

Plenipotentiary week 1

Since the first week of PP is focused on speeches and election of ITU officials, we decided to report on the first week focusing on events of the week instead of daily reports.

Monday

The event was opened by a speech from the President of Mexico, Senor Calderon. This was followed by the ITU Secretary General Hamadoun Toure's remarks, which are attached. For those not familiar with ITU speak, ICT (Information and Communication Technology) is basically code for the Internet. There isn't an existing definition in the ITU for ICT now, in fact one Member State proposes that ITU Council define the term sometime over the next 4 years. But efforts to create a definition can be read as a debate over how much of the Internet the ITU should have control over, and which parts.

Monday- Friday

Policy Statements – Much of the first week is filled with Member States making policy statements on various topics. Unless asked for a specific country's remarks I will not include them in this or further reports.

Mid-week

The introduction of documents and proposals began mid-week. This is formality and not a great deal of discussion around the meat of the proposal takes place. It does however provide the opportunity to get a lay of the land and idea of what the discussions yet to come will be like. A recurring theme seemed to call for the ITU playing an expanded role in the Internet and Internet governance. There were no surprises in how the cards fell. Syrian, Iran, Saudi Arabia (+Arab Group), China, South Africa, Mali, Algeria (+Africa Group) and Russia are all for expanding the ITUs role.

Contributions – the following are some items of particular interest, and not inclusive of all contribution input. The following are clips from some of the interesting contributions being put forward.

Arab States (S10-PP-C-0016)

1. Recognizes:

- that ITU is dealing with technical and policy issues related to IP-based networks including the existing Internet and its evolution to NGN and will certainly contribute for sure in the studies for the future development of the Internet Protocol (IP), bearing in mind that it developed an important protocol that took into consideration all security requirements during its work on models of open systems interconnection (OSI) prior to the emerging of the Internet protocol
1. Invites Sector members:
 - to seek the appropriate means to contribute to enhanced cooperation on international public policy issues relating to the Internet through the relevant Member States, in their respective roles and responsibilities

Brazil Contribution (S10-PP-C-0045)-

1. Re-iterates their dissatisfaction with the IGF being a non-decisional body and the link between ICANN and the US government.
2. Proposes Internet SG – for those that do not have access to the documents following is an extract of the proposal:
 - “to create a Study Group (SG 20 – Internet) within the structure of the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T), with the Terms of Reference to be discussed and approved by TSAG at its first meeting in 2011, tasked to deal in a centralized and coordinated manner with the technical aspects of telecommunication networks to support Internet, the appropriate management of its critical resources and all other technical matters related to Internet Governance, disseminate its outputs throughout the ITU’s membership, especially among developing countries, and interact with other relevant international inter-governmental organizations and entiti
 - “coordinat[e] the technical work carried out by the relevant ITU-T Study Groups related to the Internet and disseminating its outputs among the ITU membership, especially among developing countries; [and]
 - “develop Recommendations on technical aspects of telecommunication networks that support the Internet, in coordination with relevant Study Groups [and]
 - ” that SG20 should interact with other technical standards organizations to avoid the duplication of the work, creating a common environment to promote the

growth of the Internet and stimulating a secure and stable network.”

Elections –

The week ended with the elections, results are as follows :

Hamadoun Toure, Secretary-General (incumbent – ran unopposed)

Houlin Zhao, Deputy Secretary-General (incumbent – ran unopposed)

Malcolm Johnson, Director TSB, (incumbent – ran unopposed)

Francois Rancy, Director Radio Bureau

Brahima Sanou, Director Development Bureau (overturning the incumbent,
Mr. Sammy al-Basheer of Saudi Arabia)

Given the elections are concluded, and the real work is beginning, the next reports may have to be more often than weekly.

Attachment A: ITU Secretary General Touré's Opening Speech

Mr President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to open my remarks with thanks to Mexico as our hosts, and for the provision of these tremendous facilities here in Guadalajara. I would also like to thank the President of Mexico for being here today to open the Conference; we greatly appreciate your support.

I would also like to single out one of our Member States, Germany, to congratulate them on the 20th anniversary of German re-unification.

And let me give a special welcome to our newest Member State, Timor Leste, which becomes ITU's 192nd Member, and brings us up to the same number of Member States as the United Nations, which makes me very proud and happy. Welcome, Timor Leste.

Mr President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates Ladies and gentlemen,

Before moving onto other matters I would like to take a moment to commemorate two men who have been greatly influential in ITU's history.

Firstly, I am sure that you will have heard of the sad and untimely passing in February of former ITU Secretary-General Dr Pekka Tarjanne, who held office from the beginning of November 1989 to the end of January 1999.

Dr Tarjanne was a passionate believer in the power of ICTs to change the world, and was a leading advocate of the 'Right to Communicate' as a fundamental human right. He was also a close personal friend of many of us here today.

You may also have heard of the death of Sir Donald Maitland in August. Sir Donald chaired the Independent Commission for World-Wide Telecommunications

Development, which was established in May 1983 following the Nairobi Plenipotentiary Conference.

The Commission's report, which was published at the end of 1984, was officially entitled 'The Missing Link', but it has always been known as the 'Maitland Report'.

