

Address to ISO's 31st General Assembly

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Mr. Håkan Murby, President of ISO,
Mr. Alan Bryden, Secretary-General of ISO,
Honorable host,
Honorable guests,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor and a pleasure for me to speak here today on behalf of the International Telecommunication Union, one of ISO's partners in the World Standards Cooperation (WSC) along with the IEC.

2008 has been a busy and productive year for WSC. We've collaborated on a number of projects.

Last March we worked together, again, on another very successful Fully Networked Car event at the Geneva Motor Show. Participation increased substantially and we had a number of high level speakers over the two and half days, as well as a Formula 1 car on display. It was so successful that we will be holding the event again during next year's show, on the 4 and 5 March 2009. The call for papers has been published and we are looking forward to a very exciting event... again with a strong focus on how ICTs in cars can help mitigate their effect on climate change.

In June I had the pleasure of hosting this year's meeting of the WSC in ITU, where all the leaders of the three organizations participated. This meeting considered the many, and growing, items of common interest to the three organisations.

One of the most successful outcomes of the WSC is of course our common patent policy, and ITU held a very successful workshop on the subject last July. It is attracting a lot of interest in other bodies, and we plan to organize another workshop on the subject next year in China.

During the WSC meeting we confirmed the World Standards Day theme for this year, and I am very pleased to be here with you to celebrate it today. For next year we agreed that the theme would be climate change.

Climate change is something we all need to address. ICTs have been estimated to contribute between 2% and 3% of total greenhouse gas emissions. However, far more significant is the estimate of between 15% and 40% reduction in total greenhouse gas emission that could be achieved through the application of ICTs in other industry sectors such as energy generation, transportation, and buildings, which you will be discussing tomorrow in your Open Session.

Over that last 12 months climate change has become a significant focus of our activity in ITU. We have already produced a checklist to ensure climate change is taken into account at the start of a standards development, and we have begun work on standardizing the methodologies for estimating the direct and indirect impact of ICTs on climate change. The focus group we have established for this purpose is open to any interested party to participate in and we do in fact have several organizations participating that are not ITU members.

The WSC also agreed to improve coordination of our efforts to promote the involvement of academia in international standardization.

This year in ITU we started a new initiative to attract academia, which we call Kaleidoscope. We issued a call for papers on the subject of Innovations in Next Generation Networks (NGN). Over 140 papers were submitted for peer review, and the best 50 papers presented in parallel sessions over two days in Geneva last May. We had 220 participants and around 50 universities participating. The authors of the winning three papers received prizes totaling \$10,000 and their papers will be published in the IEEE proceedings, and will be considered as the basis for new standardization activities in ITU. We intend to repeat this each year in different parts of the world. In 2009 the topic is Innovations for Digital Inclusion... the call for papers has been published, and the prize fund will be at least as generous as this year.

The WSC meeting also considered that conformity assessment should be added to the WSC's objectives and discussions. As the accepted way of demonstrating that a product or service adheres to an international standard, global conformity assessment plays an increasingly important role in our organizations' interaction with the World Trade Organization. This is in the context of WTO members' international standardization commitments under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade. Recognition of the strong link between standardization and conformity assessment, and the promotion of both to the marketplace as partners in facilitating global trade would provide tangible benefits to the WSC partners, and to the users of both standards and conformity assessment. I am pleased that ITU-T has recently become an A-liaison member of CASCO, ISO's Conformity Assessment Committee.

A complaint I often hear, especially from developing countries, is that there is no way of being sure that a vendor's equipment meets an ITU standard. This is because we do not have any conformance testing to our standards. Since ITU was founded to ensure interoperability of international telecommunications, this is something that will be addressed at ITU's World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly ([WTSA-08](#)), in Johannesburg, next week.

WTSA is the ITU standardization sector's highest decision-making body and meets every four years. I am very happy that this WTSA will be in Africa for the first time. WTSA will focus – for ten days - on the future work programme, the new structure of our study groups to carryout this programme, appoint their chairmen and vice-chairmen, and set priorities for the next four years. Climate change and accessibility to ICTs for persons with disabilities will feature highly.

The WTSA will be chaired this year by a woman – for the first time. We are very proud to have Ms Lyndall Shope-Mafole, Director-General of the South African Department of Communications in the driving seat.

I would also like to take this opportunity to tell you about the Global Standards Symposium (GSS) that ITU will hold for the first time, the day before WTSA, next Monday (20 October 2008) at the same venue in Johannesburg. I am very pleased and very grateful that ISO Secretary-General Mr. Alan Bryden will be joining us there to discuss what I believe are some of the most important issues facing the standardization world.

Mr. Bryden will join a number of high level figures in the international standards arena for a roundtable discussion that will consider ways to strengthen collaboration between standards bodies, in particular to address, what we call in ITU, the standardization gap. This is the disparities between the ability of representatives of developing countries compared to representatives of developed countries, to access, implement, contribute to, and influence international ICT standards. We believe this is a significant factor contributing to the digital divide. I recall you discussing this issue last year, and I know that increasing the participation of developing countries is a desire shared by all WSC partners.

So, as WSC partners, we share many goals, some of which I have mentioned, but a highlight of the year, and perhaps the most visible expression of our collaboration, occurred in August when I was very proud to accept on behalf of WSC partners the Emmy Primetime award in Hollywood. This was for the work of our Joint Video Team in extending the advanced video coding standard ITU-T H.264/MPEG-4 AVC. In September, we held our WSC Standardization Community

Management Course and I liven up my presentation by bringing along our Emmy, and it was very much appreciated!

To conclude I look forward to continuing and furthering our collaboration in the WSC, together with the IEC, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank ISO and its members for its commitment to the global standards process and its willingness to collaborate with us to meet the needs of the global community. This commitment is in no small part a result of the tenacity and dedication shown by Alan Bryden and I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the whole ITU to thank him for his level of support for collaboration between ITU, ISO and IEC over the years. On a personal note I would like to thank him for an excellent working relationship over the eighteen months I have been in office, and I wish him a prosperous and happy future.

I wish you all a very successful meeting.

Thank you for your attention.