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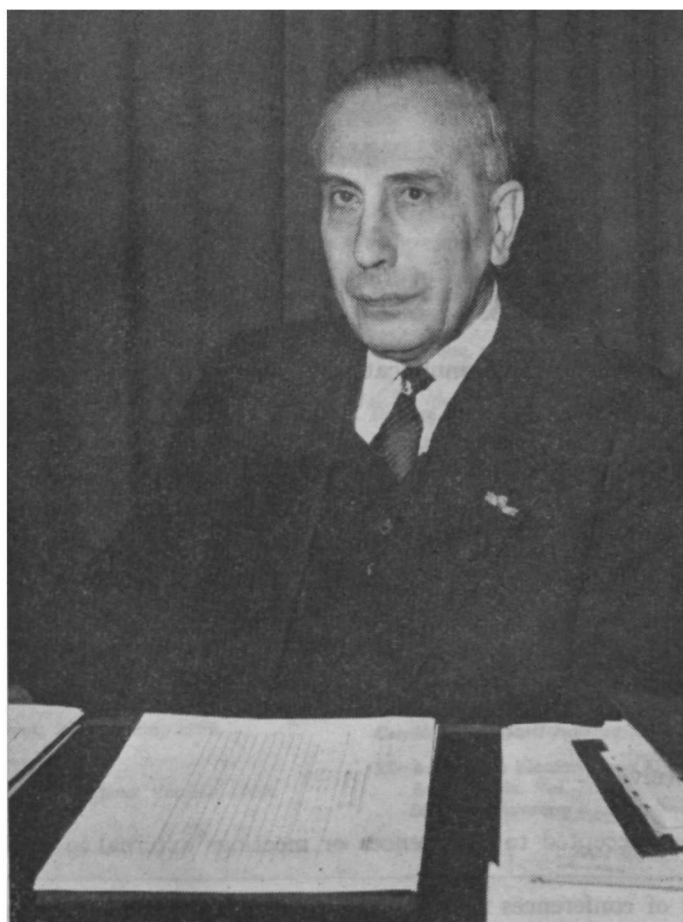
Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Geneva, 1959)

On 14 October, 1959, at 4 p. m., the Plenipotentiary Conference of the ITU was officially opened in Geneva.

Pending publication in the *Journal* of a detailed account of the debates at this important conference, and the results achieved, we are reproducing below the speeches made at the official opening meeting in

the presence of the delegations of 84 Member countries of the ITU (of the 96 that now belong to the Organization), 5 Associate Members, observers from the United Nations and Specialized Agencies, etc.

The Conference elected as Chairman Mr. J. D. H. VAN DER TOORN, of whom a photograph and a biographical note appear below.



After a long period of activity in the private telecommunication industry, Mr. van der Toorn joined the staff of the Netherlands PTT Administration in 1945 and became Director-in-Chief of the Telegraph, Telephone and Radio Services, and subsequently Director of General Affairs and Director General. As Head of the Netherlands Delegation, he took part in nearly all the important ITU conferences in recent years including the Atlantic City Conference in 1947, the Extraordinary Administrative Radio Conference, Geneva, 1951, of which he was the Chairman, and the Administrative Telegraph and Telephone Conferences (Paris, 1949, and Geneva, 1958).

He participated also in the Plenipotentiary Conference of Buenos Aires, 1952, and in the European Broadcasting Conference of Copenhagen (1948) and Stockholm (1952).

He was also active for a number of years in the European Broadcasting Union.

He attended nearly all plenary assemblies of the CCIR, the CCIF and the CCIT and presided over the first plenary assembly of the CCITT, in Geneva, 1956, on which occasion the International Telephone and Telegraph Consultative Committees were merged into the present CCITT. In the CCIR he played an active role as international chairman of one of its study groups.

Mr. van der Toorn also played a role in the Universal Postal Union; he attended their plenipotentiary conference in Ottawa (1956) and took the initiative in creating also within the UPU a technical advisory committee (Comité consultatif des études postales CCEP), over which he still presided this spring in The Hague.

