



7th Global Symposium for Regulators (Dubai, 2007)

*The Road to Next Generation Networks (NGN): Can regulators promote investment
and achieve open access?*

Speeches

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H.E. Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansoori, UAE Minister of for the Development of Government Sector

In the Name of God Most Gracious Most Merciful

Your Excellency Dr. Hamadoun Toure, Secretary General of the International Telecommunications Union

Mr. Sami Al Basheer, Director of ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau

Chairman of the 7th Global Symposium for Regulators,

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates, It is with pleasure that I inaugurate the 7th Global Symposium for Regulators as I am equally pleased to welcome you in your second home, the United Arab Emirates, wishing you all continued success in your endeavors.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the International Telecommunication Union for the fine organization and management of this important symposium with the cooperation of Telecommunication Regulatory Authority.

The UAE believes in an open global economy and its role in elevating our local emerging economy by applying the best practices and by making use of other countries' economic experiences throughout history. Telecommunications and information technology represent important sectors whereby the Government of the United Arab Emirates has taken great strides in these two sectors acknowledging the imperative role that they play in pushing the wheels of economic, social and intellectual development.

Hence, we seek to invest in new developing sectors in the UAE, such as telecommunication and information technology acknowledging the imperative role these sectors play in the country's social, educational and economic development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The UAE adopted a superior strategy for the telecommunications industry to support and develop the non-oil economic sectors including trade and commerce, financial services, education, transportation and healthcare services in addition to increased independence on technology and supporting economic development while protecting economic and social stability and increasing the size of national participation and activating the highest caliber of policies to build a comprehensive strategy to diversify the economic platform

In 2006, mobile phone usage in the UAE has surpassed 125 percent and the government is currently studying new regulations to increase broadband services. As for the internet, usage has exceeded 60% whereby the government is planning to shortly utilize the best technology available on fixed land lines via Next Generation Network (NGN).

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Arab Emirates has adopted a strategy to sustain the economy by developing the infrastructure of telecommunications and information technology and utilizing the most advanced modern networks.

The theme for this year's symposium is "The Road to Next Generation Networks: Can Regulators Promote Investment and Achieve Open Access?" whereby the three day meeting brings together heads of national regulatory authorities and senior executives from telecommunications companies from around the world to achieve consensus on the best way to address the challenges brought about by the migration of next generation networks.

The discussion will mainly underline:

- How close are we to a Next Generation Network (NGN) world?
- Understanding the difference between NGN and telecom worlds
- Investment in an NGN world
- Interconnection in an NGN world
- Pricing and interconnection in and NGN multi-platform world
- Competition in an NGN world
- Consumer protection, quality of service, and cyber security issues, what can be done?
- Universal access and service
- International internet interconnection
- Speed exchanges
- The way forward

Finally, the participants from telecommunication regulatory authorities, international telecommunication companies and strategy makers will hold informal discussion over round tables. They will be moving from table to another to reach the best from exchanging views and expertise.

Distinguished Guests,

The United Arab Emirates is keen to enhance the role of the International Telecommunication Union and we strongly encourage implementing the best practices to bridge the digital divide between the countries all over the world.

The government will drive the technology forward in the UAE in every way possible and will support all plans and activities to achieve this purpose especially those of the International Telecommunications Union. Although the symposium is in its seventh year running, this is the first time that it is acknowledged by governments of the member countries as an official annual meeting organized by the International Telecommunication Union that results in significant contributions

Finally, I hope that this global symposium will yield fruitful results and contribute in developing the telecommunications and information technology sectors in the world.

Opening Speech
7th ITU Global Symposium for Regulators
Dubai 5 February 2007
ITU Secretary General
Dr Hamadoun I Touré



Your Excellency Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansouri, UAE Minister of Governmental Sector Development and Chairman of the Supreme Committee for the Supervision of the Telecommunications Sector,

Our gracious host, Mr Mohamed Al Ghanim, Director-General, Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, United Arab Emirates,

Distinguished Chairmen; Directors General and Presidents of the Regulatory Authorities,

Members of the private sector,

Invited guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 7th annual Global Symposium for Regulators. I would like to extend a special word of thanks to our host, Mr Al-Ghanim, for inviting us to hold the GSR here in the United Arab Emirates, and for his kind acceptance to chair this year's GSR. He and his entire staff have gone out of their way to welcome us with true Emirates hospitality.

