

Excellency, Mr Director General, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a particular honor and a pleasure for me to be here with you these two days to discuss the issues relating to the transition to digital broadcasting and the digital dividend.

In the last ten years, the World has changed considerably, with the possibility offered to practically everybody to be connected to practically everybody in the World.

This is a revolution that is changing the state of the World enormously and we are yet to see an even bigger revolution with the same possibility offered to the World's population not only for telephony, but for broadband access to internet, which means an incredibly broader range of applications and possibilities.

This revolution has to be a success and what is required to ensure this success is access to spectrum for mobile communications.

Therefore, the possibilities offered from a spectrum efficiency point of view by the transition of terrestrial broadcasting from analog to digital technologies are providing a precious way of fulfilling the spectrum requirements for the mobile service. Firstly because the frequency bands currently used by terrestrial broadcasting provide the best propagation conditions and secondly because the amount of spectrum that may be released by this transition, and is called the digital dividend, is considerable.

At the same time, the problem that spectrum managers and political leaders are facing is that terrestrial broadcasting is a very particular usage, to which practically all the population is closely associated. Therefore any change in this regard has to be carefully weighted, discussed, prepared and advertised, not only at national level, but also at international level. Decisions on the transition to digital broadcasting and on the digital dividend are not only difficult ones at national level, but they also have to involve all neighboring countries. They are by essence international decisions.

Within the next two days, we'll address and discuss all the elements that require attention before any such decisions can be taken.

For this I welcome the participation of people from Vietnam and other countries of the Asia Region and I would like to thank whole heartedly the Ministry of Information and Communication of Vietnam for having organized this workshop jointly with the ITU and for hosting it in the beautiful city of Hanoi.

This is the first of hopefully many similar workshops to be held in all the regions of the World under the auspices of the ITU and which are intended to pave the way for a harmonized and successful transition to digital terrestrial television and a successful deployment of broadband communications to every citizen of the World.

I will not go into details on the program but I can tell you that we have developed it in a way that it covers all relevant issues that need to be addressed on the transition to digital broadcasting and on the digital dividend.

Thank you for being here with us. I wish you a great success for this workshop.