On 1 May, 1959, Mr. van der Toorn, reaching the retirement age, retired as Director General of the Netherlands PTT but remains active in a number of fields.

*Address by Mr. A. Langenberger (Switzerland),
Chairman of the Administrative Council of the Union :*

" 1958 and 1959 are dates which will go down in the annals of our International Telecommunication Union. The Administrative Telegraph and Telephone Conference was held in 1958. It brought the Telegraph Regulations up to date and drew up the first Telephone Regulations to cover the whole world. These have been accepted by 61 Member countries. It was a fine achievement by the Conference to have co-ordinated and standardized the principles to be followed in telephone operation and rates in the international service. It is a result of which our Union may be justly proud.

In 1959, the total of our Members rose to 101 with the admission of the State of Kuwait. I shall take this opportunity of congratulating all those States which have become Members of our Organization since 1952—and it is an organization now nearing its hundredth anniversary. These countries are, in chronological order : the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian Administration, the Singapore-British Borneo Group, the United Kingdom of Libya, the Bermuda-British Caribbean Group, Ghana, Nepal, Republic of Sudan, the Federation of Malaya, the Republic of Guinea, and Kuwait.

These States were accepted as Members almost unanimously, which clearly shows how happy we were to welcome them to our Organization—we thank them for their collaboration in promoting and improving our international telecommunications.

1959 is also a record year for our Union's activity. As you are aware, the Administrative Radio Conference has been sitting since 17 August. It got off to an excellent start and its work over the past two months under the expert Chairmanship of Mr. Charles J. Acton, Head of the Delegation of Canada, gives us high hope for its final success. You will be kept informed of progress.

Today, it is your Plenipotentiary Conference which has come together to consider and vote on the numerous proposals submitted by Member countries in order to improve or supplement the provisions of the 1952 International Telecommunication Convention of Buenos Aires and its Annexes. On behalf of your Administrative Council, I have the honour to wish you cordially welcome at the seat of our Union.

For the Council too, 1959 is an important date, since it marks the end of the period for which you appointed it seven years ago. It requests you to convey to your Governmental authorities its deep appreciation of their understanding and of their invaluable and trusting assistance during the period now coming to a close.

Allow me, without wishing to anticipate your debates, to give a brief outline of the Council's activity since 1952. As its report to your Conference says, it has had numerous and important duties to perform. It believes that it has met these requirements to the satisfaction of our Members. I shall mention only three of these duties: The Union's finances which we should like to see in a more prosperous state, the radio questions with which it was instructed to deal by the 1951 Extraordinary Administrative Radio Conference at Geneva, and all matters affecting the staff of our General Secretariat over which the Acting Secretary-General, Mr. Gerald Connop Gross, has presided with *savoir-faire* and distinction. Unfortunately, the higher grades of our Secretariat have been seriously reduced in numbers in the recent past by the death or retirement of outstanding and devoted servants. Temporary measures have been taken to remedy the situation, and the new Administrative Council will have to take the necessary action to restore normal conditions.

In a few moments we shall do homage to those of our colleagues who are no longer able to participate in the

work of this Conference and we shall also honour the senior officials who have left us.

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the Authorities of the Canton and City of Geneva have agreed to participate in this first plenary meeting. They are represented here by Messrs. Alfred Borel, State Councillor of the Canton and Republic of Geneva, and Lucien Billy, Mayor of Geneva, accompanied by Mr. Roger Meroz, Secretary-General of the Administrative Council of the City of Geneva, whom I have the honour to greet on behalf of the Conference. Let me assure them how deeply we are flattered by their presence.

On behalf of the Conference, I would also ask them to express to the Authorities they represent our sincere appreciation of all they have done for our Union since its establishment in Geneva.

We also extend a welcome to the representatives of all the international organizations present at our Conference.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to conclude, for I have already taken up enough of your precious time. I therefore declare the Eighth Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union open."