We have gathered here to discuss the road to next-generation networks. The road to next-generation networks marks a turning point for the industry, consumers, and for policy makers and regulators. Today also marks a turning point for my career in the ICT sector. The last time I addressed the Global Symposium for Regulators, I stood before you as Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau. Now, thanks to your kind support at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Antalya, I stand before you as the new ITU Secretary-General.

I also stand on this podium together with the new BDT Director, Mr Sami Al Basheer Al Morshid, my friend and colleague. While I will always remain active in the GSR as ITU Secretary-General, I now pass on immediate responsibility for the GSR to Mr Al Basheer. I have every confidence in his ability to ensure that the GSR continues to thrive and meet your needs. I would also like to especially recognize the participation in this GSR of Mr Matthias Kurth. I am grateful that you continue to support ITU and the GSR by your presence here in Dubai.

Of course, any transition is bittersweet. I will miss my role in the Way Forward Session of the GSR that has always brought forward excellent suggestions on how we can best respond to your pressing concerns. However, I look forward to the challenges ahead.

As you know, my key messages as Secretary-General at the Plenipotentiary Conference stressed several important issues: bridging the digital divide, cybersecurity and emergency communications. Regulatory reform is of key importance to all three. That is why I was delighted when the ITU Plenipotentiary adopted Resolution GT-Plen/4 on the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) in Antalya. This Resolution crystallizes the will of ITU members to hold the GSR on an annual basis, and ensures that only a future Plenipotentiary could change this decision. This Resolution also recognizes the key role that regulators play

within ITU and the importance of regulatory reform in the growth of the ICT sector. Regulatory reform is vital to ITU's mission.

Why? Regulatory reform is at the very heart of the tremendous progress developing countries have already made to improve access to ICTs. During the time that I served as BDT Director, the number of mobile subscribers increased from a little over 500 million in 1999 to nearly 2.5 billion by the end of 2006. Sixty three percent of the total 2.5 billion mobile subscribers worldwide in 2006 were in developing and emerging countries like Brazil, China, India, Pakistan and Russia, and the numbers of subscribers continue to grow.

This tremendous growth in mobile services is the result of regulatory reform, innovative business practices and leveraging technological developments. Our task now is to extend this success to broadband internet access and next-generation networks, services and applications. We all need to work together to leverage the promises of next generation networks to ensure that the WSIS targets of connecting all the world's villages to ICT by 2015 are met.

I can assure you that the whole of ITU will play its part. TSB is developing the technical standards for NGN networks. BR will ensure that spectrum necessary for wireless services is allocated. BDT will ensure that the benefits of NGNs are realized by all of the world's people.

We will also work with our partners, and I am delighted that some of our key partners in the field of regulatory reform, infoDev, the World Bank and WTO are here today. I am also working to increase the number of ITU Sector Members and I know that some of you here today recently decided to become ITU-D members in order to participate in the GSR. I would also like to encourage the ICT service providers to become members of all the Sectors, including ITU-T, ITU-R and ITU-D. I thank you for this support and welcome you.

The road to NGN may take many paths. Our vision of NGNs may continue to evolve. Regulation will be vital to ensuring that the benefits of technological advances are realized by all of the world's people. As new networks are deployed, it will be necessary to ensure that competitive bottlenecks remain open. More immediately, many regulators will focus on issues like universal access, quality of service, the enabling environment and international internet connectivity. It is also time to enhance cybersecurity and anti-spam laws and to ensure they are vigorously enforced. The model-anti-spam law we presented at the last GSR is a good place at which to begin these discussions.

