

## Major Changes Advocated by High-Level Reform Panel to Re-engineer ITU for the Future

A 27-member Reform Advisory Panel, comprised of ministers and other senior government officials, industry CEOs, regulators, and operators, met in Geneva on March 10, 2000 to agree on the key principles that should guide the reform of ITU. Organized by ITU Secretary-General Yoshio Utsumi to advise him on charting the future of ITU, the group put forward a series of wide-ranging recommendations.

Seeking the views of top-level representatives from a cross-section of converging industries—the Internet, entertainment and media, telecommunications, and information technology—marked a radical departure from traditional approaches. “Achieving the goal of transforming our organization into one that can serve the membership well in the changing telecommunications environment is our aim,” Utsumi said.

The Reform Advisory Panel (RAP), chaired by Maria Livanos Cattai, Secretary-General of the International Chamber of Commerce, had a mandate to provide clear guidance and recommendations for ITU’s reform. All members, participating in a personal capacity, agreed that the ITU had played a useful role in the past in laying the foundation of what has become a 1 trillion U.S. dollar industry. They also agreed that it still has a major role to play in the future, if it is prepared to fundamentally transform itself. “Given its overall legitimacy on a global scale, it is important that it be not condemned to irrelevance,” Cattai said.

Discussion focused on eight areas in which the Panel made broad recommendations for change, ranging from the very nature of the organization, its mission, and its stewardship of scarce resources to policy development and coordination and the role of ITU as a neutral third party. Also discussed were ITU working methods and management, including Telecom events.

The first recommendation agreed upon is that the ITU should become a truly public/private sector partnership to preserve and strengthen its international credibility. While the form of this new type of partnership needs to be defined,

the new ITU should reflect today’s competitive telecommunication marketplace, where the private sector plays a lead role while regulators act as arbitrators for the wider public interest.

In policy-related areas, the scope of ITU’s role as an international focal point for the discussion of telecommunication policy and regulatory affairs was considered primary for tomorrow’s ITU. Swiss regulator Marc Furrer strongly argued in favor of the organization providing a global forum for regulators to meet and discuss issues of mutual concerns. “I can easily meet my counterparts in the European Union,” he said, “but where do I meet the U.S. FCC, Anatel, or regulators in Asia.”

In addition to providing a forum where international regulatory authorities may discuss important issues and obtain input from those to be regulated, ITU should become a think tank for collecting and collating best-practice regulatory policies and act as a repository for benchmarking in its area of expertise.

Policy work, currently divided among three sectors and the General Secretariat, with the resulting lack of coherence, should be combined to create a center for regulatory expertise. The Panel also agreed that ITU’s role as global facilitator in regulatory and policy matters should be strengthened.

Another area for expansion is the field of dispute settlement. While stressing that the issues were complex, the Panel considered that ITU is well placed to provide governments and the private sector with a neutral and effective mechanism to resolve disputes that are international in nature.

ITU’s role in Internet governance was a cornerstone of the reform agenda. While it was recognized that the Internet had evolved without formal structure or government regulations, the question arose as to whether it could continue in the same way in the future. As the Internet itself is branching into telecommunications—voice telephony, mobile communications, or digital broadcasting—there was clearly a role for the ITU on the Internet scene.

### Members of the Reform Advisory Panel

**Maria Livanos Cattai, International Chamber of Commerce, Chair**

C. Michael Armstrong, AT&T, U.S.

John Chambers, Cisco Systems, Inc., U.S.

Roberto Colaninno, Telecom Italia, Italy

Robert Dombkowski, ECTA

Katusji Ebisawa, NHK, Japan

Marc Furrer, OFCOM, Switzerland

Chris Galvin, Motorola, U.S.

Pius Griffiths, Deputy Minister of Trade & Industry, Ghana

Donald M. Heath, ISOC Internet Society, U.S.

Nobuyuki Idei, Sony Corp., Japan

Alexander Ivanov, Komet Telecomm., Russian Federation

Volker Jung, Siemens, AG, Germany

Francis Lyall, Univ. of Aberdeen, U.K.

