Martin highlighted that ITU was a membership driven organization and financed through membership contributions. Ms. Bogdan-Martin invited the participants to think of at least maintaining the contributions if not increasing. Ms. Bogdan-Martin mentioned that in the CIS region, there are 28 Sector Members, Associates and Academia, and invited new companies to consider joining the work in ITU.

Responding to the question of Ms. Irina Sineva, representing Moscow Technical University of Communications and Informatics, if the high quality of professional editions, such as Scopus and Web of Science would be promoted by ITU Journal, Ms. Bogdan-Martin said that the end product would be seen end of January and that ITU looked forward receiving inputs from scientific and research organizations.

The workshop was continued with a **roundtable** on *Cooperation with ITU. Experience of ITU Members. Questions and Answers*, moderated by Yury Grin, Albert Nalbandian, Alexander Vassiliev, and Vladimir Minkin. The main question discussed at the roundtable was influence on ICT market by global monopolies, which diminishes the influence of inter-government organizations, such as ITU. The roundtable participants noted that previously decisions had been taken by communication administrations, while currently this power was shared with private companies, and this caused decrease of membership contributions. Formally, the number of ITU Member States has been increased, while practically countries prefer to optimize their costs and register their enterprises in Africa and pay small membership contributions instead of significant ones. Also, an opinion was expressed at the roundtable, that in the conditions of liberalization and globalization of economy, the ITU should be more creative, use the situation and engage developing countries more actively, whose today's experience and education are significantly different than it was previously. Also, it was mentioned that the power of ITU was limited by the "unclear" definition of ICT, and this does not allow ITU to be seriously engaged in the most topical issues of the ITU development, which make now a broader market. It was also suggested, that private sector, which is not ready to discuss policy, should be allowed to work at standards and services. Also, there was an opinion, that ITU should improve its image to make Member States to wish increasing their member contributions.

The "consolidated" roundtable was followed by several parallel roundtables on: ITU History, moderated by Alexander Vassiliev and Doreen Bogdan-Martin; Radiocommunication Sector moderated by Albert Nalbandian and Karlis Bogens; Telecommunication Standardization Sector moderated by Denis Andreev and Aleksey Borodin; Telecommunication Development Sector, moderated by Vladimir Minkin and Farid Nakhli. Based on the results of the roundtables, the moderators noted a real interest in the objectives of the ITU Sectors and participation in the work of relevant study groups. A suggestion was expressed to organize a regional symposium for regulators to give them an opportunity to share opinions. Also, a positive experience of a country workshop within the framework of WSIS was mentioned.

Session 5, moderated by Aleksey Borodin, was fully dedicated to the ITU regional activities. Within the framework of the session, Farid Nakhli delivered several presentations on: ITU regional events both conducted in 2017 and planned for 2018; regional initiatives of the completed four-year period and the regional initiatives approved by WTDC-17 in Buenos Aires; direct assistance provided to the ITU Member States of the region; as well as on the ICT infrastructure development index (IDI). After the presentation on the methodology of the index estimation, Mr. Nakhli invited representatives of the communication administrations to participate in the workshop and training on ICT indicators to be held in Kazakhstan in 2018.

The workshop was completed with a short presentation by Ms. Natalya Zorya, Deputy Director General, RCC Executive Committee on the history of the RCC activities in the ITU and RCC cooperation with regional organizations and the ITU Sectors.

After the workshop, ITU conducted a short **questionnaire** among the participants, who unanimously evaluated the workshop as a very useful and noted that it had contributed to a better understanding of the structure and working methods of the ITU, expressed willingness to cooperate with all the 3 ITU sectors in 2018 and find it desirable to conduct similar events in the future.

Positive feedbacks were also received several times during the event, and after the event, participants expressed their sincere gratitude to the moderators and speakers, as well as to the International Telecommunication Union and the Communication Administration of Uzbekistan for organization of the very topical and relevant workshop.

The International Telecommunication Union, in its turn, expresses gratitude to the Communication Administration of Uzbekistan for cooperation in organization and conducting of the event. Also, the ITU thanks the speakers for the excellent work done and participants for active participation in the discussions.

The workshop presentations, which are posted on the ITU website, on the webpage dedicated to the event, are very helpful as a reference source on 3 ITU Sectors and can be used by the staff of the communication administrations, who are involved in cooperation with the ITU.