

CPG23-4 meeting

Montreux, Switzerland (Hybrid meeting)

Opening remarks

09-12 November 2021

Mario Maniewicz
Director, Radiocommunication Bureau

Mr. Alexandre Kholod, Chairman of CPG,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening,

I would like to start by thanking CEPT, and in particular Alexandre Kholod, for inviting me to provide opening remarks in this 4th Conference Preparatory Group Meeting.

I would have much preferred to be with you in person in Montreux today. Nevertheless, I am very pleased to be able to address you remotely.

Let me congratulate you on the ongoing preparations for WRC-23 and thank you for your support to the work of the ITU-R, and in particular to the work of the ITU-R study groups.

CEPT has opened the path to hybrid meetings with remote participation. And I am sure you are eager to know when will the ITU following suit.

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 physical meetings with remote participation, 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 physical meeting in Geneva still this year – the WTPF-21. And we expect to resume ITU-R Study Groups physical 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 further advance our work. We have successfully achieved several milestones already. 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, as was the case in past Conferences.

I note that the CEPT has already developed draft briefs for almost all WRC-23 agenda items, with a few preliminary CEPT positions still to be developed or approved. This shows good progress is being made also in the Regional level.

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

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

Regarding CPM23-2, the current planned dates are from 28th of March to the 7th of April 2023.

We have received, however, an official request to avoid overlap with the Ramadan period. Considering the dates of WRC-23, 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.

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 - similar to 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 Mr. Alexandre Kholod, to participate and to nominate representatives of the regional group 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 for WRC-23, I want to acknowledge the regional NOW4WRC23 activities led by Mrs. Amela Hatibovic Sehic and by the coordination team. In particular, the CEPT NOW4WRC23 statement and the CEPT mentoring program that was successfully launched in September. I hear the group has also held 13 interactive sessions including panel discussions and presentation of guest speakers. By sharing experience and empowering women within national and regional delegations we will increase the number of women participating and taking leadership roles also in the international level.

Dear Friends,

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

Nevertheless, it will also be a very important year for the advancement of ITU-R studies. I count on the expertise of CEPT to support these studies and you can also 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 CEPT colleagues and friends once again at the ITU Headquarters in Geneva in the beginning of 2022.

Thank you very much