Bow Tan Mah, Singapore

George Moose, Permanent Mission of USA, Geneva

Jorge Nicolin, Comision Federal de Telecom., Mexico

Makram Obeid, Syrian Telecom. Est. (STE), Syria

Savio Pinheiro, SP Communications, Brazil

Leonid Reyman, Minister for Comm. and Info., Russian Fed.

John Roth, Nortel Networks, Canada

Diana Sharpe, INTUG

Lyndall Shope-Mafole, Embassy of South Africa, Paris

Serge Tchuruk, Alcatel, France

Cheikh Tidiane Mbaye, Sonatel, Senegal

Robert Verrue, Direction Generale XIII, Comm. Europeenee

Jichuan Wu, Minister of Information Industry, China

“We are moving to a world where bandwidth will be plentiful and accessible to all, and where data and voice together with wireless technology and e-commerce platforms will be combined in an all-pervasive communication system,” said Nobuyuki Idei.

It was agreed that the ITU should not intervene on issues outside its core expertise, such as content. However, there was broad consensus on the useful role that it could play in its areas of competence to help reconcile different national policies and rules that might hamper the growth of the Internet and e-commerce.

Regarding management, the Panel felt that accountability for running the ITU should rest with the Secretary-General who should be given greater authority and responsibility for its operation. In addition, a new process for the efficient nomination and approval of senior officials needs to be put into place. The private sector members of the Panel, strongly supported by some of their other colleagues, recommended that the Secretary-General propose a slate of candidates to be appointed by the appropriate bodies, taking into consideration the need for a high level of skill and for geographic balance.

To push forward the reform process, the Panel proposed that a specialized group be appointed to produce concrete recommendations with fixed deadlines for delivery. The RAP recommendations will be submitted at the next meeting of the Working Group on ITU Reform early in April.

*SMPTE will continue to report on these meetings as information becomes available.—Ed.*

### **SMPTE Calls for Input on Browsing Interchange Format**

SMPTE has announced the release of a Request for Technology (RFT) on a Browsing Interchange Format (BIF). The RFT seeks input from software developers of proposed mechanisms to support the interchange of video, audio, and data content for the purpose of searching through libraries and other storage systems.

Goals for the submitted schemes are to permit rapid and efficient identification of material to be incorporated into productions or to be reviewed, reused, and repurposed. To minimize the required storage capacity and network bandwidth, the browsing signals must be highly compressed and scaleable in bit rate.

The RFT document is available through the SMPTE web site at [www.smpte.org/engr/rftbif.pdf](http://www.smpte.org/engr/rftbif.pdf). Either Juergen Heitmann ([jheitmann@av-media-technology.de](mailto:jheitmann@av-media-technology.de)) or Carl Girod at SMPTE ([cgirod@smpte.org](mailto:cgirod@smpte.org)) will answer questions on the document.

### **Trial Publication and Public Comment on SMPTE Standards, Recommended Practices and Engineering Guidelines**

SMPTE Standards, Recommended Practices and Engineering Guidelines are now published on the SMPTE web site at [www.smpte.org/stds](http://www.smpte.org/stds) for trial publication and public review. These documents will continue to be published in the *SMPTE Journal* for information-only purposes. This change is in accordance with the SMPTE Administrative Practices.

