



INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION  
**TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BUREAU**

**WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT  
CONFERENCE (WTDC-98)**

Valletta, Malta, 23 March - 1 April 1998

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*For information*

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**PLENARY MEETING**

NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE BDT

I have the honour to submit to the Conference for information the attached document concerning the first International Conference and Exhibition for the Development of Telecommunications in the Arab States.

**First International Conference and Exhibition for the  
Development of Telecommunications in the Arab States  
(Arabcom 98)**

On the occasion of the second World Telecommunication Development Conference, I have pleasure in reporting to you on Arabcom, the International Conference and Exhibition for the Development of Telecommunications in the Arab States. Motivated by our commitment to the development process and responding to ITU's appeal to the private sector to play its full role in telecommunication development, we took the initiative of organizing Arabcom 98, the first of a series of conferences and exhibitions designed to give a strong stimulus to development in the Arab States.

I wish to thank ITU and its Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) for their encouragement and assistance in our work, I am pleased to say that Arabcom was extremely well attended, in particular by ITU itself, by the Director of BDT, Mr. Ahmed Laouyane, and by the Gulf Cooperation Council. It also secured the support of the League of Arab States and the participation of Arab Ministers of Telecommunications, a large number of decision-makers from the public and private sectors and numerous senior representatives of international organizations and international telecommunication companies who wished to be part of this initiative to promote development in the Arab world. The proceedings of Arabcom 98 were successfully completed and the recommendations that were adopted provided, *inter alia*, for the reconvening of Arabcom every year and its adoption as a forum for the Arab world on condition that it obtains ITU sponsorship and is included in its programme of annual regional forums and exhibitions, and on the understanding, of course, that it will involve both the public and private sectors in the endeavour to develop telecommunications.

I wish to urge you all, as a mother and child-rearer as well as in my official capacity, to show solidarity and join forces, public and private sectors alike, so that we may offer our future generations a comfortable life and a better future in keeping and in harmony with the global village towards which the world is evolving today. I also urge you to participate in Arabcom 99 to be held in Beirut, which promises to be an auspicious occasion for an encounter between technology and decision-makers in the Arab world, contributing to the spread of technology to all developing countries, particularly in the Arab world, on the threshold of the twenty-first century.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate my thanks to ITU and BDT for the confidence they have shown in me and to reaffirm that my message of telecommunication development is, in effect, an issue of crucial importance, a duty for the present generation to be conscientiously fulfilled and a right of the generations to come.

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