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(ITU) للاتصالات الدولي الاتحاد في والمحفوظات المكتبة قسم أجراه الضوئي بالمسح تصوير نتاج (PDF) الإلكترونية النسخة هذه والمحفوظات المكتبة قسم في المتوفرة الوثائق ضمن أصلية ورقية وثيقة من نقلاً.

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# Beyond WTSA-2000

## Relevance, speed and adaptability

Gary Fishman  
Chairman, TSAG

**F**or this special edition of the *ITU News* on WTSA-2000, I would like to stimulate some thinking about the time beyond WTSA-2000, what the membership of the Standardization Sector tells us it needs and how the Assembly's actions will enable us to reach that future successfully.

Although the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG) has prepared proposals on more than 50 resolutions and recommendations for WTSA's consideration, including proposals for the future structure of ITU-T study groups and allocation of nearly 200 study questions, when I think of the time beyond WTSA-2000, the issues affecting the performance of ITU-T can best be summarized by just three themes: relevance, speed and adaptability.

For ITU-T to be effective in the future, WTSA-2000 will be asked to enhance its capabilities in each of these three areas.

### Relevance

Are we working on the right things? One thing is clear when we look beyond the time of WTSA-2000 and that is that we must constantly reassess what we are working on. This WTSA will be asked to approve mechanisms that enable creation of new groups during the interval between Assemblies to complement current procedures that allow study groups to initiate work on new study questions. WTSA-2000 will be asked to approve a revised resolution enabling the membership, through TSAG, to create study groups without waiting for the next WTSA. It will also be asked to

approve a "fast set-up" option for study groups to create focus groups as quickly as forums and con-

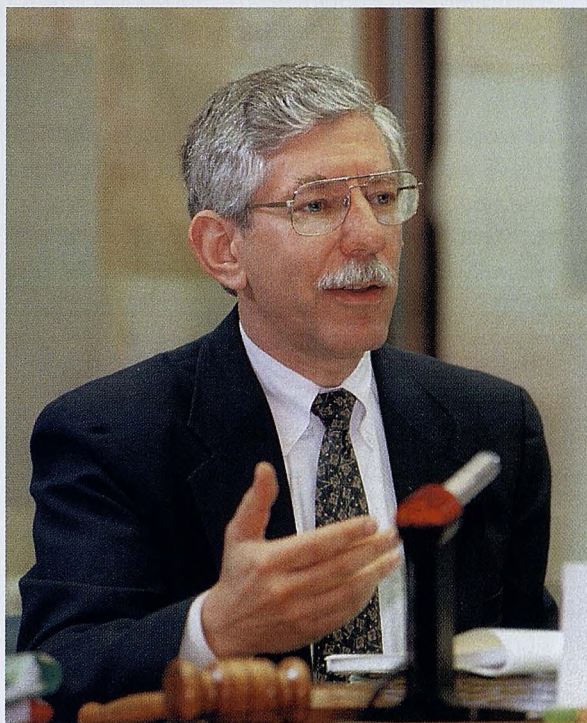


Photo: A. de Ferron (ITU 000037)

sortia are formed outside ITU. Hopefully, these new tools will help keep work in ITU-T, instead of seeing competing forums established to do the work outside this Sector.

### Speed

Are we able to develop and approve Recommendations at the right time? Are we able





**Networks and services increasingly represent the lifeblood of national economies**

(Photo: ITU 970038)

to work fast enough? Over the past periods, ITU-T working methods have been refined so that approval procedures that used to take more than two years are now completed in about ten months. But that is not fast enough for the telecommunications industry when the capacity of optical transmission systems doubles in the time it takes to hold two study group meetings at a traditional interval of nine months. We must be faster. Therefore, this WTSA will be asked to approve new procedures that were embodied in the ITU Constitution and Convention by the 1998 Plenipotentiary Conference. Under the new Alternative Approval Process (AAP), speed will be increased and the openness and transparency of ITU-T working methods will be enhanced through the use of electronic communication. At the same time, the AAP responds to the concerns of many that the number of physical meetings has become overly burdensome. The procedures in use today that have been reduced to nine or ten months will be further reduced to two or three months.

### Adaptability

Are we able to change when change is required? The structure and functioning of ITU-T has evolved over many years and it generally

worked well. However, the pace of technology and the speed required for the production of high-quality international recommendations demand much more of ITU-T than it can deliver if it is inflexibly tied to fixed structures and processes.

As ITU-T Study Group Chairmen stated to the June 2000 meeting of TSAG, "work of the study groups and TSAG should be on a continuous basis, disassociated from the interval between WTSAs". The World Telecommunication Standardization Conference in 1996 (WTSC-96), the predecessor of WTSA-2000, recognized the need for continuous review and change and delegated limited authority to TSAG to take action in a few specified areas, such as maintaining up to date working methods and responsibility for recommendations relating to the operations of the Sector.

WTSA-2000 will be asked to approve an update to that resolution so that ITU-T's ability to adapt quickly to changing requirements will be enhanced. If approved, the membership will be able to adapt work structures, working methods and cooperation mechanisms when needed, and not be restricted to a fixed interval between assemblies.

Providing a list of resolutions and recommendations and saying how important each one will be to the future of ITU-T might have been a more traditional

approach to previewing the work of the Sector's Assembly. However, how many of us would remember all 50, why each was important or what happened to each one after the Assembly was over? Rather, when considering TSAG's proposals to WTSA, we should focus on the years beyond WTSA-2000 when the membership has to come together to do its work and we should keep in mind how WTSA-2000 decisions will contribute to the three key aspects of ITU-T's effectiveness: relevance, speed and adaptability. ■

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