*Reply address on behalf of visiting delegations,
by the Delegate of Japan, Mr. Haruhiko Uetake :*

" It is my most honourable privilege to have been given the opportunity to say a few words on behalf of all the delegations who are present here.

First of all, I wish to express my deep gratitude, in which I am sure all of you will join, for making it possible for us to hold this Conference here. I wish to express my appreciation of all the arrangements that have been made by the Swiss Authorities and in particular the Authorities of Geneva who have made this Conference possible, which was certainly not an easy task. I would also like to thank the Acting Secretary-General and the Secretariat for their admirable work in preparation for the Conference without whose work the Conference could not succeed.

I also wish to pay tribute to the admirable contribution made by the ITU and its Member countries towards the progress of mankind over a period of nearly one hundred years. I am firmly convinced that the mission of the Union is becoming more and more indispensable to the maintenance and development of international society, and also that it is the honourable duty of all of us to continue our efforts to cooperate to this end.

We are quite aware of the fact that aspects of our daily life are changing rapidly owing to the technical developments where telecommunication plays a very important role. The development of the utilization of telecommunication will without any doubt be a most important factor in the future life of mankind together with the development of the utilization of atomic energy. From this point of view, the present Geneva Conference is being held under different circumstances from the Buenos Aires Conference which was held seven years ago. I believe that the main purpose of this Conference is to respond to these new circumstances and to reinforce the Union so that it may fully meet the requirements which are and will be confronting us at present as well as in the future.

The recent technical development of telecommunication and electronics tends to widen the difference of facilities, techniques, operation and administration between highly-developed countries and other countries. Inferiority of facilities and operation in one country causes a direct disadvantage to the others and the expansion of utilization of telecommunications in one country

depends on the progress of related techniques in the others. It is our earnest hope that international cooperation be strengthened by every possible means in order to realize harmonious development of world telecommunications in the interest of all countries.

We are confident that this Conference, which will certainly become a very important milestone in the history of the Union, will achieve a full measure of success."

*Statement by the Acting Secretary-General
Mr. Gerald C. Gross*

"Before proceeding further I know that you are all aware of the sad event which took place last week: the death of Professor Dr. van der Pol, first Director of the CCIR and distinguished man of science. It is also my painful duty to recall to you the absence of our Secretary-General, Dr. Marco Aurelio Andrada, who died unexpectedly in the service of the Union on 18 June, 1958. May I suggest a one minute period of silence in tribute to these two outstanding leaders in the world of telecommunications, and to the many other colleagues of ours who have passed away since our last Conference.

Mr. Alfred Langenberger, who has served with distinction as Chairman of the Administrative Council during its 14th Session and during its Special Session which closed yesterday, has opened this Conference in accordance with the provisions of the existing Telecommunication Convention of Buenos Aires, and has already touched upon some of the problems which are before you to deal with in the relatively short space of two months between now and 15 December, 1959.

At this Plenipotentiary Conference, which in a way is a summit meeting since you are the supreme power of the Union, it is a pleasure to recognize among so many very old friends the Dean of the Conference, Mr. José Garrido, Vice-Director-General of Telecommunications in Madrid. It was my privilege to meet Mr. Garrido for the first time at the important telecommunication conferences in Madrid in 1932; he has occupied a high position in his Government ever since that time.

In this time of great endeavours and achievements it has already been recognized by national and international organizations that the ITU will have to tackle and solve new and urgent international problems.

We have already seen developments in this respect in the Radio Conference, where the dawn of the glamorous new age of outer-space communications has had a very sharp impact and practical influence on the technical work of the Conference. Similarly at the Telephone and Telegraph Conference which ended here in Geneva last year we saw for the first time world-wide practices extended from the telegraph field to the telephone field as well.

In short the parameters of telephony and telegraphy as it was known in 1875, and radio in 1903, in 1927, in 1932, and in 1947, are, to borrow a technical term from Einstein "ever expanding" and it is up to us in the ITU to raise our sights accordingly.

