

## **3rd ATU Preparatory Meeting for WRC-23 (APM23-3)**

Lusaka

### ***Opening Remarks***

29 August – 2 September 2022

**Mario Maniewicz**  
**Director, Radiocommunication Bureau**

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Honorable Minister of Technology and Science of the Republic of Zambia,  
Mr. Felix MUTATI

Honorable Minister of Information and Media, Ms Chushi KASANDA

Director of ICTs of the Minister of Technology and Science, Mr. Milner Makuni

Acting Director General of the Zambian Information & Communications Technology  
Authority, Mrs. Pethel PHIRI

Secretary General of the African Telecommunication Union, Mr. John OMO,

Excellencies, Distinguished guests,

Dear delegates and friends,

Good morning.

Thank you for the kind invitation to join the 3<sup>rd</sup> African Telecommunications Union  
Preparatory Meeting for WRC-23. It is a pleasure to be with all of you today.

It is my first time in Zambia, and I hear this is one of the most beautiful countries  
of the world, with spectacular waterfalls and many National Parks. I would love to  
visit the rich wildlife of Zambia, but unfortunately time is short.

So, let me start by congratulating the Secretary General of the ATU on his re-election. In the ITU, and in particular in the BR, we look forward to continue working closely with you during your second mandate, as we have done in the previous one, for the benefit of all African countries.

Dear colleagues,

The ATU has conducted an impressive work in formulating regionally harmonized policies and strategies to improve access to ICTs.

I note the recent Report on the state of digital sound broadcasting, as well as on the Strategy on the introduction and promotion of digital sound broadcasting in Africa, the Report on the status of satellite services licensing in Africa and international trends, and very importantly, the development of a Harmonized model framework for licensing of satellite services in Africa.

I express my deepest appreciation to the ATU and to all countries of the African continent for these huge achievements.

I am very pleased that the ITU Regional office and the experts from the Radiocommunication Sector were able to work together with the ATU during the past years to support the creation of an enabling regulatory environment.

A great example of this cooperation is the PRIDA initiative and the promotion of harmonized spectrum utilization and regulations across Africa.

While we are thrilled with the attainments thus far, we also recognize that the work is not yet over.

A couple of months ago, the ITU published the 2022 edition of the Global Connectivity Report. The report shows that only one third of the African population is using the Internet – while our goal is to achieve universal and affordable Internet access to all. Having said that, I am convinced that ATU is on the right path to promote the rapid and sustainable development of ICTs in Africa.

Distinguished delegates,

The ITU is committed to connecting all the world's people, wherever they live and whatever their means.

Towards this end, the World Radiocommunication Conference 2023 will consider technical, operational, and regulatory matters related to radiocommunications. It will address issues related to both terrestrial and space services and will make decisions that affect access to limited natural spectrum resources.

Allow me to share with you where we stand in terms of the preparation for WRC-23, the return to physical meetings, and the dates and venues of the upcoming CPM and WRC-23.

After 2 years and a half from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ITU has resumed physical meetings and conferences. From April until July, we have had over 5 thousand delegates attending ITU-R Study Groups and Working Parties, with a third of them being physically present and two thirds joining the meetings with remote participation. These numbers are very encouraging.

As many of you have repeatedly mentioned, informal discussions are necessary to help us find solutions to contentious topics. Therefore, for 2022, all remaining ITU-R meetings are planned to be held physically, with remote participation.

We note that remote participation also has its benefits. It removes travel cost barriers and overcomes travel restrictions. So as to accommodate all, we will continue to offer remote participation for the upcoming meetings, even though they will be held in a physical format within the normal working hours for meetings held in the ITU headquarters.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding WRC-23 preparations, the work has advanced considerably and important milestones have been achieved. ITU-R study groups are now working on ITU-R Recommendations, Reports, and other supporting documents for WRC-23.

Some ITU-R working parties have already concluded the draft CPM text, while others have 2 more months to do so, to allow for sufficient time for the translation of hundreds of pages into the 6 official languages of the Union.

Regarding this exercise, I encourage delegates to continue abiding by our common successful practice in preparation for past WRCs, where the CPM Report should present, to the extent practicable, the description and feasibility of the possible competing methods or solutions to satisfy an Agenda Item, and if necessary, accommodating the conflicting views that may exist on complex issues.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The dates and the venue of the Second Session of the Conference Preparatory Meeting has been confirmed. CPM23-2 will be held at the end of March 2023, in the CICG in Geneva.

A minimum of two months prior to the date scheduled for the second session of the CPM, the consolidated draft CPM Report shall be made available in electronic format.

Likewise, the dates of WRC have also been confirmed from the 20 November to 15 December 2023. And I am pleased to announce that the conference will take place in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates.

Please note that the ITU website for WRC-23 is now available and provides direct and continually updated access to information on the preparations for the conference.

I also encourage ATU members to continue its participation in the NOW4WRC23 initiative and to strive to achieve women's full participation in all aspects of the work of the ITU-R and at the WRC-23.

Dear Friends,

The return to physical meetings has enabled delegates to better clarify their positions and to facilitate informal discussions towards finding compromise solutions.

This was the case in the ITU and I am sure it will also be the case when developing the African preliminary common views and positions on WRC-23 agenda items.

As ATU Member States, Associate Members and Partners gather here today, I recognize the importance of the preparatory work ATU is conducting. Finding a common ground Regionally is the first level towards achieving global agreements.

It was the case in the past, and will surely be the case again, where Regional organizations will play a fundamental role in the success of WRC-23.

I assure you that the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau remains at your disposal for any assistance or support you may require in your efforts towards achieving regional spectrum harmonization and towards your preparation for WRC-23.

I wish you a very fruitful meeting and I thank you for your kind attention.