

4th meeting of Regional Regulators' Associations

Opening speech

**Mr S. Al Basheer Al Morshid,
Director of Telecommunication Development Bureau
ITU**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Chairpersons of regional regulators' associations, regulators and colleagues from regional and international organizations and development agencies,

I would like to welcome you all and thank you for responding to our invitation!

Let me start by thanking our host, Mr. Mohamed Al Ghanim, Director General of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the United Arab Emirates (TRA), and his team for their warm welcome, cooperation, dedication, and all the hard work they have put into the organization of this event.

This meeting is special to me as it marks my first regulatory event as Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT). Some of you may already know me and I am pleased to see familiar faces in this distinguished audience. For those of you that I haven't met yet, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome and greet you and I am confident we will have many opportunities to meet over the coming days. I am eager to learn about your activities and to further extend our cooperation.

I am delighted to see that almost all the regional regulators' associations have come to Dubai to participate in our meeting today as well as in the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) which will start tomorrow.

In line with past practices, we have invited development agencies, as well as regional and international organizations that have been active in supporting some of your activities. I am very pleased to see that many of you are present here again. I especially would like to thank our partner on many projects, the World Bank, who has joined us today.

As most of you have just arrived for this long and busy week, I would like to suggest that we keep our meeting today very informal and make ourselves at ease.

I would like to express my gratitude for your confidence in the work of the BDT and I can assure you that we will continue to support your regulatory activities to the largest extent. The last World Telecommunication Development Conference, WTDC 06, adopted a resolution (Resolution 48) on strengthening cooperation among telecommunication regulators. That resolution resolved that regulators would continue to have a specific platform for sharing experiences. This was further emphasized in a resolution adopted by the Plenipotentiary on the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR). The PP resolution stressed the importance of such annual gatherings in enhancing regional cooperation among regulators from different countries and regions of the world.

Regional Regulators Associations have an essential role to play in coordinating a harmonized approach to guide their members in addressing the challenges arising from the fast changing ICT world we live in.

Having been part of the regulatory commission in my country, I was able to see, first hand, the benefits of the Arab Telecommunication Regulators Network.

As many of you know, WTDC 06 recognized the importance of regional initiatives and adopted a series of regional and sub-regional regulatory harmonization projects (Resolution 17 (Rev. Doha, 2006)). I am sure that you, regional regulators associations, were all instrumental in drafting these initiatives and projects. I am delighted that the ITU Regional Office Heads were able to join us here today to share further information on these regional regulatory initiatives. To be successful, these initiatives will require the active participation and collaboration of the regional organizations as well as the member countries of those regions. Our regional Offices will be working hand in hand with you to develop and implement these projects. So please, don't hesitate to contact us and provide your views and suggestions.

We are here to assist you in fulfilling your mandates. It is only through our combined efforts that we can make a difference.

This meeting is for you. Let us use it as an opportunity to exchange information, ideas, identify areas for future collaboration and further build synergies between our activities.

Several regional regulators associations have asked to speak. However, due to the limited time available, not all of you appear on the programme. We appreciate your enthusiasm, and hope that time permitting we will be able to hear from all of the associations present.

Finally, I would like to conclude by stressing that the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, underscored the importance of an enabling environment that fosters supportive, transparent, pro-competitive, harmonized and predictable policies, as well as legal and regulatory frameworks that provide appropriate incentives for investment in, and development of, the information society.

I firmly believe that events like this one, as well as the Global Symposium for Regulators, are key to helping developing countries create this enabling environment.

I would now like to start the session by appointing our Chairperson. I would like to propose, Mr. Mohamed Al Ghanim, Director General of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the United Arab Emirates (TRA) and Chairman of the Arab Regulators Network as Chairperson.

Please join me in welcoming Mr Al Ghanim as Chairperson of this meeting.

Mr Al Ghanim, the meeting is now in your very capable hands!

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