In a very general way it may be said that the problems before the Conference can be classified under two basic broad headings:

- I. The purposes of the overall structure of the Union and its relationships with the United Nations and the specialized agencies of the United Nations. The chief objective, of course, is to be of the greatest service to our Member Governments in the interest of telecommunications.
- II. The necessary financial and administrative organization so that the personnel of the Union may be

equipped to reach the objectives sought and implement the broad directives set forth by your conference in the new Convention.

Under Part I above there are of course a number of important problems relating to the organization and structure of the ITU itself. Such problems as the relationship between the permanent organs of the Union including the Administrative Council, the General Secretariat, the IFRB and the two International Consultative Committees must be resolved.

There is also of course, the problem presented by the rapidly expanding domain of telecommunications as a whole—the nerve system of the modern world. Not only do we have the normal growth to be expected in the telegraph and telephone field, which during the last century was our main concern, but we also have the tremendous growth and the complexity of all the radio services whose expansion during the last two decades staggers the imagination.

At the Administrative Radio Conference now going on in this same building, the eighty odd delegations present have had to cope with the solution of problems involving new services, to cite only one—the communications with space vehicles. These problems did not exist and were not envisaged at the time of the Radio Conference in Atlantic City.

There is also for the ITU the increasingly important problem of protecting the interests of telecommunications in the field of United Nations Programme of Technical Assistance and the Special Fund in which we participate on behalf of our Member countries. Several delegations have already proposed language to broaden the basic convention in this respect and there will undoubtedly be similar proposals forthcoming from other delegations.

In the report from the Administrative Council to the Plenipotentiary Conference attention is called to the great need of assisting countries in the development of their telecommunication services as part of their overall economic and social evolution.

If we turn now to Part II of the very broad classifications I have previously mentioned—financial and administrative questions—we come to a number of problems which require action at this conference.

First and foremost is the question of the full assimilation of the ITU into the United Nations common system of pay, pensions and allowances. It will be recalled that the first step in this direction was taken by the Administrative Council at its 12th Session in May, 1957, (Resolution No. 366) which resulted in a referendum among all Members of the Union.

Paragraph 2 of the circular telegram transmitting the referendum reads:

'Administrative Council has examined questions of applying to ITU staff the conditions of employment in force in the United Nations and other specialized agencies, and has decided, in principle, on ultimate alignment with the United Nations common system.'

The overall referendum with which we are all familiar and which I will not take time to read at this time was approved by an overwhelming majority of Members of the Union and as a result a first step in the direction of complete assimilation was taken. At the same time the circular telegram indicated that proposals for complete integration would be submitted to the Plenipotentiary Conference in 1959.

As a result of continuing studies since 1957 by the Administrative Council and the General Secretariat, these proposals have now been made and will undoubtedly be given careful study by the appropriate committees of your conference.

For many years the ITU has suffered from the fact that salary levels are lower than those of other international

organizations. This discrepancy has not only created poor morale amongst the existing staff, but has also been the cause of serious recruitment problems.

I feel that this final step by our conference to correct these inequalities along the lines outlined by the Administrative Council, and to deal with the staff of the Union on the same basis as do other Organizations in the family of the United Nations, will have a most healthy and stimulating effect on the efficiency of the staff at headquarters.

The Secretariat of the Union is a loyal, hardworking group whose members have devoted themselves to furthering the interests of the Union. I feel therefore, that the question of salaries, allowances, and pensions should be given favourable consideration by the conference in order that appropriate action may be taken to terminate the long period of uncertainty through which the Secretariat has suffered, while the Union has discussed what its salary plan shall be. I believe that the salary plan, as proposed by the Administrative Council, will lead to considerable strengthening of the Secretariat and will provide a sound basis for our future work.

Needless to say, in the studies just mentioned (which have been going on intensively for the past two years), the closest collaboration has been received from the United Nations, the other Specialized Agencies, the heads of all the permanent organs of the ITU in Geneva, and the Staff Association of the Union.