The Maitland Report effectively provided the blueprint for the creation of ITU-D and the Telecommunication Development Bureau. Thanks in no small part to Sir Donald's work we have now largely achieved his dream of bringing most of the world's people within reach of a telephone.

So let us now take a moment of silence to remember these two men and their important contribution to the Union.

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Distinguished guests,

From today, and for the next three weeks, Guadalajara will be the capital city of the ICT world.

So it is both a tremendous pleasure and a rare privilege to be with you here today in the 'Pearl of the West', one of the foremost cultural centres of Mexico.

I will be looking forward not just to three weeks of hard work here, but also to hearing Mariachi music in its traditional home, and to sampling the many local culinary specialities on offer.

I would also like to thank the Governor of the State of Jalisco, Emilio González Márquez, for the wonderful hospitality that has been shown to ITU and to our membership.

I have come to know the Governor personally during the preparatory phase of this conference and he has already converted me into a Chivas fan!

Jalisco is not only known for Mariachis and Chivas, of course, but is also famous as Mexico's Silicon Valley. Indeed, it is home to many global ICT companies, and is therefore the perfect venue for ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of the work we will undertake here in Guadalajara at ITU's 18th Plenipotentiary Conference.

We are here to shape the future.

Not just the future of the ITU, but the whole future of the ICT sector – which now influences every other business sector worldwide, and which now reaches into the lives of almost everyone on the planet.

And "the future" – to quote the great Mahatma Gandhi – "depends on what we do in the present."

It depends on our Member States being bold and being visionary. It depends on agreements being reached that will provide a sound platform not just for the next four years ahead, but for the next decade.

Over the past four years, we have made extraordinary progress.

Since I took office, at the beginning of 2007, the number of mobile cellular subscriptions worldwide has almost doubled – to reach an extraordinary five billion subscriptions.

The number of Internet users has also come close to doubling in the same period, so that today around two billion people have access to the Internet.

And by the end of the year we expect there to be 900 million mobile broadband subscriptions.

ICTs are transforming the way we live, work and play.

They are transforming healthcare, education, transportation networks, the energy sector and the provision of government services.

They are generating jobs, and driving growth, productivity and long-term economic competitiveness.

They are helping us accelerate progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Distinguished guests,

Who would have dreamed, 25 years ago, that the world would change so quickly? That we would be able to access our email and the Internet from a smartphone or a portable tablet? That we could be guided accurately to remote destinations by GPS systems? That we would exchange over six trillion SMS messages this year? That parcels in transit and tin cans on supermarket shelves would be able to let people know where they were?

Some of the most unlikely imaginings of science fiction have become reality.

And they have become reality in no small part because of ITU's work.

Without the efforts made by our Membership, the radio frequency spectrum and satellite slots that make most of today's communications possible would not have been made available – and we would not be living in an always-on, always-on-the-move, digital world.

The globally-agreed interoperable standards that make technological convergence possible would not have been created.

And the world would not have seen such spectacular and satisfying ICT development.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

Let us be proud of the accomplishments that have been achieved.

But more importantly, let us be proud of the work we do here in Guadalajara, and the future accomplishments which will be achieved on the basis of the work we do over the next three weeks.

We have the most extraordinary opportunity. Perhaps a greater opportunity than has ever been offered to such a Conference.

The opportunity for ITU to shape the future, and to bring the enormous social and economic benefits of ICTs to all the world's people.

Over the next three weeks we will, of course, define the future shape of the Union.

And I invite you all to do that in the spirit of ITU tradition; a tradition of consensus and transparency built over a proud history going back over 145 years.

We will put in place the strategic, financial and operational plans that ensure the successful functioning of our organization over the next four years.

But let us also take the time to dream, to imagine, to innovate, and – yes – to create a bright, long-term future for the ICT sector.

A future that will make our children and our grandchildren proud of the work we did here in Guadalajara in October 2010!

Together, ITU's membership must take any necessary steps to re-engineer and remodel our great organization so that it can defend itself and meet any future challenges as successfully as it has met past challenges.

The ICT Sector has demonstrated extraordinary resilience and has shown an ability to withstand external shocks in a way that even the financial sector failed to do.

Not only that, the ICT sector has reliably churned out new technologies that leave one wondering whether some day our scientists will run out of ideas.

When terrestrial networks are knocked down by disasters, satellite communications take over and ensure continuity of service. Following the birth of Wi-Fi and WiMAX, came LTE with its Pico-cells, and now cloud computing reigns supreme!

This is how it should be – because technology is all about innovation and continuous creativity.

So ITU must continue to remain at the heart of the ICT sector, as we embrace a new era of converged applications and services.

ITU must be confident and proud that our work continues to make the ICT sector the solution, and not the problem. That ICTs will continue to be one of the best ways we can help address the most pressing issues of our time – from financial and economic crises, to environmental disasters and emergency situations, to monitoring and mitigating climate change.

These are big issues. And we will need to be a bold and brave organization, and to stand tall, if we are to achieve our full potential.

And I am absolutely confident that this is what we shall do!

Some may wonder how I can see into the future. But I believe I can.

As the saying goes, "Faith is to believe what you do not yet see; the reward for this faith is to see what you believe".

Thank you.