

# SAMENA TRENDS

EXCLUSIVELY TO SAMENA TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL'S MEMBERS

BUILDING DIGITAL ECONOMIES

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## CO-OPERATION IN GLOBAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Dr. Hamadoun I. Touré**

Secretary-General, International Telecommunication Union

“Meeting the Digital Agenda:  
Maximizing Revenue Through Excellence.”



# Beyond Connectivity 2013

6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2013

Kempinski Hotel Ciragan Palace  
Istanbul, Turkey

# EDITORIAL



## Co-operation in Global Telecommunications

Telecommunications shall continue to play an integral role in human progress—which will partly be measured by our ability as industry to respond to the human society's emerging technology needs, the right to information, and access to educational tools. Global communications today require a concerted mechanism and an advanced coordination system, developed through consensus and by keeping both multi-stakeholder interests as well as the need to innovate in view.

International cooperation in global telecommunications is vital to our collective success tomorrow.

For the telecommunications industry to achieve business success over the next decade and to help the world's economies meet digital success, a strong co-operative approach has been in progress for well over a year now. Its outcomes will be unveiled soon. Under the supervision of the ITU, the world will witness this December an unprecedented display of consensus, cooperation, and collaboration, and we hope it all will conclude in the best interest of humanity.

For well over a year, WCIT-12 related activities and their perceived impact on both businesses and end-users have gained much attention. This, in the views of many, has in part been related to the hyped ramifications on the future of the Internet and how (and if) various stakeholders participating in the global conference would be able to align their varying national agendas centered on the current and emerging complexities of the telecommunications industry.

Fortunately, what will be discussed in the WCIT-12 will be much greater in depth than what may have met the eye. There are various real issues that will be delved into in this important global conference, including security, environmental impact and climate change, energy, service accessibility, taxation, availability of communications services to people with special needs, among various other important issues that concern the use of telecommunications to meet modern public needs.

What WCIT-12 has already succeeded in achieving, in my view, is that it has entangled a collage of issues that need to be addressed, and has given them greater clarity. Now, what is critical is to see such issues be voiced and addressed at their most relevant and appropriate platforms. That is, it would be important to address national-level, international, and business issues at their suitable levels, supported by effective management of the way the nearly two-week long debate will take place.

Via WCIT-12, achieving strategic cross-border partnerships among countries, it is hoped, will become more realizable. Such partnerships among countries will determine to what extent they succeed in becoming knowledge-driven, digital economies that can generate and effectively use new information for achieving sustainable socio-economic development and conducting nation-building. In essence, a consensus-building platform is what WCIT-12 should serve as. WCIT-12 certainly has the potential and, as I have observed, the aim to revive and re-invent ways in which consensus-driven resolutions to some very critical issues can be arrived at.

It would be an achievement to see WCIT-12 conclude as a tested platform where all the contentious issues will have been resolved through consensus and in harmony, in the best interest of the telecommunications business and of the citizens of the world.

Truly Yours,

**Bocar A. BA**  
Chief Executive Officer  
SAMENA Telecommunications Council



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## REGIONAL NEWS

### Invision Offers 3 Months Free Subscription to Aljazeera Sports Package

STC continues to offer sport fans an exclusive 3-months free subscription to Aljazeera Sports package through its Invision service. The offer, having been a wild success in the past, comes to reaffirm STC's commitment to keeping its customers constantly connected to sports channels. Through its Invision service, STC offers unique and distinguished packages on the local and regional scale, including great features such as the convenience of pausing and replaying any program, and access to all encrypted channels in high quality through the Invision device, in addition to more than 150 TV channels and the video on demand (VOD) service. Invision further offers interactive YouTube features, parental control, and the ability to record programs and movies on the 160GB capacity Invision device. It is worth mentioning that customers can request the Invision service by calling customer service (907), visiting the website ([invision.com.sa](http://invision.com.sa)), via Khadamti portal, or by visiting an STC customer-care center.

### Week 6 to 8 Winners Announced in Batelco's SMS Challenge

Batelco has announced the latest batches of winners in its amazing SMS Challenge. Batelco, the Kingdom's leading mobile service provider, launched its exciting SMS competition on September 3rd, giving its mobile customers the chance to be one of the 78 lucky customers to win the fantastic cash prizes and cars. Throughout the competition,

which runs until November 18th, there will be daily prizes of \$265 cash, weekly prizes of \$2,650 cash and at the end of the challenge period two very lucky winners who will win a BMW Z4 each plus a trip to BMW World in Munich.

### Etisalat's New Wasel Per Second Billing Plan Offers More Savings on the Country's Widest Mobile Network

Etisalat announced that it has introduced a new Wasel per-second billing plan in the UAE offering its discerning Wasel pre-paid customers higher savings on both local and international calls. Per-second billing from Etisalat means that a customer only needs to pay for the exact number of seconds used on a call. This simplifies the billing process and maximizes savings for the customer making it easy to calculate the cost of each local or international call.

### Batelco Network Upgrade in Muharraq and Riffa to Deliver Enhancements for Customers

Batelco, Bahrain's leading communications services provider, would like to inform its business customers that it will carry out network upgrade work in Muharraq and Riffa on November 17th. The upgrade is in line with Batelco's ongoing strategy to ensure its communication services are on par with the highest international standards. The network upgrade is needed in order to enable Ethernet services over the SDH nodes at Muharraq and Riffa, to deliver enhanced service to customers in this area. During the upgrade

hours, some business customers in the affected areas may experience temporary disruption to leased circuits (IPLC), and Mobile 2G basic voice services at the mentioned areas. Batelco Group General Manager Media Relations Ahmed Al Janahi said that Batelco apologizes for any inconvenience the upgrade work may cause and appreciates the understanding and cooperation of its business customers.

## Thuraya Recognized as the Satellite Communications Player of the Year at the ASBU BroadcastPro Middle East Award Ceremony

Industry leading Mobile Satellite Services operator, Thuraya Telecommunications Company, announced it was recognized as Satellite Communications Player of the Year by the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) at the BroadcastPro Middle East 2012 Awards event held in Dubai on November 12. Thuraya was given the award for supporting Journalism on-the-move and providing connectivity to those who are putting their lives on the line to report on important events across the region. BroadcastPro Middle East noted the significant contribution of Thuraya's flagship product for reporters in the field, the Thuraya IP, which is an ultra-portable broadband terminal allowing broadcasters to link up to their studios across Thuraya's congestion-free satellite network using convenient uplink/downlink streaming speed packages. Thuraya's Vice President of Marketing, Mr. Sanford Jewett, participated in the ceremony and accepted the award on behalf of the Company. Sanford Jewett said, "On behalf of our organization and staff, we are truly honored to receive this recognition for our work in the media and broadcast sector."