Other related problems which come up under the broad heading of what I have described as Part II, include the financial problems which demand solution by your conference as the Supreme Power of the Union.

One of the questions of this type which I have in mind is the financial burden resulting from the adoption by the Atlantic City Conference in 1947 of the five official languages of the United Nations, including the three working languages, without at the same time creating the necessary financial provision for such additional expenditures.

It is clear that if, as we have every reason to believe, additional services will be required by our Member Governments, they will cost additional sums. As the Council has explained to you in various communications during the last six years, the Union has been meeting its additional expenditures by dipping into the reserve fund. It is only by this device that it was possible to maintain the amount of the contributory unit at 8800 Swiss francs. You will agree that this state of affairs cannot continue. Besides, the reserve fund is almost exhausted. Had it not been for the reserve fund the Union would not have been in a position to furnish the services requested.

In circular letter No. 2757/59/F sent to you on 23 June, 1959, the Council called your attention to the fact that the value of this unit would have to be increased for the reasons just cited. Our best estimate at the present time, is, that allowing for normal growth, it can be kept under 13 500 Swiss francs, on the assumption that the present number of contributory units would stay at 618. Let us consider what this means: for the countries having a single unit contribution, the increased cost would be 4700 Swiss francs or approximately \$1100. For those contributing at the maximum rate of 30 units, the increase would be 141 000 Swiss francs or approximately \$32 800. The sum is not inconsiderable in itself, but I would like to mention for your information, Gentlemen, that due to increases in several factors beyond our control, including the cost of living, budgets of all the Specialized Agencies have steadily increased by a considerable percentage during the period 1952-1959.

The relationship of the ITU with our Member Governments in the field of telecommunications is obviously parallel to that of the other agencies with their Member Governments in their specialized fields of human endeav-

our such as health, agriculture, education and aviation. Therefore, even without the technical developments I have enumerated there is bound to be a corresponding increase in the unit value of the Union.

The following figures will be of interest to you :

Organization	Headquarters Staff	Estimated 1960 Budget	
		US dollars	Swiss francs
WHO	1178	16 918 700	72 750 000
UNESCO	1005	13 778 580	59 250 000
FAO	1114	10 790 440	46 400 000
ICAO	456	4 578 064	19 700 000
UPU	39	661 000	2 840 000

As will be seen, the ITU with an estimated future budget of the order of 8 500 000 francs, or approximately two million dollars, will be one of the most economical of all these Organizations. There are some 260 staff members in the Union at the present time, not counting the 230 people temporarily engaged for this conference. I do not believe that any of us would agree that the work of our specialized agency, responsible as it is for the whole expanding field of worldwide telecommunication, is of any less importance than the corresponding work of any of the other agencies.

There are of course many ways of making economies for the Union and here I am talking about large scale economies. If one goes into past history it is rather interesting to note that no international conference was needed between 1875 and 1932 to modify the International Telegraph Convention of St. Petersburg, 1875 ; and that since 1932 when fusion took place at Madrid, to produce the International Telecommunication Convention of Madrid, 1932, only two additional conferences, those of Atlantic City 1947, and Buenos Aires 1952, have been found necessary in order to modify the Convention itself.

Similarly if this Geneva Conference is successful it may not be necessary to modify the basic convention itself for a period of some ten or twenty years. I am aware, of course, of the generous plans of the Swiss Government to celebrate the centenary of the Union in 1965. They would not need to be changed since the centenary can well be the occasion for a world conference to modify one of the Regulations annexed to the Convention (either the Radio or Telegraph and Telephone). Such a development would of course, highlight the planning and wisdom of the signatories of the International Telecommunication Convention of Geneva, 1959. It would result in economies of the order of several million francs in 1965 to the Members of the Union, if we take into account the time, salaries and travel expenses of the delegates, in addition to the cost of the conference itself.

Perhaps by the end of this conference we will have reached a stage where we can once more emulate the wisdom of the early founders of the Union, and take account of the wide research and discoveries of our time, and provide for them in the technical conferences themselves and the work of the International Consultative Committees, without altering the basic structure and constitution of the Union itself.