The migration to NGNs represents a unique opportunity to analyze and evolve our regulatory frameworks. One guiding principle as we develop our regulatory frameworks is to ask how to craft the best regulatory framework to achieve the WSIS objective of ensuring that all of the world's people have access to ICTs.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention. I wish you all a fruitful and frank exchange.

Before I conclude I would like to extend my thanks to a number of people here

- Kathleen Abernathy. Former FCC Commissioner and former Chairperson of the GSR
- Cuthbert Moshe Lekaukau, of Botswana, the first GSR Chairperson
- Ali Ghodbani of Tunisia, last year's GSR Chairperson
- Valerie D'Costa, infoDev
- All regional and international organizations and associations
- All private sector companies that continue to attend the GSR. They have proven to be invaluable partners over the years. We shall continue to ensure together ITU and the regulators provide the private sector with the necessary environment for them to evolve and compete. After all who is bridging the digital divide that we all talk about? It is the private sector. I can assure that ITU recognizes the determining role of private sector and will continue to support you.
- I would like to once again thank our gracious host Mr Mohamed Al Ghanim, Chairman of the TRA in the United Arab Emirates, and recognize the rapid development of the ICT sector in the UAE due mainly due to good governance, vision, hard work and good

strategy. UAE is a valued ITU member that ITU membership has been recognized at the last Plenipotentiary Conference by electing UAE as a Member of the Council. I invite you to contribute more to this Union that belongs to you.

- Last but not least our wonderful host, the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, and their sponsors Etisalat, Du, Ericsson, Thuraya and Cisco.

Mr. Sami Al Basheer **Al Morshid**
Director, ITU BDT
Opening Speech
7th Annual Global Symposium for Regulators
Dubai 5 -7 February 2007

Your Excellency Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansouri, UAE Minister of Governmental Sector Development and Chairman of the Supreme Committee for the Supervision of the Telecommunications Sector.,

Our gracious host, Mr. Mohamed Al Ghanim, Director-General, Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, United Arab Emirates,

Distinguished Chairmen, Directors General and Presidents of the Regulatory Authorities,

Members of the private sector, invited guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my greatest pleasure to welcome you to the 7th annual Global Symposium for Regulators as the newly elected Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau. I would like to echo Dr. Touré's special thanks to our host, Mr. Al Ghanim, for inviting us to hold the GSR in the United Arab Emirates, and for his kind acceptance to chair this year's GSR. He and his entire staff have worked closely with my staff in the preparation of this very important meeting, and have demonstrated true Emirates' hospitality to all of us.

Having previously been a regulator, I am especially delighted that the first major event for BDT under my leadership is the Global Symposium for Regulators. I am delighted that the 7th GSR has attracted regulators from every region of the world. The world now has 145 regulatory bodies and the majority of them are here today, including some of the most recently established regulators. I would like to extend a special welcome to the newest regulators from Lebanon and Samoa. The 7th GSR has attracted over 400 participants, hailing from 100 countries, and the heads of 62 regulatory authorities join us here today. I look forward to meeting with as many of you as possible over the coming days.

One of the major outcomes of the World Telecommunication Development Conference in Doha last year was the agreement of **25 regional initiatives**, five for each of the five BDT regions. A number of these are regulatory initiatives. For example, Africa, Asia and the Arab States have agreed to work on regulatory harmonization. This issue was discussed yesterday in the meeting of regional regulatory associations. The chiefs of the ITU regional offices in Africa, Asia and the Arab States are here this week and at your disposal to begin discussing how we can move these from plans to implementation.

As you know, **the focus of the GSR is dialogue**. We have very few formal presentations, primarily those by the authors of the GSR Discussion Papers. The GSR Discussion Paper authors will make presentations at the beginning of each session to kick-start your discussions. We then count on the moderators and panelists to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to talk and share their views.

For your information, we commissioned a series of discussion papers for the GSR to correspond with the themes of the different sessions. We have posted these **GSR Discussion Papers on the GSR website**, and invite you to read and comment on them. They will be **open for comment until 1 March**, when we will finalize them as the next edition of ITU Trends in Telecommunication Reform.