## Etisalat Accompanies Media Representatives to Visit Huawei in China to keep them Updated on the Technology Sector

Etisalat UAE last week organized a delegation visit to Huawei headquarters in China which included officials from Etisalat's Corporate Communications Department and a large group of media representatives from the UAE. During the week-long visit, they attended high level meetings and undertook various field tours to the Huawei headquarters and many of its plants, research centers and labs. The visit aimed to view closely the work details and phases related to the development of solutions, services and products that Huawei provides to the ICT sector in general and to the Etisalat network in particular. Travelling between the Chinese cities of Shenzhen and Shanghai, the visiting members were given exclusive access to a number of Huawei's state-of-the-art global facilities. Amongst the locations visited were Huawei's Global Headquarters, the company's largest global R&D center, as well as Huawei's showrooms featuring the brand's subsidiaries. The meeting with Huawei senior executives provided an overview about the company's plans of expansion within the Middle East over the coming years—focusing on its strategic partnerships with industry leaders in the region like Etisalat.

## Vodacom Chooses Intelsat for Cellular Backhaul Deployment in Africa

Intelsat S.A., the world's leading provider of satellite services, announced a new multi-year capacity agreement with South African-based Vodacom on the Intelsat satellite fleet. Vodacom will utilize capacity on Intelsat 906 at 64° East and Intelsat 25 at 328.5° East to support its deployment of cellular backhaul service in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Vodacom is currently implementing its 3G network across the DRC. This agreement expands the Intelsat-based cellular backhaul infrastructure supporting wireless services in Tanzania, Mozambique and other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, Vodacom utilizes multiple satellites on the Intelsat fleet for international trunking, corporate networking, in-flight broadband and disaster recovery services across the continent. "This agreement continues our decade-long support of Vodacom in Africa, and comes at a time of unprecedented demand for reliable communications access," said Intelsat Managing Director of Africa Sales Jon Osler. "Intelsat's breadth of services in the region, and our expertise in supporting wireless operators, allows providers such as Vodacom to reach its business goals as it expands its presence across Africa."

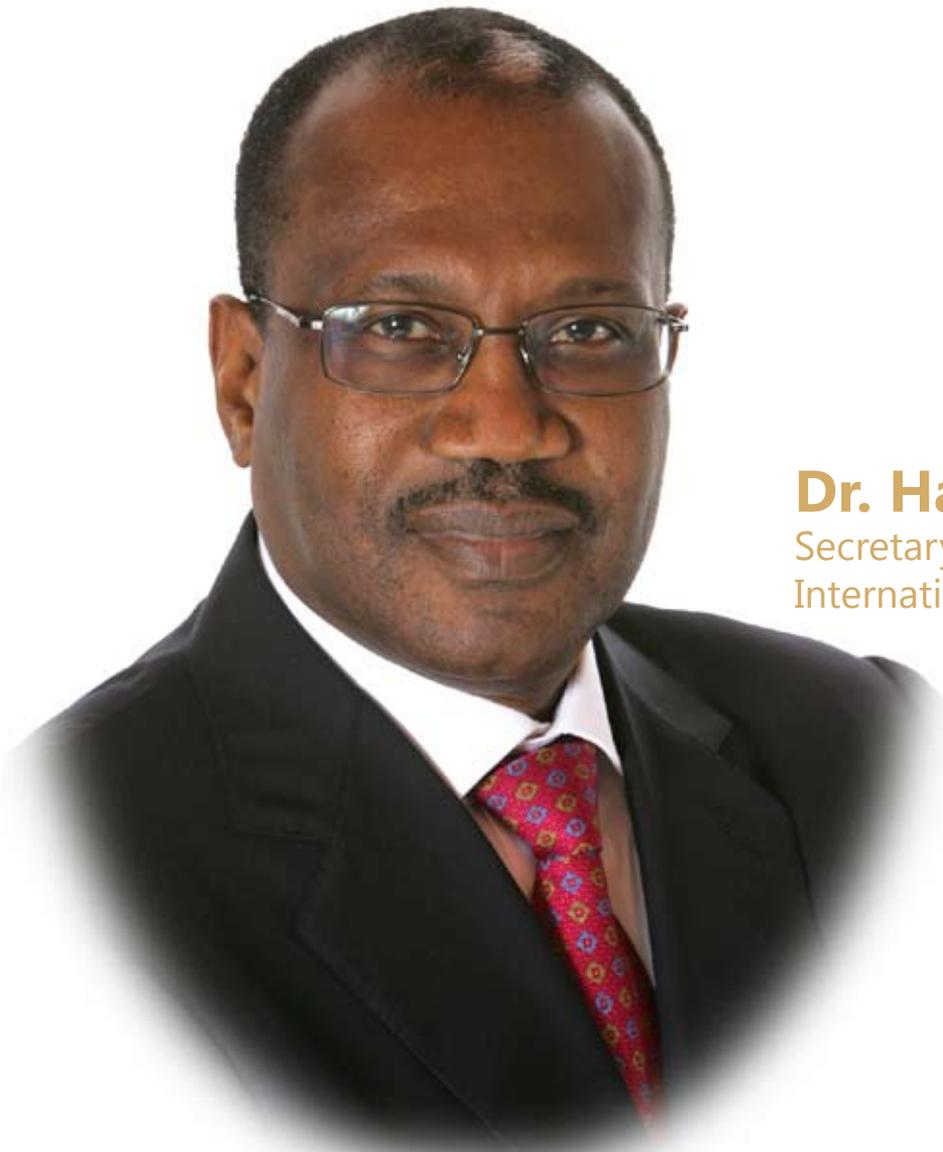
## Forbes Ranks Mobily Management the Top in Telco Sector in KSA