Many other financial and administrative problems must be dealt with such as the possibility of a consolidated budget, the increased use of common services at headquarters and the question of the new ITU headquarters building.

During this same period and in the same quarters used for the Plenipotentiary Conference, you are endeavouring to put the final seal on a new set of Radio Regulations. The attention of the world is focused on this conference because of the growing public interest in all phases of telecommunication. Your work will not be easy. Many

difficulties will be encountered. I feel confident that you will be successful in solving the problems, and in expressing this confidence I bid you a warm welcome to Geneva!"

The Head of the USSR Delegation, Mr. Ivan Klovov, made the following statement :

" Allow me first of all, Mr. Chairman, to thank you for the kind words and good wishes addressed to those attending this conference. The Soviet Delegation welcomes the representatives of all the countries gathered together in this Plenipotentiary Conference to examine the exceedingly important problems to which the further development of international co-operation in telecommunication matters, directed to the strengthening of political, economical, and cultural relations between peoples, gives rise. We should especially like to greet the representatives of the countries which have become Members of the Union since the last Plenipotentiary Conference in 1952. We wish them all speed in developing their telecommunication media.

Gentlemen, we are living in a remarkable epoch, an epoch of tremendous scientific achievements, in the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and in exploration of the cosmos. To a notable degree, these achievements have been rendered possible by progress made in radio engineering and telecommunication media. This Plenipotentiary Conference will, we trust, take decisions which will make for even greater progress in these fields, and especially in those parts of the world where telecommunication media are inadequate. We are convinced, too, that all here present, taking advantage of the improvement of the international atmosphere, will endeavour to solve their problems by active partnership and respect for the rights of all countries, both great and small. If this is done, there is every hope that our conference will successfully finish its task, even earlier than expected.

Thank you, Gentlemen, for your attention."

His Excellence Abdul Meguid Mortada, Head of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Delegation, spoke as follows :

" I consider it a great honour to represent my country, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, at this conference and to be among you once again. On this occasion, I would like to extend to you all the cordial greetings of my people.

Last year, at the Administrative Telegraph and Telephone Conference that was held here from September to November and which I was fortunate to attend, I had the opportunity to express the views of my country with regard to the aspects of international relations in general, and telecommunications in particular. These are essential to the promotion of universal stability, general security and international peace ; being basically indispensable for raising the standard of living and prosperity.

I shall not dwell on these points, but I may restrict myself to giving expression to a few thoughts pertaining to the conference, and inviting your attention thereto in the course of the meetings.

In the first place we may consider the enlargement of the Administrative Council in which each region must be adequately represented.

It is our belief that the expansion of rapid development of telecommunications everywhere justifies such consideration. Means and ways must be devised, whether in representation, in organization or in technique.

I might emphasize that the role which the Middle East countries are playing in world affairs is becoming increasingly important, and for this reason the Middle East should be represented at the Administrative Council of the ITU, one of the international organizations which are of vital interest in the framework of international relations.

Second, thought may be given to the recruitment of ITU staff on the basis of regional distribution, in order to include so many countries of different nationalities.

Third, some time ago the question of the creation of a Regional Staff Training Centre for Telecommunications was taken up by the ITU. We are keenly interested in this matter and feel that it is most essential for administrations lacking training facilities and facing the problem of staffing their services. I therefore wish to point out that, in my opinion, it is imperative that training should not be restricted mainly to technical matters ; but should extend to other subjects such as operating and administrative procedures, tariffs, international accounts and such like. These subjects are of particular significance for international co-operation, co-ordination and standardization of national telecommunication services. Furthermore, my Government considers it of paramount importance that all efforts be made to have the Training Centre entirely run, conducted, and financed by the ITU so that its international character be warranted on a more or less regional basis.

My Government is eagerly looking forward to the realization of this project which would maintain progress and improvement in the universal telecommunication field.

