TDAG SUBGROUP (GENEVA, 21 FEB. 2001)
Cosmas Zavazava

- OVERALL LDCs PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES:
- a) Reform telecom sector of LDCs
- b) Increase teledensity both in urban and rural areas

- ROUNDTABLE OBJECTIVES:
- a) Establishing patnership between LDCs and other ITU members
- b) Increase telecom investment in LDCs by the private sector.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ROUNDTABLE

- Presentation of country documents by the six chosen countries (Cambodia, Chad, Comoros, Ethiopia, Sudan and Tanzania). Haiti dropped due to the political situation.

- SELECTION CRITERIA:

a) low teledensity

b) Recovering from conflicts

c) Country`s capacity to absorb and build on assistance(Council – 99)

OUTCOMES OF ROUNDTABLE

- KFW, OFCOM: interest in continuing projects in Cambodia
- ALCATEL: interest in supporting projects in Sudan
- Swisscom: interest in providing experts to LDCs

- BDT : To continue implementing the Special Programme for LDCs with ad hoc assistance to the six LDCs. Continue to seek partners and use Telecom Surplus funds for select projects.

PLANS FOR YEAR 2001

- A budget of CHF1.1 million has been set aside for 6 new selected countries: Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger and Yemen.

- Countries in Special Need (Res. 34 of 1998 Plen. Potential Conference): Project document nearly complete for these countries i.e. Burundi, Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia and Sierra-Leone.

LESSONS LEARNT

- Absence of development banks at Roundtable: Shows increased role of the private sector
- Need to continue to engage these banks
- Need for concrete proposals that attract investment.

- As partners lets remember that as we fight the digital divide: YOU ALONE CAN DO IT BUT, YOU CAN`T DO IT ALONE!!