The executive management of Etihad Etisalat "Mobily" has witnessed yet another success as one of the leading telecommunication companies in the Kingdom in a significant period of time. Mobily had the advantage of being ahead of its local competitors by three levels throughout the Middle East, according to Forbes Middle East which has recently issued a list about the telecommunication sector in the region. Mobily has achieved many aspects of notable growth profit shares by 28 percent and an increase in the market value by 9 percent. The Chief Operating Officer at Mobily, Abdulaziz Al Tamami, said "We always strive to continue growth in alliance with our strategic plans, we are also seeking to benefit from the highly competitive and demanding Saudi market"

## CoreSite First DE-CIX Connected Data Center Operator in North America

CoreSite Realty Corporation, a national provider of powerful, network-rich data centers, and DE-CIX, world-leading carrier-neutral and independent internet exchange in Frankfurt, Germany, announced a newly established relationship which will result in direct access to the DE-CIX peering exchange from multiple CoreSite locations across the U.S. The relationship accelerates the growth of CoreSite's Open Internet Exchange Hub, the purpose of which is to aggregate the interconnection capabilities of the world's leading internet exchanges. This relationship with DE-CIX provides CoreSite customers with expanded peering opportunities through a simple connection to more than 480 ISPs from over 52 countries, including central and eastern European countries, Russia, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Peering at internet exchanges allows organizations to directly connect their internet infrastructure through a stable, fast, and cost-effective fabric to reduce IP-transit and network costs. DE-CIX's route-server service will provide CoreSite customers free access to multiple networks immediately without the need to negotiate agreements with each individual partner.

# Industry Leader's Vision



**Dr. Hamadoun I. Touré**  
Secretary-General  
International Telecommunication Union

Dr. Hamadoun I. Touré, Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) since January 2007, was re-elected for a second four-year term in October 2010.

As Secretary-General, Dr Touré is committed to ITU's mission of connecting the world, and to helping achieve the Millennium Development Goals through harnessing the unique potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

A long-standing champion of ICTs as a driver of social and economic development, Dr Touré previously served as Director of ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) from 1998-2006. In this role he placed considerable emphasis on implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), launching projects based on partnerships with international organizations, governments, the private sector and civil society.

Dr Touré started his professional career in his native Mali in 1979. He built a solid career in the satellite industry, serving as managing engineer in Mali's first International Earth Station. He joined Intelsat's Assistance and Development Programme in 1985. He was appointed Intelsat's Group Director for Africa and the Middle East in 1994, earning a reputation as an energetic leader through his commitment to various regional connectivity projects such as RASCOM. In 1996 he joined ICO Global Communications as African Regional General Manager, spearheading the companies' activities across the African region.

A national of Mali, Dr Touré holds a Masters Degree in Electrical Engineering from the Technical Institute of Electronics and Telecommunications of Leningrad, and a PhD from the University of Electronics, Telecommunications and Informatics of Moscow. He is married with four children and two grandchildren, and is proficient in four official ITU languages: English, French, Russian and Spanish.



**Q.** Can you elaborate on the role of ITU in the development of the telecom industry?

**A.** Ever since its origin way back in 1865, ITU has had the development of telecommunications as one of its primary goals. Our membership includes not only representatives of 193 national administrations with oversight over telecommunications, but also more than 700 private entities from across the world. Many of these are telecommunication operators or equipment providers. The role of ITU is to bring all of them together to debate important and emerging issues, and to work together - in major conferences, specialist study groups, and more generally - to find the best way to advance towards our common goal of connecting the world.

The technical standards developed at ITU underpin essential elements of the networks used by the telecommunication industry, including the transformational technology of broadband. Our responsibilities in the area of radiocommunications - such as spectrum allocations and satellite orbits - are crucial for modern mobile systems. And ITU also provides support through, for instance, offering training and advice, especially to developing countries, so that skilled professionals are nurtured and enabling policy and regulatory environments are created to support innovation and growth. Our Global Symposium for Regulators is an excellent example of this process. There are many more.

**Q. How can telecom operators meet the challenge presented by the massive growth in mobile data consumption?**

**A.** Our ITU statistics show that more than a third of the global population (nearly 2.5 billion people) is now online, very many through smartphones. More and more people want to send and receive more and more data traffic, such as video, via the Internet, and increasingly through mobile devices. Today, there are roughly twice as many subscriptions for mobile broadband worldwide (more than a billion in total) as there are for fixed broadband. And over the last five years, the annual growth rate of mobile broadband subscriptions has been an average 41% - the most rapid among all services, and almost twice as fast in developing countries as in developed ones. This trend of double-digit growth is set to continue, given that, by the start of this year, nearly half the world's population was covered by a 3G mobile network.

All this has major implications in terms of service speed, price, available spectrum, and revenues. In addition, while mobile networks are moving to technologies such as LTE, fixed networks are undergoing a transition to next-generation networks (NGN) in order to meet the requirements of advanced ICT services. Sustained investment will be needed, and this represents one of the biggest challenges faced by the industry today. This is one of major issues that governments and industry are working together to address at the World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT).

**Q. There is still a lot to be achieved in providing broadband infrastructure to meet the needs of today's Internet user. What do you think is the best model to promote it and what is the role of governments?**

**A.** Where there is a ready demand for broadband – and when prices for consumers are affordable -- market forces can achieve the expansion of broadband. This is happening fast in developing countries through mobile services, as I explained. The role of governments in that case is to provide a fair and transparent regulatory system. In places that are less commercially attractive, public-private partnerships are likely to be fruitful.

The answer is that a range of business models is required, depending on circumstances. The issue has been explored by the Broadband Commission for Digital Development, launched by ITU in 2010 together with UNESCO precisely with the aim of promoting the expansion of broadband. Much more information can be found via its website at [www.broadbandcommission.org](http://www.broadbandcommission.org).

**Q. What are the key initiatives taken by ITU to contribute towards achieving its goal of connecting the world?**

**A.** The Broadband Commission is one of them; the ITU Academy, which offers training to students and professionals in developing countries, is another. And as you know, ITU organizes a 'Connect' series of events on a regional basis to mobilize partners and resources for various projects. So far these have been held in Africa, the Americas, the Commonwealth of Independent States and, of course, the Connect Arab Summit took place in March this year, very successfully hosted in Doha by the State of Qatar. Alongside ITU's core activities to assist development, these are key initiatives that gather governments and leaders from the private sector to find ways forward.

