

**The 2nd African Preparatory Meeting for the World Radio Communication
Conference 2023 (APM23-2)**

Virtual event

Opening remarks

6 September 2021

**Mario Maniewicz
Director, Radiocommunication Bureau**

H.E Ms. Aurelie Adam-Soule ZOUMAROU, Minister of Digital Economy and Communication, Republic of Benin,

Mr. Flavien BACHABI, Chairman, Regulatory Authority of Post and Electronic Communications of Benin,

Mr. John Omo, Secretary General of the African Telecommunication Union,

Mr. Atef MARZOUK, Acting Director for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

It is a pleasure to address you today in the opening of the 2nd African Preparatory Meeting for the World Radio Communication Conference 2023 (APM23-2).

Let me start by acknowledging the valuable contribution of the African Telecommunications Union and its Members in supporting the work of ITU's Radiocommunication Sector and in coordinating the African preparation for WRC-23.

The development of African common positions and proposals and the cooperation amongst regional groups are fundamental for the preparations and the success of the next world radiocommunication conference.

WRC-23 will deal with agenda items of utmost importance to African countries.

- Agenda Item 1.5 will review the spectrum use and spectrum needs of existing services in the UHF band for Region 1, and consider possible regulatory actions in the frequency band 470-694 MHz.
- Many African countries are in the process of deploying digital terrestrial television (DTT) and, in addition to technical aspects, important issues related to spectrum management are associated with the economic and social cost of introducing new technologies.
- Another important issue for the Region is Agenda Item 1.2. It will consider the identification of frequency bands in the 3 GHz (3 300-3 400 MHz) and 6 GHz ranges (6 425-7 025 MHz, 7 025-7 125 MHz) for IMT in Region 1, including possible additional allocations to the mobile service on a primary basis.
- From the African Spectrum Allocation Plan, I note that the 3 300-3 400 MHz is already used for IMT in several African countries and the upper part of the 6 GHz band is being used for fixed links in Africa.
- The availability of appropriate aeronautical VHF communications is also an issue over remote areas in the Region, and Agenda Item 1.7 will consider the possibility to develop new satellite solutions in that respect.
- There are other difficult agenda items such as 1.1 (IMT in 4.8-4.99 GHz), 1.8 (UAS CNPC) or 1.16 (NGSO ESIM), which are being studied within the ITU-R study groups.
- It is important to continue supporting the sharing and compatibility studies that are being undertaken in preparation for WRC-23. The studies will define the conditions of a successful coexistence between new and existing radiocommunication services with the objective of not causing harmful interference.

- Last, but surely not least, I am following very closely the implementation of Resolution 559 and I was glad to note that coordination activities under this Resolution are progressing well, so that WRC-23 will be able to consider the inclusion of Resolution 559 submissions in the BSS Plan.
- In that regard, I also encourage the interested parties to continue following closely the studies under agenda item 1.15 (dealing with the introduction of ESIM in the Appendix 30B Earth-to-space Ku-band), or under some topics of agenda item 7 (e.g. topic E on improved procedures under RR Appendix 30B for new ITU Member States, or topic F on the impact of excluding feeder-link/Up-link service and coverage areas in the bands subject to RR Appendix 30A and RR Appendix 30B).

Dear participants,

For over a year now, ITU-R Study Group meetings have been convened online. Delegates have had to accommodate different working methods and sometimes challenging working hours. Furthermore, the work has continued in between meetings through correspondence groups.

The effectiveness of virtual meetings and the lack of opportunities for informal discussions among delegates led to much concern on how this process would evolve.

Fortunately, we have achieved our first milestones successfully. With your support, the radio wave propagation models, as well as the technical characteristics, operational parameters and protection criteria of services and applications have now been defined. Administrations and regional groups can, therefore, use these inputs to prepare and provide sharing and compatibility studies to the relevant ITU-R responsible groups.

I feel reassured that we are on track in the preparatory work towards WRC-23. And I count on you to continue firmly in this path.

In addition to the work of the ITU-R Study Groups, the BR has conducted capacity-building activities in the region, such as the ITU Regional Radiocommunication Seminar for Africa that was held in July this year, as a complement to the World Radiocommunications Seminar held at the end of 2020. In that regard, I am happy to inform you that the plenary sessions of the World Radiocommunications Seminar can now be accessed on demand through the website Best of WRS-20.

Within the regional organizations, the work on different WRC-23 agenda items also seems to be progressing well.

We will be able to follow up more closely on the progress of the preparatory studies at the ITU interregional workshops on WRC-23 Preparation. The first workshop of this series of annual events has been planned for mid-December this year, immediately after the meetings of all the concerned ITU-R groups.

The Workshop will review the progress made so far in ITU-R and at the regional and national levels. It should also provide opportunities for other international organizations and the main stakeholders to provide their views and expectations on relevant WRC-23 agenda items and topics.

Regarding the date and place of the WRC-23, as some of you may know, the United Arab Emirates have informed the Secretary-General of their readiness to host the WRC-23 from 20 November to 15 December of 2023, preceded by the 2023 Radiocommunication Assembly in November 2023, also in the UAE. This decision is now confirmed by the Council and consultation with all Member States is ongoing.

Dear Friends,

Before ending my remarks, I would like to reassure you that you can continue to count on the full support of the Radiocommunications Bureau to conduct your work. I also encourage you to continue participating actively and providing contributions to the ITU-R Study Groups.

And as we move forwards on the discussions and agreements on various WRC-23 agenda items, let's keep in mind the purpose of our work, which is the promotion of a telecommunication sector that serves all while serving our planet.

With this, let me conclude by wishing you all a very successful meeting today and all the best in your preparations for WRC-23.

Thank you very much for your attention.