*C. V. Girod, P.E., Director of Engineering*

## **ENGINEERING MEETING SCHEDULE**

### **MAY**

15	SG Audio Prod/Post Ent. Programming	Disney Studios
Wed.	A12.68 (M. Strong)	Burbank, CA

### **JUNE**

7	SG Audio Prod/Post Ent. Programming	Disney Studios
Wed.	A12.68 (M. Strong)	Burbank, CA

16	Committee on Digital Cinema	Infocomm
Fri.	DC28 (C. Behlmer)	Anaheim, CA

### **JULY**

10-14	A12/I23/C24/D27/V16/W25/N26/S22	MATC/WECB
M-F		Milwaukee, WI

19	SG Audio Prod/Post Ent. Programming	Disney Studios
Wed.	A12.68 (M. Strong)	Burbank, CA

### **AUGUST**

30	SG Audio Prod/Post Ent. Programming	Disney Studios
Wed.	A12.68 (M. Strong)	Burbank, CA

### **SEPTEMBER**

11	A12/I23/C24/D27/V16/W25/N26/S22	BBC
Wed.		B'gham, UK

### **OCTOBER**

11	SG Audio Prod/Post Ent. Programming	Disney Studios
Wed.	A12.68 (M. Strong)	Burbank, CA

11	Committee on Digital Cinema	ShowEast
Wed.	DC28 (C. Behlmer)	Orlando, FL

### **NOVEMBER**

22	SG Audio Prod/Post Ent. Programming	Disney Studios
Wed.	A12.68 (M. Strong)	Burbank, CA

### **DECEMBER**

4-8	A12/I23/C24/D27/V16/W25/N26/S22	TBA
M-F		

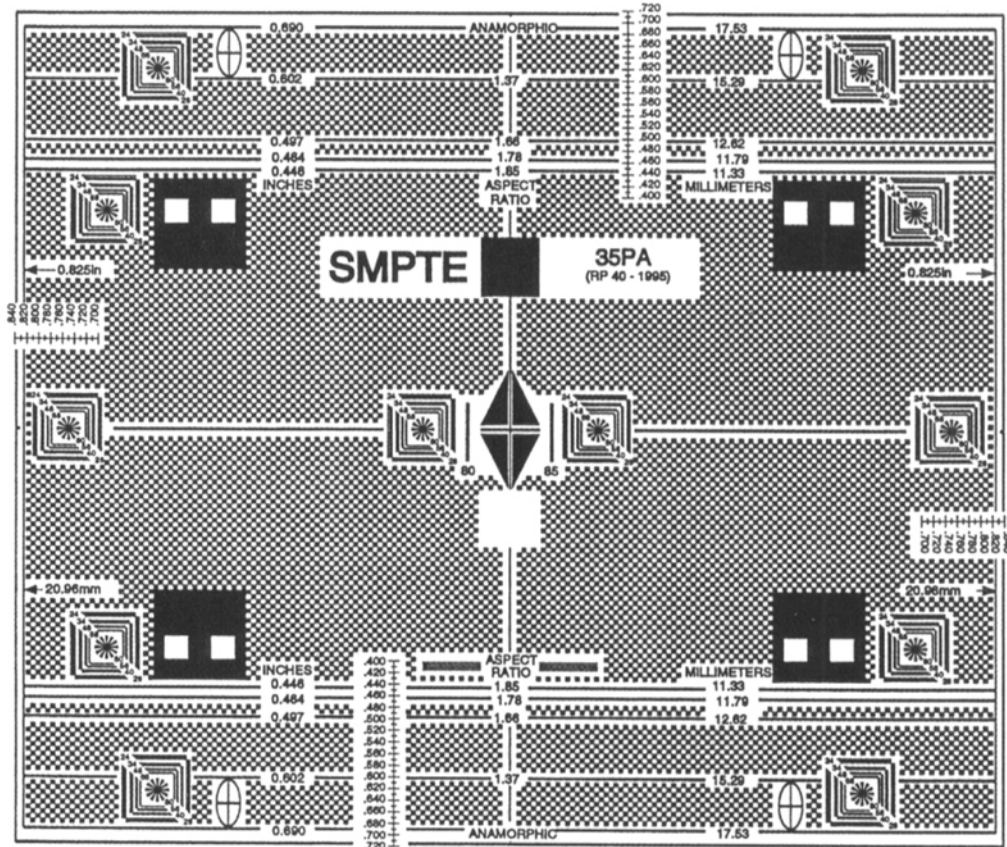
The calendar above shows the dates of upcoming meetings and the cities where they will be held.

Please check the web site and monthly mailings for specific times. Members attending these meetings should be aware that meeting times are approximate. It is possible that meetings may start earlier or later than scheduled, depending upon the workloads of each group. You should be prepared to arrive earlier than the time posted.



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