**Q. From an ITU perspective, how do you think the issue of cybersecurity can best be dealt with on both national and international levels?**

**A.** Cybersecurity is a prime example of an issue that simply cannot be tackled only by countries acting alone. That is why ITU puts priority on its role of coordinating efforts to protect cybersecurity through international cooperation, such as with the International Multilateral Partnership Against Cyber Threats (IMPACT), based in Cyberjaya, Malaysia. ITU-IMPACT is a multistakeholder and public-private alliance, and the operational home of ITU's Global Cybersecurity Agenda. It supports the ITU membership with the expertise, facilities and resources to enhance their capability to prevent, defend against and respond effectively to cyberthreats.

At the same time, individual nations must play their part in protecting cybersecurity within their borders - both for the sake of their own citizens, and because we live in a globalized world of information. Through the Internet, criminal activities can find a route from one country to another, so what one administration does potentially affects all. To help governments counteract threats to cybersecurity, ITU offers guidelines, toolkits and training on, for instance, the establishment of computer incident response teams, or CIRTs, that can act at a national level but also coordinate with other countries.

It is part of ITU's mandate to promote confidence and security in the use of ICTs. This has to be achieved by countering threats to cybersecurity nationally and globally.

**Q. Over the past months, ITU has faced a campaign from lobbyists concerning the WCIT-12 meeting in Dubai; can you please clarify any misunderstandings?**

**A.** It is highly regrettable that certain industry lobbyists have launched rumours and campaigns that have painted a false picture of ITU and of the 2012 World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT-12). This has misled the public and has distracted from what is really important at this landmark event, called by ITU at the request of its membership in order to review a treaty: the International Telecommunication Regulations, or ITRs, last agreed in Melbourne, Australia in 1988.

To put the record straight, let me state (as I have done repeatedly) that WCIT-12 is not going to transfer powers over the Internet to ITU or any other United Nations body, as claimed by the lobbyists. It is notable, in fact, that the conference's opening ceremony was addressed by the CEO of ICANN, Fadi Chehadé, who emphasized the growing cooperation between his organization and ITU. Neither is WCIT-12 going to remove the principle of the human right to freedom of expression and access to communications, which is recognized in ITU's Constitution that cannot be superseded by the ITRs.

In addition, and contrary to what has been suggested, the preparatory process for the conference has been thorough and has involved a multitude of not only governments but also private entities from around the world. We have sought as wide a range of views as we can, from all stakeholders, and most of the conference itself will be publically webcast. ITU has done a massive amount of work in order to ensure transparency and efficiency during WCIT-12.

**Q. What are the important issues that WCIT-12 will consider?**

**A.** WCIT-12 is tremendously important because its aim is nothing less than to chart a roadmap towards a global communications system that brings affordable connectivity for all, including the billions of people worldwide - two - thirds of the population - who cannot yet go online. During the event, some two thousand delegates from more than 160 countries will debate and pore over thousands of pages of proposals as they draft a new treaty. Among the issues to be considered are:

- Broadband investment - to ensure that there is sufficient infrastructure to handle massively increasing demand for bandwidth
- Energy efficiency in ICT equipment and networks
- Accessibility for people with disabilities
- Cybersecurity
- Dealing with unsolicited content
- Preventing fraudulent misuse of numbering resources
- Measures to prevent "bill shock" from high mobile roaming charges
- Reducing taxation on telecommunications
- Ensuring transparent and non-discriminatory pricing
- Fostering competitive and liberalized telecommunication markets, and
- Freedom of expression - which, as I have said, cannot be restricted at WCIT-12

The 1988 version of the ITRs paved the way for the phenomenal growth we have witnessed since then across the ICT sector. It established milestone principles of public service, acknowledging the right of users to communicate, and enabling the transition to new bilateral commercial agreements that set the stage for the boom in voice and data traffic. The new treaty should improve communications for all of us. But in particular it is about bringing mobile telephony to the remaining one billion people worldwide who do not yet have a mobile phone; about bringing Internet access to the 4.5 billion people who are not yet able to enjoy its benefits, and about enabling the 650 million people with some type of disability to use ICTs and the Internet in a safe and affordable manner.

**Q. High data roaming charges are becoming an issue for mobile subscribers; what strategies could be applied by telecom operators, and will WCIT-12 decisions affect this?**

**A.** The problem of disproportionate charges for using your mobile phone abroad – especially for exchanging data – is to be considered by WCIT-12, as I have said. None of us wants to experience "bill shock" when we get back home! There are already moves by both the industry (such as the GSM Association of mobile operators, or GSMA) and by administrations to prevent this. At WCIT-12, proposals include adding provisions to the regulations to ensure transparency of end-user prices for international mobile services, so that users receive full information promptly whenever they cross a border. Another added provision would ensure that prices are based on either the actual costs for the service provider, or on prices charged in the user's home country, or on those charged to customers in the visited country.

In the short term, if such proposals are accepted, the profits of mobile operators might dip. However, the current high charges for roaming could be discouraging a large number of potential customers who would otherwise use mobile devices more widely. Data roaming in particular is a booming market, and is likely to become even larger as cloud services take hold. There are big opportunities for business if they get the pricing right. And if lower prices lead to more use of roaming services, higher overall revenues might result that would also encourage investment in the networks and applications that are so much in demand.

All this depends upon international cooperation, which is what makes WCIT-12 so important.

**Q. How do you see the future of the telecom sector in the light of the WCIT-12?**

**A.** Twenty-four years ago when the ITRs were last negotiated, there were just 4.3 million mobile cellular subscriptions worldwide. Today there are over six billion. And we have seen the blossoming of what will undoubtedly be marked as one of humanity's most significant innovations: the Internet. It is clear that telecommunications and ICTs in general have a bright future.

But of course, as technology advances, changes will occur in the marketplace, such as the move taking place now towards convergence and IP platforms. It is difficult to predict exactly what those advances will be - who, in 1988, would have imagined today's tablet computers or smartphones linking to the Internet! What we must do is prepare the ground for progress. That is the purpose of WCIT-12.

**Q. WCIT-12 is considered a landmark conference. What message do you want to send to all stakeholders?**

**A.** Today, there are almost 2.5 billion users of the Internet worldwide. Let us hope that, by the time we next have to negotiate the ITRs, many years hence, every single individual in the world will be benefiting from easy and affordable access to this incredibly powerful resource.

