

**1st Meeting of the APT Conference Preparatory Group
for WRC-23 (APG23-1)**

Virtual event

24 Sept 2020

Opening Remarks

**Mario Maniewicz
Director, Radiocommunication Bureau**

Ms. Areewan Haorangsi, Secretary General of the APT,
Dr. K.J. Wee, Chairman of the APG19,
Ms Zhu Keer, Mr Christopher Hose, acting vice-chairs of APG19,
Mr. Kavouss Arasteh, Special Advisor to the APG19,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning, good afternoon and good evening to you all.

It is a pleasure for me to be able to join you this morning at the opening of the first meeting of the APT Conference Preparatory Group for the WRC-23 and I would like to thank Ms Haorangsi for her kind invitation.

Dear colleagues,

While living these challenging times, and while adapting our lives to face the COVID-19 pandemic, we are reminded of the fundamental importance of telecommunication services in general and, in particular, of our work as telecom regulators.

In the ITU, we now move into a new study cycle, and I want to recognize the achievements of WRC-19 and look into the preparatory work for WRC-23.

As you all know, WRC-19 was a resounding success. It was one of the biggest conferences we have had, counting with over 3'400 participants representing 163 Member States and 129 organizations.

The Conference updated the Radio Regulations and opened the path for the introduction of new technologies.

- It identified additional frequencies that may be used for IMT in the millimeter wave bands. And it is no surprise that APT was a protagonist in achieving these results with many operators in the Region having already deployed 5G networks;
- It identified additional bands that may be used for High Altitude Platforms;
- It defined a regulatory framework for large constellations of non-Geostationary Orbit Satellites, which may help expand connectivity to the remote areas;
- It modified the technical conditions applied to wireless access systems in the 5GHz band, which will enable a greater utilization WiFi and other RLAN technologies; and
- At the same time, the protection of existing services remained a foundational requirement in the international regulation of the radio spectrum.

Surely the outcomes of WRC-19 will accelerate the digital transformation throughout the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All these achievements would not have been possible without the contribution and collaboration of the various Regional Groups. Reaching consensus for updating the international treaty that governs the use of radio-frequency spectrum and satellite-orbits takes time and effort. It requires a comprehensive preparatory process followed by extensive negotiations during the conference. And the Regional Groups played a key role towards building the global consensus needed for decision-making.

Today, I am very pleased to share with you that the 2020 Edition of the Radio Regulations, is now available for download in the ITU webpage. I strongly encourage all Administrations to use it as the basis for their National legislation framework.

Now, looking forward, we have a new cycle ahead of us and the preparations for WRC-23 have already commenced. The ITU-R Study Groups and their Working Parties have begun to organize their work programs and initiate their studies using an online platform for remote participation in their meetings.

Virtual meetings have given the opportunity for many people who otherwise would not have been able to participate in ITU-R meetings to take part in the discussions. Statistics show that on average the participation in the ITU-R meetings has more than doubled with virtual sessions as compared to the physical ones.

The use of online platforms has allowed the ITU-R Study Groups to keep on track with their work. For example, WP 5D is aiming at the delivery of IMT-2020, or 5G, specifications by this November, as originally planned. In this regard, I would like to highlight the close cooperation of APT countries and industries with the ITU in the development of the IMT-2020 standards.

In line with this approach, I applaud the initiative of the APT to convene this meeting virtually and begin Asia-Pacific's preparation for the WRC-23.

Looking into the agenda of this meeting, I see you will be electing the leadership of the APT Conference Preparatory Group for WRC-23, discussing and adopting the structure of the Group, nominating the leaders of the Working Parties, and discussing the workplan for the preparation of RA-23 and WRC-23.

When organizing your work, I encourage APT to follow the guidance of the Gender Declaration approved during WRC-19 towards supporting the participation and the leadership of women in all the WRC-23 preparatory activities in national, regional and global levels.

Moving ahead to the WRC-23, I am happy to note that several agenda items that were proposed by Region 3 were incorporated in the Agenda and will be studied during this next cycle.

To cite a few, I note:

- Agenda Item 1.2 will consider a global identification of the band 7025-7125 MHz for IMT,
- Agenda Item 1.4, on HIBS, will seek to facilitate the use of HAPS platforms as IMT base stations,
- Agenda Item 1.6 will consider regulatory provisions for suborbital vehicles,
- Agenda item 1.7 will look into satellite usage to support aeronautical VHF communications, and
- Finally Agenda Item 1.11 will seek to introduce additional satellite systems into the GMDSS.

Furthermore, I recognize that the interests of the Asia-Pacific region go beyond these topics, and include the deliberations of other Regions with regards to the C-Band and the 6 GHz band.

In fact, although the C-Band is being considered in some countries for the deployment of 5G systems, it is extensively being used in other countries by satellite systems due to its favorable coverage and propagation characteristics. Moreover, the 6 GHz band that will be considered in Region 1 for IMT, is also being evaluated by some countries of the Region as a license-exempt band.

Dear colleagues,

In the beginning of this year we had planned several events in Indonesia, including a Spectrum Management Workshop, a Spectrum Management Conference and Satellite Workshop. These conferences were held virtually in partnership with Forum Global and APT.

Furthering our effective partnership with State Radio Monitoring Center (SRMC) Peoples Republic of China, ITU through its Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific arranged a Center of Excellence training course on Spectrum Management and RF monitoring. The course had excellent participation of around 360 participants from 54 countries from all over the globe.

I am glad to announce that, from 19 to 30 October, we will be organizing the Regional Radiocommunication Seminar 2020 for Asia Pacific. The seminar, which will be organized virtually this time, will cover concepts related to spectrum management, procedures for recording of frequency assignments in the Master International Frequency Register and tutorials on the use of tools for terrestrial and space stations. It will conclude with a Forum on *“Radiocommunications Trends: Opportunities and challenges for the Region”*. I invite you all to participate.

I am confident we will be able to organize more of these events next year and face-to-face.

Finally, I reiterate the important contribution of the APT both to the outcomes of the WRC-19 and to the work of the ITU Study Groups. The close cooperation between the ITU and APT countries and industries has highly contributed to the standardization of the radio interface of IMT-2020 and we count on the same cooperation when initiating the new activities beyond 5G.

I would like to conclude my remarks by reassuring you that the Radiocommunication Bureau of the ITU is committed to support the Asia-Pacific countries, including the most developed ones, the small island states, as well as the least developed countries, regardless of their varied needs and realities.

I am mindful that you have a comprehensive agenda ahead of you. I would therefore thank the APT for the opportunity of addressing you today and wish you fruitful discussions.

Thank you very much.