In conclusion, I warmly thank you for your attention and wish you, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, every success in the task lying ahead of us at this conference."

Mr. Ed. Weber, Delegate of Switzerland, made the following statement :

" For the first time in its existence, the Plenipotentiary Conference, supreme organ of the International Telecommunication Union, our fine and efficient world organization, is meeting within the walls of the City of Geneva, its permanent seat.

The great honour which falls on the city of Calvin reflects on the country I represent. The Federal Council has therefore directed me to wish you a very cordial welcome to Switzerland, and to convey its wishes for a fruitful session and all success in your important work.

I also have to state that the Government of Geneva and the Administrative Council of the City have asked me to say on their behalf that they join in the homage of the Swiss authorities and wish you a pleasant stay. They hope that the arrangements made with the General Secretariat of the International Telecommunication Union will give you thorough satisfaction as regards your personal comfort and that, although the season is somewhat advanced, the sun will be generous and help to brighten the days of relaxation which your Chairman will grant you.

The authorities of the Canton and City of Geneva, to show the special interest they have in our Conference, invite all its delegates, together with the delegates who have already been working here for two months at the Administrative Radio Conference, to a gala reception which will be held on Friday 16 October at the *Musée d'art et d'histoire*.

Also, and in spite of the fact that Switzerland is not the host government in the terms of the International Telecommunication Convention now in force, the Swiss

Federal Government and the Post, Telegraph and Telephone Administration, plan to invite delegates to the Plenipotentiary Conference to a 3-day excursion to Zurich from 5-7 November.

Finally, may I give you some administrative information. The Swiss Administration will grant postal franchise for your letters and postcards. Each Plenipotentiary delegate will receive the necessary information from the *Direction des postes*, Geneva.

The *Direction des téléphones* of Geneva will also do everything within their power to facilitate your telephone calls and cables.

The post, telephone and telegraph personnel on the ground floor of the Conference building are at your service and will be pleased to furnish you with any information you may require.

May I express my warmest wishes to Plenipotentiary delegates for happy and speedy discussions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the floor."

*His Excellence Sardon Bin Haji Jubir,
Head of the Delegation of the Federation of Malaya,
made the following statement :*

"I would like to join with the previous speakers in thanking all those responsible for the excellent arrangements they have made in connection with this conference. In particular, I would like to thank Mr. Langenberger, Chairman of the Administrative Council, and the Honourable Delegate of the USSR, for so kindly extending a special welcome to new countries, such as the Federation of Malaya, which have joined the Union since the last Plenipotentiary Conference in 1952.

Since this is of course the first occasion on which the Federation of Malaya has had the honour of participating in a Plenipotentiary Conference of the ITU, and bearing in mind that my country is only a very recent member of the United Nations, I trust you will pardon me for making a short statement. Whilst the primary function of this Conference is of course to revise the Convention, I do think it is necessary that at a conference of this nature, which meets only once in five years and where delegates are assembled from telecommunication Administrations all over the world, there should be no serious misconception concerning the telecommunication systems of new Member countries. Particularly if they are many thousands of miles away from Europe.

Malaya, for instance, now has one of the finest telecommunication systems in Asia. Last month we opened a new 600-channel microwave telephone system which is among the most up-to-date of its type anywhere in the world. The whole of our telecommunication system is strictly according to CCIs standards and there will therefore be no difficulty if and when the main artery communication running down the Peninsula has to take its place in a world telecommunication system.

The majority of our telephone exchanges are automatic and a good start has already been made with subscriber trunk dialling.

Side by side with the development of the trunk network, considerable development of rural communications has taken place during the past year or so and I really believe that in this respect Malaya is as up-to-date as most countries of the world.

Since 1948, the whole telecommunication system has expanded more than four times and the Telecommunications Department is showing a handsome profit on a commercial basis. Unlike many other administrations, I am pleased to say that the Telegraph Service, which was running at a loss a few years ago, is now making a profit.