It is ITU's mission to connect the world. WCIT-12 is a multistakeholder, global event that presents us with a unique opportunity to further that aim. Working together, we must seize that opportunity to help close the digital divide and lay the foundations for a knowledge society of the twenty-first century, in which people everywhere, whatever their circumstances, have a chance to take part.



## Mastering the Art of Scientific Marketing

Here's how to break out of traditional marketing's comfort zone to deliver the art of the craft with the science to back it up.

If you knew with 100 percent certainty that an investment of \$100 would give you an ROI of 200 percent, would you make it? If you could clearly identify the cause and effect of your successful marketing activities, would you do it? Surprisingly, the answer to both questions for many marketing departments is no.

Few marketing leaders take a deliberate and systematic approach to plan, execute, and review the success of their marketing activities. Even fewer truly understand the underlying reasons for their successes or failures. Management by "gut feel," prior experience, or pure luck is still widespread among marketers. So why are they surprised when they must fight to win the support of the CEO and other senior management?

### Scientific Marketing:

The application of analytical testing and statistical methods in gathering and interpreting market information.

In a recent survey of 1,200 CEOs globally by the Fournaise Marketing Group, a shocking 80 percent of CEOs admit they do not really trust and are not very impressed by the work done by marketers. In comparison, 90 percent of the same CEOs do trust and



value the opinion and the work of CFOs and CIOs. In the survey, 80 percent of CEOs believe marketers are too disconnected from the short, medium and longterm financial realities of the business.

More than ever before, today's marketing chiefs influence critical parts of the business, including product research and development, sales, customer experience, etc. Yet while companies invest in new capabilities for manufacturing, procurement, finance, and even HR, rarely do companies make significant investments in developing and institutionalizing their marketing capabilities. Marketers must deliver the art of the craft with the science to back it up. Many know this, but can't move beyond their marketing comfort zones to spur innovation.

## Break out the slide rules

As a marketer, chances are you are (or you wish you were) advertising or marketing around the hit television sitcom *The Big Bang Theory*. The show revolves around the misadventures of four scientist friends. So why not take a lesson from the nerdiest of the bunch—Dr. Sheldon Cooper—and let science drive your decisions?

Scientific marketing is the systematic study and application of marketing activities and their impact on customer behaviors. In other words, scientific marketing is a more thoughtful approach to marketing. It is learning from the past, dissecting marketing successes and failures into its individual components, and taking advantage of the insights gained from them. It might not be as exciting and fun as traditional marketing, but if done well, it resonates with marketers and achieves measurable results in ways traditional marketing can't.

Ideally, companies should document everything they learn as they work on different initiatives, then institutionalize the successful methods they derive. Other disciplines such as finance, IT, manufacturing, and others tend to follow very structured and deliberate approaches to their operations. This has given birth to many rigorous *modus operandi* (e.g. TQM, ISO, etc.). But marketing departments have yet to embrace that level of sophistication and standardization.

A scientific approach allows marketing initiatives to be repeatable, predictable, consistent, and institutional. Those attributes may not be "sexy," but they are extremely important to a company's bottom line. By being repeatable, marketers can leverage a past approach to duplicate the success of a new product launch, pricing strategy, or promotion. A

predictable initiative means that the expected returns become more reliable. Delivering a consistent product, brand, and customer experience are what drive customers to choose and stay with companies like Starbucks, Amazon.com, Emirates, Bose, Apple, or BMW over competitors. And with institutional programs, companies become less dependent on any one person and can leverage a high level of institutional knowledge and practices with both old and new employees at any time.

The benefits of scientific marketing are evident in organizations such as Apple, which many predicted would disintegrate after the death of its charismatic leader Steve Jobs. Yet, Apple has since fared well as Jobs successfully institutionalized a strong culture that follows a more rigorous and systematic approach in all areas, including marketing. The way Apple does business and makes key management decisions is explicitly documented in internal case studies and implicitly inculcated in employees to ensure Apple maintains its culture. There are just things that define how Apple does business, e.g. simplicity, premium pricing, high-end branding, rare compromises on product quality, etc. The same could be said of other companies well-known for their disciplined approach to marketing, such as consumer goods giant Procter & Gamble.

## Infusing scientific discipline into your marketing department

Scientific marketing does not mean that you should abandon the creative side of marketing for complete attention to data and analysis. And it shouldn't be a fight about which is better—the left-brained (analytical) or right-brained (creative) marketer. The new marketing world is about being "whole-brained," as some in the industry say. Scientific marketing adds some weight to the analytical side.

So what can marketers do to infuse science into the art of marketing? We break it down into three steps: define your overall strategies, enable scientific marketing philosophy and practice, and execute and track your plans.

Marketing chiefs need to clearly articulate what marketing activities they wish to enhance, then define the goals of this new approach. Not all activities lend themselves to a

### Scientific Marketing in Action—Telecom

One company derived more than \$100 million in new revenue after applying scientific marketing principles to its business.

#### Before

- A leading telecommunications operator engaged Peppers & Rogers Group to help build and operate a new Customer Value Management (CVM) department to grow revenues from its existing customer base and respond more swiftly to competitors.
- Prior to PRG's engagement, the client launched 5 to 10 below-the-line (BTL) campaigns per year.
- Critical business data for decision making was unavailable, unreliable, or required 2 to 4 weeks of data extraction time.
- Client needed 1 to 3 weeks to respond to price wars initiated by competitors.

#### After

- The new CVM and Analytics departments now use insight from datamarts and analytical models such as:
  - Advanced customer micro-segmentation
  - Multi-SIM fingerprinting
  - Social network analysis
  - Cross-/Up-sell models
- The company is able to launch over 100 BTL campaigns per month.
- Critical business data is now available in minutes.
- The project generated \$100 million+ in incremental revenues within the first 12 months.

scientific approach, so you must be realistic about your level of readiness and capabilities to embrace a different approach to marketing. Taking a company from 0 to 60 requires patience, organizational buy-in, and a clear strategy, accompanied by a plan and budget to achieve it. Some key activities to consider scientifically include:

**Product, Service and Customer Experience Development:**

We rarely see marketers take advantage of sophisticated methods to develop their value propositions. This is one of the weakest areas of today's typical marketing department where few marketers use tools such as integrated lifetime value (LTV) segmentation analytics to develop better products.



