

**Dear Dr. Magdalena Gaj,** (President, Office of Electronic Communications (UKE), Poland),

**Dear Mr. Brahim Sanou** (Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), International Telecommunication Union (ITU),

**Dear Mr. Guido Acchioni,** Policy Officer, Broadband Unit, DG CONNECT, European Commission),

**Dear participants,** (*business telecommunications sector*).

I would like to thank you for the opportunity given to present an overview of the situation and the steps being taken by the Albanian government and the Regulator (AKEP), towards the development of a broadband network in this very important ITU activity.

The development of broadband infrastructure is a crucial element in the provision of healthcare services, education, government, business and trade in order to achieve sustainable economic and social growth.

In recent years, Albania has made considerable progress in developing networks and providing broadband services to subscribers. The number of operators that provide fixed electronic communications networks and broadband services is around 180. This is really a high number considering the Albanian population. However, it's a fact that many of the key operators are extending their networks mainly in urban areas dominated by optical fiber, the rural areas and their territories remain out of focus. Such areas are covered by many small local providers. Room for improvement exists, both in terms of infrastructural development as well as competitiveness of the market operators.

The broadband access has grown in both its segments: from fixed and mobile networks. During 2015, the electronic communications market has increased in terms of the use of mobile networks services and broadband Internet access. On the other hand, the fixed telephony segment has suffered a decrease. This is a trend similar to that of the recent years where the fixed telephony has been decreasing and is being replaced by the mobile telephony, resulting in an increase of broadband access.

Today we have a fixed and wireless broadband network which is offering many opportunities and room for the development of applications, starting from the simplest up to those that require very high transmission capacity.

In particular, the Internet has become an integral part of daily life of people. So, consumers now have the opportunity to use electronic communications networks to access the Internet at speeds up to 100 Mbps, at home, in offices, in businesses, in public places, etc.

Today we have a service that is being increasingly used, and is the IPTV. But not everyone is aware of the fact that we are going through a new phase. And it is not only the consumers who should understand this. Above all the operators shall be oriented towards innovative and integrated services. And it is our duty to say to everyone that a new era is coming.

Implementation of broadband and the services that can be offered through broadband requires serious investments in the infrastructure of electronic communications networks and these investments should be viewed in a long-term perspective for the benefit of companies and society in general.

The main technology in the provision of broadband access continues to be ADSL, recently NGN networks (combination of optical fiber and copper cable) is satisfactory.

Last but not least operators shall be intelligent and invest for value of money and not for individual networks. Shared infrastructure is becoming a language spoken during the last year not only by the authority AKEP. It has been enforced by government through great contributions of the local government bodies. We believe that the new territorial division in 61 municipalities and a better collaboration with them increases more the possibility of penetration of networks and broadband services in these areas.

Albania has made and is making continuous efforts with respect to broadband. The Albanian government has approved a number of laws and strategic documents, especially the:

- Strategy "Digital Albania Agenda 2014-2020" and other regulations on this support.

The legislation provides a scope and role of AKEP, important functions for broadband services, Internet access.

We are working on the draft law "On the development of electronic communications networks and high speed to ensure the right of way", which aims to facilitate and encourage the provision / construction of electronic communications networks for high speed, by promoting the joint use of existing infrastructure as well as a more efficient development of new infrastructure by reducing construction costs of high-speed network.

In order to promote joint use of passive infrastructure of fixed networks (and phones) in 2015 AKEP approved the "Rules for the use of common facilities. Some of the regulatory measures

for the joint use of infrastructure assets (bitstream, leased lines) and passive (pipes) to fixed networks have begun to give effect in 2015, during which there was an increased use of shared infrastructure Altelecom operator.

Now, during the first months of 2016 AKEP is cooperates with ITU for the followings:

1. Establish of Information System, focused on electronic communications networks, (Atlas Electronic), AKOS (Slovenia)
2. QoS for electronic communications services UKE - Office of Electronic Communications

In order to move faster, but also promote the implementation of standards it is necessary to strengthen the requirements for a rational use of natural resources and infrastructure.

We would want to thank the ITU for the big support and the Authorities of AKOS and UKE for their support.

To conclude, I can say that a big challenge is awaiting us for broadband development in the future. Let's all get down to work to enable the broadband system to support sustainable development of our economy.

AKEP is ready to be part of any initiative which requires coordination with Region and ITU as the leader of these processes.

Wishing this conference success and thanks ITU and UKE for the excellent organization.

Thank you for your attention