As far as our international telecommunications are concerned, we are now connected to the international telex network and, through the overseas radio telephone services, our subscribers have access to 95% of the world's telephones.

I have mentioned these developments concerning telecommunications in my country so that you will realize the substantial efforts we are making to improve and expand our telecommunication system in accordance with the international standards laid down by the ITU. We have now, however, reached the stage when, if we are to continue expanding with reasonable speed and efficiency, outside technical assistance is needed. In particular, I want to stress the need for first class modern training facilities.

We in Malaya are therefore particularly pleased to see that the proposed Committee E of this Plenipotentiary Conference will have technical assistance included in its terms of reference. We shall have more to say on this subject at committee level. I do, however, sincerely hope that something positive on the subject of technical assistance will emerge from this conference to enable new and rapidly expanding countries such as Malaya—which have done so much to help themselves with their limited resources—to take full advantage of the continuing developments in the field of telecommunications.

I do not need to stress to you, Gentlemen, how vital it is that there should be the maximum possible understanding between all nations of the world and at the present time this is particularly important in Asia. One of the best means of ensuring goodwill and understanding in Asia is to do everything possible to improve the telecommunication systems of the countries in the area, and in this connection the training of personnel can and should play a vital role.

Once again, on behalf of the country which I have the honour to represent—the Independent Sovereign State of the Federation of Malaya—I thank the Government of Switzerland, the Secretary-General of the Union and all his staff who have done so much towards ensuring what, I am sure, will be a most happy and successful conference."

* * *

Mr. J. D. H. VAN DER TOORN, Head of the Netherlands Delegation, was elected Chairman of the Conference by acclamation, upon the recommendation of the meeting of the Heads of Delegations. Mr. LIBERO OSWALDO DE MIRANDA (Brazil) and Mr. KATZUSO OKUMURA (Japan) were then elected as Vice-Chairmen.

Taking the chair, the Chairman of the Conference, thanked the conference on behalf of the Netherlands Delegation, and personally, for the honour bestowed upon him. He also thanked all present for the warm applause which had welcomed him to the Chair. He would, of course, need all their sympathy and help throughout the conference. His feelings were best described by the following quotation: "To do anything in this world worth doing, we must not stand back shivering and thinking of the cold and danger, but jump in and scramble through as well as we can." He would therefore "jump in" and hope to be a good Chairman of the Conference.

Twelve years earlier the Atlantic City Conferences had been held, shortly after World War II, and new foundations had been laid for the old ITU building. Seven years earlier, in 1952, the Buenos Aires Conference had made improvements. In the meantime, as previous speakers had said, fundamental and applied research and the development of scientific and technical applications had advanced with almost incredible speed, leaving deep

footprints in the field of telecommunications. Telecommunications were, indeed, one of the branches showing the greatest progress ; a new atomic era had been entered, as well as the spectacular epoch of space communications.

It should not be forgotten, too, that since the Buenos Aires Conference there had been a rapid and constant growth in telecommunication services in general. Furthermore, there were a number of new countries and a basic requirement for their economic development was the establishment of reliable telecommunication services. They would have to consider during the conference whether the structure of the Organization could cope with all this. However, it was a reassuring thought that the Union had the experience of nearly one hundred years of changing circumstances behind it.

There was, of course, still another factor, because an organization might have the proper structure, but even

more important, perhaps was the quality and character of those comprising it. The delegates themselves, who were putting the life into the organization should be keeping in step with the ever-changing aspects of science and technology, and should have the vision and mental alertness required for decisions to be taken in a new and changing world. He thought that the human factor should always be borne in mind when dealing with the numerous problems confronting them and the various proposals before the conference, as the Acting Secretary-General had already mentioned.

In conclusion, he had no doubt that, with an excellent spirit of co-operation such as that prevailing in the Administrative Radio Conference which was meeting in parallel with the Plenipotentiary Conference, an outstanding job would be done. He wished the Conference all the necessary wisdom and hoped that their common labours might strengthen their bonds of friendship and mutual understanding.
