

12 October 2009

To: Dr Kamal Shehadi
Chairman and CEO
Telecommunication Regulatory Authority of Lebanon (TRA)

From: Instituto Dominicano de Telecomunicaciones (Indotel)

Reference: 09008806

Subject: Views of the Instituto Dominicano de Telecomunicaciones (Indotel) in response to the consultation document for GSR 2009

Dear Dr Shehadi,

We have pleasure in submitting to you the views, set forth below, of the Instituto Dominicano de Telecomunicaciones (Indotel), the telecommunication regulatory body for the Dominican Republic, in response to the consultation document for the ninth Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR).

1 Promoting convergence to develop ICT markets and realize its benefits (what role for telecommunications regulators in promoting convergence?)

Convergence must be neither imposed nor directly promoted by the regulatory body, but should be a market initiative with each company identifying its own competitive advantages stemming from the convergence of networks and services.

The role of the regulatory body should be focused on creating a conducive environment in which market competitors are not hampered by competitive disadvantages caused by regulatory barriers.

In line with the advance of new technologies, the sector's legal and regulatory framework should be made more flexible such as to enable interworking between conventional and next-generation networks.

That flexibility should be reflected in the granting of the authorizations necessary to provide any type of telecommunication service, as well as in the emergence of a "converged" regulatory body with the capacity and authority to take decisions that have an impact on different telecommunication markets.

2 Building effective regulatory institutions (converged regulator or cooperation amongst sector-specific regulators?)

Thanks to technological convergence, it is now possible to provide a range of services simultaneously on different technological platforms. Services which are comparable from the consumer's point of view should therefore not be treated differently from the regulatory standpoint simply because they are provided through differing channels or on different platforms.

In this regard, Indotel firmly believes in the idea of a converged regulator establishing the regulatory conditions whereby services and applications can be provided and obtained in a non-discriminatory manner, all of this with the proviso that its intervention must be confined to ensuring that operators are able to provide their services.

3 Using regulatory tools to stimulate investment in a converged world

The regulator should seek to ensure that, in a converged environment, telecommunication service operators are able to offer the widest possible range of services, thereby optimizing the efficiency of their cost structure.

It should also seek to eliminate any legal barrier which places limits on operators' ability to provide services for which they are authorized, since this prevents them from reaping the benefits of convergence and hence from further reducing the end price of the public services in question.

It has to operate in an environment in which the current interconnection regime is characterized by increasing flexibility. It is worth noting in this connection that there have reportedly been cases of disputes, which have ended up being detrimental to users, stemming from the persistence of outdated interconnection arrangements, such as asymmetric access charges, capacity-based interconnection on mobile networks and interconnection at the IP level.

A "converged regulator" must promote change in the way in which the radio spectrum is currently exploited. It must allow for greater participation by market forces, while at the same time ensuring, given that the spectrum is a public good, that the State retains its control over the entire spectrum, irrespective of the manner in which its allocation is managed.

4 Stimulating growth in innovative applications and devices towards connecting the unconnected

Indotel has been providing incentives for investment aimed at broadening the coverage of the public telecommunication network through the execution of projects geared towards the provision of telecommunication services to localities requiring them.

One way to stimulate the expansion of efforts to reduce the digital divide is by promoting and financing, under the minimum subsidy approach, access to communication networks through private-sector participation, be this through the installation, operation and maintenance of new infrastructure and/or facilities, through the sharing of existing infrastructures or by means of service marketing systems, or through a combination of all these.

With these ends in view, Indotel has developed programmes focusing on the installation of public telephones and deployment of broadband networks in localities selected on the basis of eminently social criteria and with due attention to the number of inhabitants in each community and shortcomings in terms of the services in question. All of this has been done on the basis of a policy of inclusion underpinned by the conviction that telecommunications are a fundamental factor in bringing these hitherto forgotten and marginalized communities into the mainstream.

Finally, we should like to express our gratitude for the opportunity that has been given to us to participate in this survey. We naturally remain at your disposal for any additional or supplementary information you may require.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

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Executive Director