ITU/BDT Regional Seminar on Broadband Wireless Access (BWA) for CIS, CEE, and Baltic Countries

Moscow (Russian Federation)
26-29 November 2007
Chairman's Report

The Seminar examined the technological, economic, and regulatory factors that influence the availability and deployment of Wireless broadband services and their services in the region. This was a three and half day Seminar touching on a number of issues with experts to share their knowledge, experiences and views on the future of the industry with the attendees from CIS, EC and Baltic Countries.

The Welcome address was held by the Hosting Administration Mr Artem Adzhemov, Rector of MTUCI, and the Director of the ITU/BDT Mr. Sami Al Basheer Al Morshid. This was followed by Chair's opening remarks and Keynote address. The key messages were:

- Broadband networks will be key to the continued growth of the Internet and the global economy – and also to the growth and development of the social welfare of the developing regions.

- Being able to communicate, not only _what_ you want and _in what form_, but also _where and when_, will drive the continued integration of networks – wire-line, wireless and broadband.

- Networks of all kinds – seamlessly interconnected – will be critical to serving the needs of the economy and consumers.

o Broadband for all means 5 Billions of people will connect to services via broadband access by 2015!

- Government can play an important role in stimulating broadband deployment, as markets alone may not ensure broadband deployment reaches everyone.

Broadband will have an impact on the way operators do business in the future. They will have to address more market requirements that move operators towards increased focus on end-user application and content (e.g. IP-TV, music). While, at the same time, strong competition requires efficient network operations and maintenance to minimize OPEX (operational expense). Traffic is increasing while revenues are dropping and the need to find the right tariff to end encourage use of data and other services remains the challenge.

By 2010, the convergence of fixed, mobile, and broadband services will be steadily maturing and in reality will be a convergence of services. Yet, this imposes changes in regulation and deployment of standards. At the moment there is a confusion of technologies and standards and too many to choose from. Not to forget, this evolving of services also puts constrains on the Network access and Back-haul.

The first session on introduction to wireless Broadband touched on the global BWA in the ITU and reports on the Broadband activities as well as the regulatory policies on universal access. The preliminary results to Question 7-2/1: Regulatory policies on

universal access to broadband services were presented. One of the key findings is that, there is a need to make changes to regulatory environment to improve broadband universal access. Broadband services are limited in developing countries.

Deployment of wireless broadband services in rural and remote areas can help to address a variety of challenges posed by the distance. ITU-D Study Group 2 Question 20-2/2 Broadband Access Technologies addresses examples this issue as well as includes other topics i.e. e-health, e-learning, e-government, etc…

Administrations from around the world are invited to participate in the ITU-D's Study Question 20 -2/2 on Broadband Access technologies.

Contributions from developing countries that describe their experiences with Broadband implementation and use will be very important for the outcome of the next study cycle.

An introduction to the ITU development activities on wireless communications was presented. At the present time, the conditions for including broadband services within the scope of universal service (as set out in the Directive) are not fulfilled.

The following sessions illustrated broadband programs and system implementations both on regional and national levels. This was concluded by regulatory aspects of Wireless Broadband and highlighted with the results of the WRC2007.

Day 2, addressed the Standardization status, activities of the ITU and other standardization bodies in terms of technologies deployed around the world e.g. GSMA HSPA, 3G/UMTS, NG Access, ETSI BRAN, CDMA2000 as well as iBurst and Radio on fiber & Free space Optical systems for the future. In addition, there a case example on Universal service Wireless Broadband Policy in Serbia was presented.

Day 3, was devoted to BWA planning and implementation in the technologies of WiMAX and other Wireless networks. The presentations gave examples of tools used and their capabilities of acquiring the right network topologies. This was followed by Fixed Mobile Convergence solutions, issues that needed to be raised and services.

Day 4 was on Guidelines for developing Countries in terms of 2G to 3G migration/Evolution and lessons learnt on both deployment and licensing aspects. In addition, the implementation and economics of transition to IMT2000 in the Guidelines of the ITU-D handbook were presented by the ITU-D Vice-Rapporteur Q18/2.

The day ended the Seminar with a Panel to give the region their thoughts of guidance and can be summarized as following:

- o Only 80% have responded to the Universal access questionnaire from which one could derive that Universal access policies are unknown. It is important that contributions from the region be received in order that the Working group finishes its work in 2008.
- o The ITU has collected a lot of information on national and regional Policy and this information is available in Databases. Hence, the regions are encouraged to utilize these databases.
- o Convergence should be taken seriously and well balanced between regulatory policies/pricing/ and competition Authorities. This should result in a fair, relaxed, and flexible regulatory framework in order to stipulate incentives' for investment. Privacy and security issues should be respected with the market demand.

- Propagation and planning are no more issues; there are a number of tools that can demonstrate the building of economical networks.
- Transform the knowledge and make use of the benefits acquired in such seminars to predefine and build cases for scenarios for the region/countries to meet the economy of scales. Assist in the decision-making process and influence investment savings.
- Not always do the top-down network architectures work. Make sure that enough Spectrum is freed in time for the license process and remember that spectrum harmonization has its benefits to meet the economies of scale. There will be hybrid solutions and one should not be afraid of this.

Many very good questions arose during the seminar, two of which no answer was found:

1) Will Operators be free to decide where they will deploy WiMAX in their existing spectrum?
2) How will Content rights and regulation in the Russian Federation be handled?

Observation:
Many very good presentations with detailed information were held during the Seminar. It is recommended to increase the time devoted to panels and discussions for future similar events.

Announcement made:
In order to encourage more CIS participation the ITU encourages the creation of Regional Groups to respond to local problems and issues and also an association of regional regulators so that dialogue between the two can be accomplished.
The ITU encourages the CIS to establish a promotion group and Advisory Group in each region as of next year.

The Chair thanked the Ministry for Information Technologies and Communications of the Russian Federation, the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) in collaboration with the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) and the Radio communication Bureau (BR) as well as the host; the Advanced Telecommunications Training Institute (ATTI) of Moscow Technical University of Communications and Informatics (MTUCI) for creating and holding this Seminar.
Especial thanks were conveyed to the translator and the Seminar adjourned.