**Pricing:** This area has always followed a more rigorous exercise as it requires careful consideration of consumer price sensitivities, competitive pricing, and operational costs. Nonetheless, there are many good methods like integrated lifetime value customer segmentation, economic price discrimination, or belowtheline (BTL) piloting that marketers can use more consistently to refine product pricing.

**Marketing communications:** With the advent of digital advertising, media planning in digital is where we frequently find application of scientific marketing, e.g. BTL revenue stimulation in the telecommunications business, or SEM and SEO to drive higher clicks on Google and Facebook advertisements.

**Sales and distribution:** Discipline is lacking in this area. For example, channel optimization using customer segmentation and sales data is a very simple and powerful, yet underutilized method. If a company wants to attract more highvalue and loyal customers, it should provide more incentives to the channel that drives those types of customers.

## Overcoming barriers to enablement

Sure, being more scientific sounds good in theory, but putting it into practice can be a challenge. When it comes to enabling scientific marketing, roadblocks include organizational challenges, the willingness of marketers to change, the expanded skills required, tools and processes, limited training resources, and analytical and business intelligence tools. Some recommendations around each of these roadblocks include:

**Organization:** Each marketing function must have an owner empowered to drive change. Organizations need to be designed around scientific marketing work flows to function coherently.

**People:** Marketers need to have the willingness to become more scientific in their approach, as well as have new skill sets to enable it. The most sophisticated scientific marketing methods require skills not easily found among business school graduates. A realtime geomarketing analytical model might require a Masters degree in Applied Statistics, for example. Look outside traditional disciplines for experts.

**Processes:** Marketers need to know when to use scientific methods for optimal results. For instance, when is it ideal to use primary market research surveys and focus group sessions? Learn from each endeavor, and share those results with others to inform future processes.

**Information:** As we have previously written in this journal, the lack of timely, actionable information is oftentimes the most basic hurdle. Organizations need invest in tools to make information available to those who need it, analyze it effectively to guide decisionmaking, and track relevant customer KPIs. The benefits are well documented—a 2011 research study from MIT, *Strength in Numbers: How Does DataDriven Decisionmaking Affect Firm Performance*, shows productivity improvements in the order of 5 to 6 percent resulting from adoption of datadriven decision making.

**Training:** Does your marketing organization offer formal and informal training to ensure all marketing staff have the same vocabulary, use the same tools, and have the same understanding of how to do marketing “the right way” in your organization? Don't forget to provide marketers with the knowledge to succeed.

**Culture:** For scientific marketing to become ingrained in a company's DNA, marketing chiefs must lead by example. At its best, we have seen some of the world's leading marketing organizations coin their own marketing vocabulary, understood only by the truly initiated. Get everyone on the same page, working toward the same goals.

## Execution

Once a strategy has been devised, it comes time to execute against a clear plan and track progress. Many scientific marketing efforts fail at this stage as many organizations lack the full commitment and resources to endeavor on what can be a multiyear journey. In some instances, it might make sense to outsource select functions in the mediumterm and eventually bring them back inhouse once the expertise has been developed, e.g. analytics, pricing, media planning are activities that can easily be outsourced to get scientific marketing power in weeks rather than years.

## Tying science to art

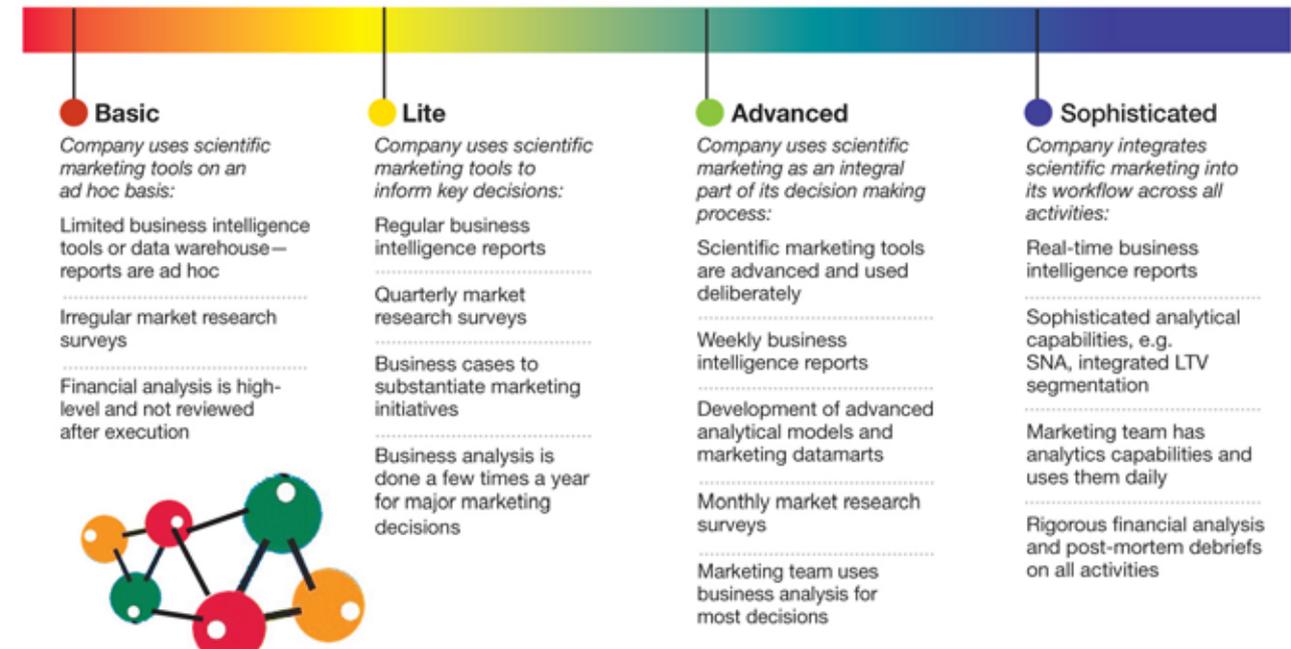
Naturally, not everything can be reduced to numbers or a rational methodology that always produces black and white results. Unlike manufacturing, many marketing functions require human input that cannot be standardized. For example, a creative brief to an advertising agency, a product review with an R&D team, or the insights coming out of a focus group interview all have elements that require interpretation. Here is where experience, gut feel, and just pure instincts of an effective marketer come into play. But scientific marketing alongside these activities can provide a more rational framework and guidelines to produce more consistent outcomes.

