

**The 28th Arab Spectrum Management Group Preparatory Meeting
for WRC-23 (ASMG-28)**

Online event

Opening remarks – Regional Groups Discussion

20 October 2021

Mario Maniewicz

Director, Radiocommunication Bureau

Mr. Tariq Al Awadhi, Chairman of ASMG,

Dear participants,

I would like to start by thanking ASMG, and in particular, Mr. Tariq Al Awadhi for inviting me to provide some opening remarks in this 28th Meeting of the Arab Spectrum Management Group. I am very pleased to address you today.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize the increasing international cooperation between the ITU and Arab States. We very much appreciate your consistent support and partnership, not only in the ITU-R, but in the ITU as a whole. The fact that the last WRC was held in this region and that it will also be the case for the coming one, is just an example of the support to the activities of the ITU-R that I just mentioned.

I also congratulate you on the ongoing work with respect to the ASMG preparations for WRC-23.

Dear colleagues,

As you know, the beginning of the ITU-R study cycle coincided with the beginning of the COVID pandemic. And for almost 2 years, we have been holding online meetings. With your support, we went through these difficult times. We

adapted to limited meeting hours, worked in between meetings in correspondence groups, and dealt with the challenge of reaching consensus in a virtual environment.

Now that we can say that we have mastered the technicalities of online platforms, I am very pleased to announce that we will soon return to physical meetings. In fact, they will be hybrid meetings, as for some time we will most probably have only a portion of our delegates being able to attend meetings in person.

The ITU has planned the first hybrid meeting in Geneva still this year – the WTPF-21. And we expect to resume ITU-R Study Groups physical/hybrid meetings as of February 2022. Surely, delegates and staff will need to conform with Swiss rules and the rules of host countries in the future, in particular, with respect to social distance, room occupancy, covid certificates, use of masks, and travel constraints.

I expect that being face-to-face will help advance our work. We have successfully achieved several milestones already. And sharing and compatibility studies are being developed using the agreed characteristics and parameters of services and applications. The discussion on specific complex agenda items is continuing and I am confident that the ITU-R community will identify good compromise solutions for all agenda items, rather sooner than later during the Conference.

I note that ASMG has already developed preliminary positions for almost all WRC-23 agenda items which shows good progress has been made also at the regional level.

The studies and regulatory solutions developed at both the ITU and in ASMG will feed the CPM text and ultimately form the basis for the decisions of WRC-23.

As you know, the current dates for the CPM23-2 are from the 28th of March to the 7th of April 2023. We could postpone CPM23-2 to the beginning of May 2023, provided there would be an invitation to host this event outside Geneva during that period, since the CICG will not be available.

The dates of the 2023 World Radiocommunication Conference have now been confirmed. And the conference will take place from 20 November to 15 December 2023, preceded by the 2023 Radiocommunication Assembly that will take place from 13 to 17 November 2023. WRC-23 will take place in the United Arab Emirates, either in Abu Dhabi or Dubai.

As I mentioned before, this will be the second World Radiocommunication Conference held in the Arab Region in a sequence.

And we are very grateful to the UAE for their kind invitation.

Dear participants,

I am glad to report that the WRC-23 Informal Group has already been established, and it has held its first meeting virtually in June, this year. The informal group will facilitate the preparation of WRC-23, by agreeing on the draft structure of the Conference and the leadership of the Committees and Working Groups - like what was done in previous WRCs. It goes without saying that the conference itself will be chaired by the UAE, as it is customary when we have a host country for our conference.

The second WRC-23 Informal Group meeting is scheduled in December alongside the Inter-regional workshop on WRC-23 preparation.

And talking about the Inter-regional workshop, I take this opportunity to invite you to the 1st Inter-regional Workshop on WRC-23 Preparation, which will be held from the 13th to the 15th of December, as an online event. And I invite this regional group to nominate representatives to join the different roundtables on the specific WRC-23 agenda items and topics. The workshop will provide up-to-date information regarding the on-going ITU-R preparatory studies for WRC-23 and present the preliminary draft common views, positions, or proposals from the regional groups, and other main international organizations and relevant stakeholders.

On another aspect of the preparation of the WRC-23, I have noted that, during the next days, ASMG will hold its second NOW4WRC23 meeting. I recognize the NOW4WRC23 activities that are underway, and in particular the mentorship

program both at the regional and global levels. And I very much encourage the engagement of more mentors from the region to support these programs.

It is by empowering women at the national and regional levels that we will increase the number of women participating and taking leadership roles in our sector at the international level.

Dear Friends,

2022 promises to be a very busy year for the ITU. We have 3 major ITU Conferences that will be held during the same year, the WTDC, WTSA and the Plenipotentiary Conference.

Nevertheless, it will also be a very important year for the advancement of the ITU-R studies. And you can count on the full support of the BR to conduct the work on the preparation for WRC-23.

I wish you a very productive meeting and I am looking forward to receiving colleagues and friends again at the ITU Headquarters in Geneva in the beginning of 2022.