



INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

**TELECOMMUNICATION  
DEVELOPMENT BUREAU**  
**ITU-D STUDY GROUPS**

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FIRST MEETING OF STUDY GROUP 1: GENEVA, 10 - 12 SEPTEMBER 1998

FIRST MEETING OF STUDY GROUP 2: GENEVA, 7 - 9 SEPTEMBER 1998

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Question: All

### **STUDY GROUPS 1 AND 2**

**SOURCE:** ICO GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS (OPERATIONS) LIMITED (UNITED KINGDOM)

**TITLE:** CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIRST MEETING OF ITU-D STUDY GROUPS 1 AND 2

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The Malta Action Plan, developed in Valletta in March 1998, sent a clear message to the BDT and to study group participants that the essential issues surrounding the development of rural communications require further attention. In approving the new set of questions and topics for this cycle of work, the conference further endorsed the examination of these matters, but with an emphasis on how regulation can affect such development (and, conversely, how the technologies involved will require development of regulations).

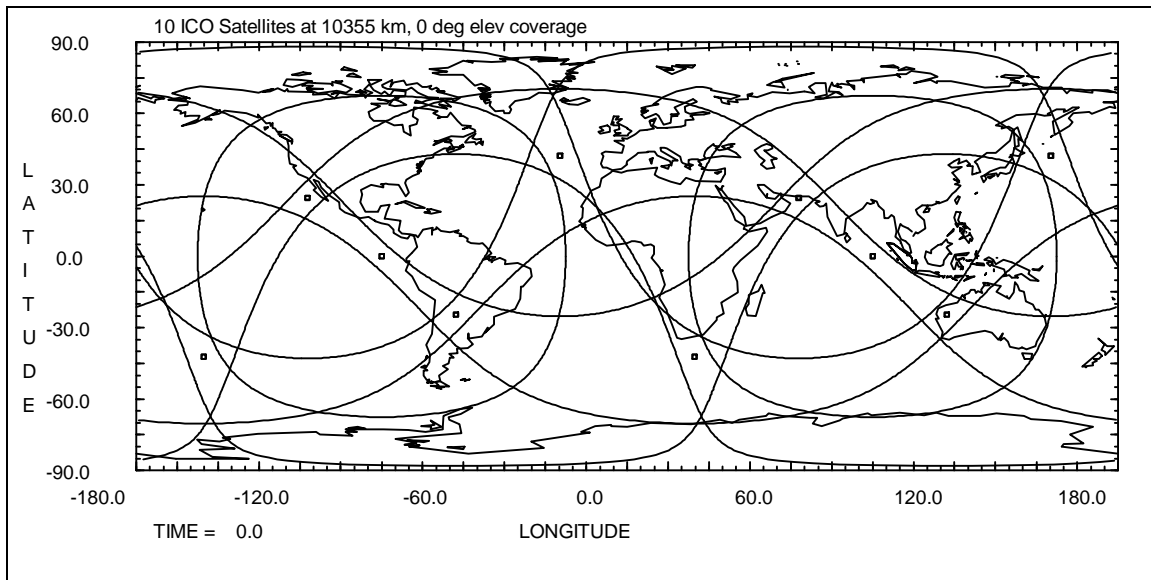
Questions 10a/2 and 10b/2, and Topics 4 and 7, focus on rural development. Telecommunications for remote areas, development of multi-purpose community centres, telecommunications as a mechanism for enhancing learning environments, and the development of new technologies with rural applications. Such work, we believe, must take into account the value of Global Mobile Personal Communications by Satellite (GMPCS). These systems, particularly those that will be global networks, such as ICO, are being built with the intention of providing or facilitating exactly the kinds of service contemplated by these questions and topics.

*“Access to GMPCS can assist Administrations in achieving national objectives in education, health, urban/rural population distribution, universal service, disaster relief, and international relations. GMPCS can contribute to the implementation of policies aimed at economic development and social stability.”*

- BDT Director's Report on the Group of Experts, Malta 1998

In the case of ICO, solid investment from telecommunications and industrial entities from over 60 countries ensure a commitment to providing service, on a national basis, that also brings with it human resource development such as training, business opportunities, and technology transfer.

### ICO Satellite Constellation Coverage Areas.



As shown above, ICO service will be technically available to and from anywhere on the planet. Moreover, ICO fixed and semi-fixed service can be used to develop infrastructure in a cost-effective way. ICO user terminals, illustrated below, either handheld or transportable, require relatively little power. The easy scalability and speed of installation, the high quality of service, cost insensitivity to distance or terrain, as well as a minimal environmental impact, all allow easy and effective integration with terrestrial networks.



**Cellular roaming    Basic mobile    Specialty mobile    Semi-fixed**

Such integration will allow ICO, either through a national operator(s) or other local entity, to provide the services that are essential to bridging the communications gap underlined by questions 10a/2 and 10b/2 and topics 4 and 7.

#### Regulation and the Extension of the Network.

Questions 7/1 treats the subject of extending universal access and service. Topic 5, almost in answer to 7/1, addresses the collaboration between sectors of public interest and telecommunications operators. Private GMPCS networks such as ICO, which numbers among its service partners many of the national telecommunications operators of the developing world, demonstrate one effective way of forging a relationship between the private and public sectors to extend access and service. Bound by national and international regulation, global and regional GMPCS networks have worked to accommodate the needs of governments by tailoring their services to meet many of their needs. In

this way, GMPCS system operators may serve as examples for other communications services that seek to extend their reach by working with the governments of individual countries.

Question 9/1 seeks to clarify the impact of the introduction and utilisation of new technologies on the regulatory environment for telecommunications. This too is an important consideration for GMPCS networks. Until recently, few countries had regulations in place that dealt specifically with GMPCS. With considerable involvement of the ITU and many regional organisations, national governments were able, over time, to develop guidelines, and in some cases regulations, for the treatment of GMPCS service. While this process is not over, question 9/1 may want to consider the case of GMPCS as an example of how the ITU in particular can facilitate the job of governments by working with them, and with the builders of the new technologies, to develop a regulatory framework that can serve all involved.

ICO would be grateful to participate in the work of the questions and topics noted above. Regardless of that participation, however, it is important to recognise the value of the GMPCS example in much of the work of the study groups of this new, post-Valletta cycle. ICO wishes delegates great success in their work.

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