The scientific approach to marketing is not just a concept. It's already happening at the world's leading companies. CEOs are looking for performance metrics, resources are tight, and timing is everything. The more precise marketing

tactics and strategy, the higher the likelihood for success. To once again refer to Sheldon Cooper in *The Big Bang Theory*, "Don't you think if I were wrong, I'd know it?" With a scientific approach, the answer is yes.

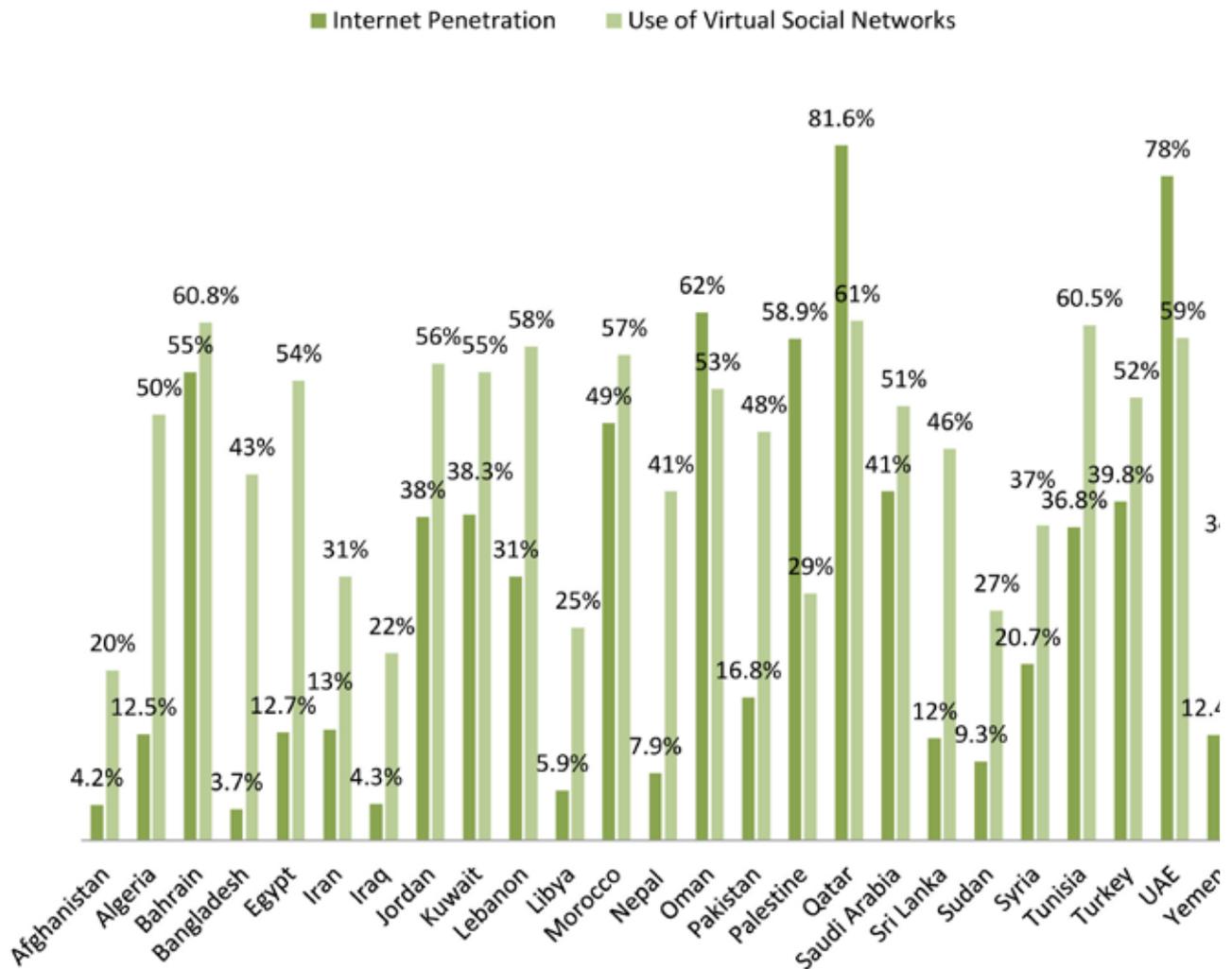
### Figure 1: The Scientific Marketing Journey

There are many facets of scientific marketing. Where do you sit on the spectrum?