As you know, **today the GSR is open to ITU-D sector members – today's sessions have also been opened to the press—and the remaining two days are reserved to regulators and policy makers** to foster a frank exchange of regulatory best practices. We thank our private sector members and the press for respecting this framework. But this does not mean that we won't still see the private sector and the press! Many members of the private sector are participating in a special technology exhibit. During coffee breaks, you are encouraged to **visit the technology exhibit**. Several companies will be exhibiting to showcase the latest NGN technological developments to the regulators, policy makers and attendees alike.

As many of you know, Dr. Touré, in his former role as BDT Director, launched a **consultation to identify best practices on NGN regulation**. Some 25 countries have contributed to this consultation. Mr. Al Ghanim has consolidated these contributions into a draft set of best practice guidelines which we have posted on the GSR website. We invite all regulators and policy makers to review the draft guidelines today and tomorrow with the goal of reaching agreement on a **final set of best practice guidelines on Wednesday in the Way Forward Session**. Please talk to members of my staff if you have any further comments to provide.

As the ITU Secretary-General also mentioned, we will be asking regulators and policy makers to **share with us their most pressing concerns in the Way Forward Session on Wednesday**. We will ask you to recommend the issues you would wish us to focus on next year. Your recommendations will decide the theme of the next GSR as well as the theme of the next edition of Trends in Telecommunication Reform. This is your chance to direct our work to best meet your concerns. Last year you asked us to look far into the future to NGN regulation. Perhaps this time, you would prefer to focus on more immediate concerns. I would like to invite you to give this some thought and discuss it with each other over the next few days so we can reach consensus on Wednesday.

On the third day of the GSR we will also try something new, **speed exchanges**. We will organize a series of informal roundtable discussions in which you can meet a very small group of your fellow regulators and policy makers to discuss the issues of concern to you. My staff will explain more about the speed exchanges tomorrow.

Like you, I recognize the importance of regulatory reform to the growth of the ICT sector. I look forward to ensuring that BDT provides the kinds of regulatory products and services our membership demands. The GSR may be central, but is not the only product and service we offer. My staff will share with you the many products and services offered by the Regulatory Reform Unit, the RRU later today.

This GSR is an opportunity to frame our discussions for several years ahead. NGNs are a very hot topic. Some predict they will change the ICT sector. Others believe that NGN deployment will be uneven, or may never be deployed in some countries. Certainly, to the extent that NGN deployment takes place, the migration to NGN will not occur overnight. And the paths to NGNs will be many. Some will use the migration to NGN for their own advantage. Others will use it to expand

opportunities to bridge the digital divide. As the Secretary-General has just said, now is the time for the global community of regulators and policy makers to discuss and develop an enabling regulatory framework to ensure that the best of NGNs are available to all of the world's people and that any challenges are fully understood and addressed. We must commit to develop a framework for the good of end users, while at the same time balancing the interests of all players.

We have many questions before us. Primary among these is how to encourage investment and innovations to better meet our goals of connecting all of the world's villages to ICTs by 2015 and promote affordable access to ICTs. In an NGN world, the choice of technology used for infrastructure no longer has an impact on the kinds and variety of services that are delivered over the infrastructure.

But what does this mean for regulators? Regulators have many choices to make. Some view NGNs as intersection of the telecom and Internet worlds. If so, which regulatory regime should apply? The current heavily-regulated telecom regulatory model? The lightly-regulated Internet model? Or some new hybrid model? Is NGN an opportunity to lighten the regulatory burdens that were placed on PSTN operators, while at the same time cautiously moving toward *some* regulation of the Internet to protect the network and its users? NGNs afford an opportunity for regulators to analyze current practices and revise them in light of what makes sense going forward.

This GSR represents the first opportunity for regulators around the world to discuss the many challenges and opportunities and exchange best practices. I look forward to listening and learning from you.

Before I conclude, I would like once again thank on your behalf, our host, the TRA of the UAE for their excellent organization and warm welcome, making us all feel at home.

I wish you all the success in your deliberations, and a fruitful symposium.

Mohamed Al Ghanim – Director General, TRA UAE

First, I would like to welcome:

His Excellency Mr. Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansouri, UAE Minister for Development of Government Sector

Dr. Hamadoun Toure/ Secretary General – International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Mr. Sami Al Basheer/ Director – ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)

And all our guests.

I would like to welcome you again in the United Arab Emirates hoping that you will enjoy your stay in your second home. On the behalf of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, I am pleased to congratulate both Dr. Hamadoun Toure and Mr. Sami Al Basheer for their new roles in the International Telecommunication Union.

Distinguished Guests,

I am honored to be part of the 7th Global Symposium for Regulators being the most important and successful activity related to the development sector held by the International Telecommunication Union.

I am glad to meet the country members of the International Telecommunication Union, members of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority and members from the telecommunication sector from all over the world.

The symposium will discuss this year the best methods in setting strategies and organizational measures for implementing Next Generation Networks (NGN) and we expect positive results which will encourage using NGNs more and more to help developing telecommunication sectors around the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to present you a brief on the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority in the United Arab Emirates:

The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority was established mid 2004 and since then the organizational outlines for the telecommunication system were set to create the right environment for competition within the sector attested by the launch of the new telecommunication operator in the UAE in the next couple of days.

Many organizational strategies are expected to be delivered during this year and it is worth mentioning that the UAE will lead the Arab network of the telecommunication regulatory authorities.

We have high expectations that projects in the pipeline will play a major part in enhancing the regional cooperation in the telecommunication sector and other sectors as well. Yesterday's meeting among telecommunication regulatory regional authorities was a step forward to exchange expertise and views concerning the telecommunications sector, IT and the best organizational methods and regulations.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like now to talk about what I hope we can achieve in the coming days. First, I hope we can bring some clarity and common understanding to the subject of NGN because, at the moment, the term NGN means different things to different people. To illustrate this point, according to Canada's inputs into the Best Practice Guidelines for Next Generation Networks Migration paper,

Some years ago, the International Engineering Consortium defined NGN as seamlessly blending the public telephone and data networks into a multi-service network in which central office functionality was pushed to the network's edge.

The ITU defines NGN as a packet-based network of multiple broadband Quality of Service (QoS)-enabled transport technologies and in which service related functions are independent from underlying transport related technologies. It offer unfettered access for users to networks and competing service providers.

A simpler definition from BT is a network able to carry any application.

According to the European Regulator's Group, it is a packet-switched architecture fostering provision of existing and new/emerging services through a loosely coupled, open and converged infrastructure.

The Canada paper surmises that If one adds these definitional variances to the ever-increasing pace of change, one could theorize that no definition of "NGN" can be fixed.

But no matter how you define NGN, one thing we can all agree on is that NGN is coming. That much is certain.

Another certainty is that NGN will be deployed in countries that are in various stages of liberalization and regulation. Take the UAE for example. We are at the beginning stages of liberalization. The second operator will launch its business in the coming days and the

Telecommunications Regulatory Authority has been in business for only two years. Yet in the first year alone, the TRA put into place a regulatory framework, licensed a second operator and initiated interconnection negotiations. One of the ways we were able to do this so quickly was because of the world-wide regulatory experience. We didn't have to re-invent the wheel. We just had to make the wheel fit the UAE circumstances.

And I think NGN is something like that. We don't have to make a new wheel for NGN. We just have to make sure the wheel we have will work with the new circumstances. We regulators have to make sure we understand what is going to change and how we need to adapt our wheel around it. However, that is easier said than done.

Nonetheless, we in the telecom industry have faced evolving technologies and principles for a very long time and in recent years, these changes have occurred over increasingly faster speeds. In each case, regulators have stepped up to the challenges facing them. I have every confidence this will be the case for NGN.

I wish you all a successful symposium. Thank you