**Andre Popov**  
Partner  
Peppers & Rogers Group

## SAMENA: Internet &amp; Social Network Penetration

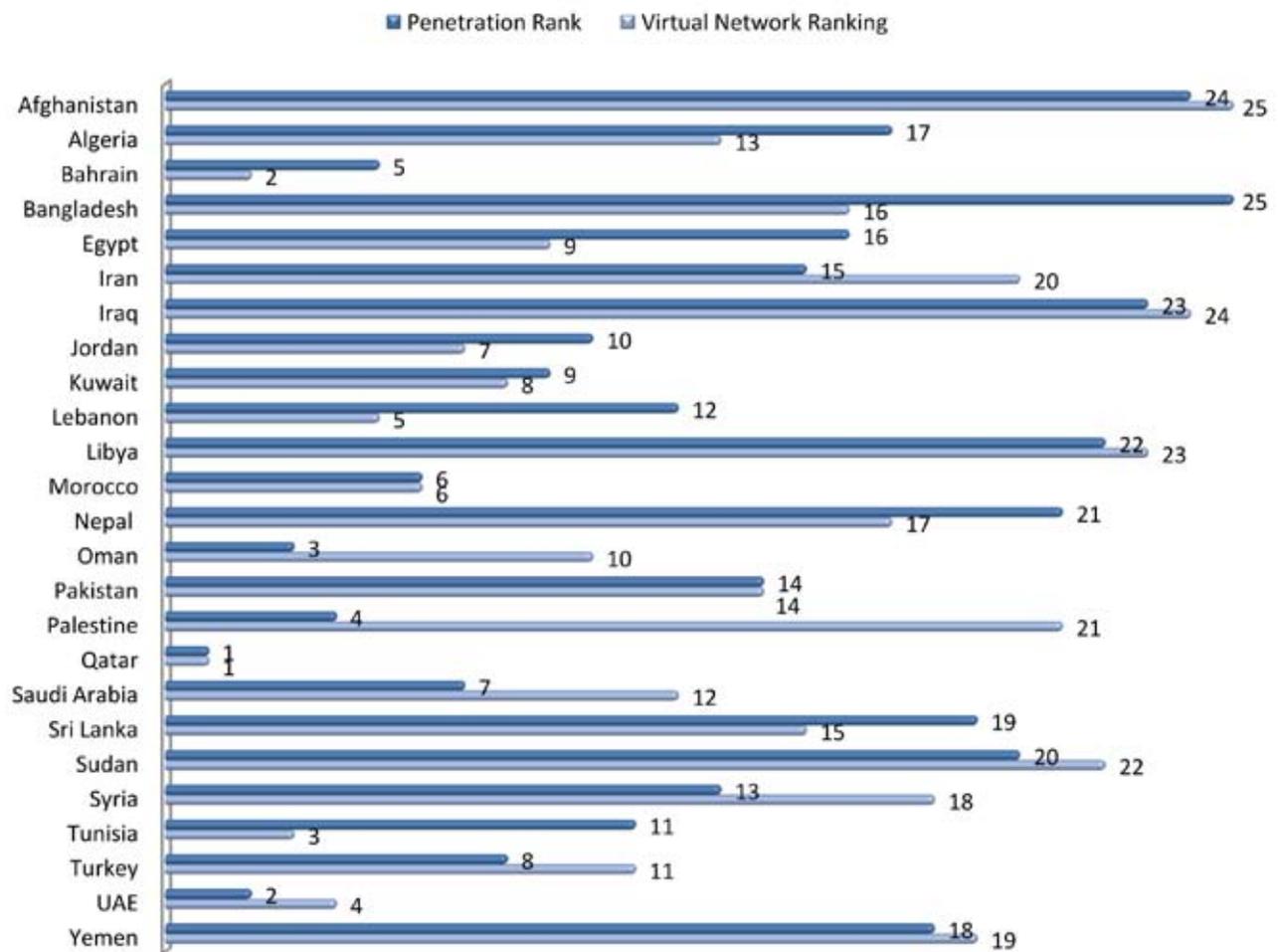


**Image Source:** SAMENA Telecommunications Council

**Data Source:** The Global Innovation Index 2012 by INSEAD, Telecom Regulators

**Research Note:** An analysis of Internet penetration and social media usage in the regional markets was done. This graph shows the gap between the internet penetration and social medial penetration/usage in the 25 markets in the SAMENA region. The figure shows that Qatar, UAE and Oman have the highest Internet penetration within the SAMENA region. Similarly, Qatar, Bahrain and Tunisia have the highest percentage use of social media in terms of population penetration. Pakistan has the highest Internet penetration in South Asia, Qatar the highest Internet penetration in the Middle East whereas Morocco has the highest Internet penetration in North Africa. With regards to presence on social media, Pakistan has the highest penetration in South Asia, Qatar the highest penetration in the Middle East and Tunisia the highest penetration in North Africa.

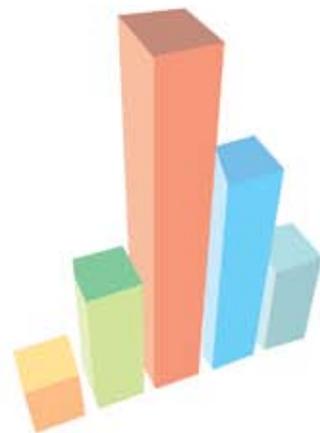
## SAMENA: Ranking - Internet &amp; Social Network



**Image Source:** SAMENA Telecommunications Council

**Data Source:** The Global Innovation Index 2012 by INSEAD, Telecom Regulators

**Research Note:** The 25 SAMENA countries have been ranked on the basis of Internet penetration and the percentage of population using social media. It is observed that Qatar, UAE are the top 3 countries with respect to Internet penetration whereas Iraq, Afghanistan and Bangladesh are at the bottom. Similarly, Qatar, Bahrain and Tunisia have the highest percentage population using social media whereas Libya, Iraq and Afghanistan are placed at the bottom.





# SATELLITE NEWS

## Inmarsat Signs L-3 Global Communications Solutions as Initial Launch Partner for Global Xpress®

Inmarsat, the leading provider of global mobile satellite communications services, announced it has signed L-3 Global Communications Solutions (GCS) as an initial launch partner for land satellite terminals for its forthcoming Global Xpress® service. L-3 GCS is the leading supplier of VSAT terminals to USSOCOM and other elite military and government users. They bring the field-tested credibility that Global Xpress customers will be looking for when upgrading to Ka-band speed and coverage. By bringing L-3 GCS' Panther™ - and Hawkeye™-certified terminals together with Inmarsat's global managed services, customers will realize the value and flexibility of combining national MILSATCOM with on-demand commercial services under any operational scenario. Scheduled for service introduction in 2014, Global Xpress will offer an unprecedented combination of high data rates, bandwidth and global coverage. Global Xpress is the only global Ka-band system of its kind and will support L-3 GCS customers who have become accustomed to highly transportable, rugged and reliable terminals for all kinds of missions. "Inmarsat is pleased to include L-3 GCS as a supplier of Global Xpress-qualified terminals. Government customers have come to rely on Panther and Hawkeye equipment for some of their most critical missions" said Leo Mondale, Managing Director, Global Xpress.

## Inmarsat to Highlight Technologies That Will Transform Communications in Africa

Inmarsat, the leading provider of global mobile satellite communications services, will preview some of the revolutionary services enabled by new satellites to be launched from next year on stand E17e at AfricaCom. Inmarsat will also showcase its recently expanded portfolio of offerings for African businesses, government and individuals. Inmarsat will redefine mobile satellite services with higher streaming speeds and two satellite launches in 2013. Its upcoming Alphasat I-XL satellite launch will enhance L-band service capabilities across Africa, providing even faster streaming performance. This will be followed by the highly anticipated rollout of its new Global Xpress network, which will deliver global superfast broadband. At AfricaCom, Inmarsat will demonstrate the breadth of its portfolio including: its award-winning BGAN service, which provides simultaneous voice and broadband data communications globally; BGAN Link, a broadband data service for organizations requiring high volumes of data volumes; BGAN M2M, a global two-way IP data service for M2M communications; IsatPhone Pro, its low-cost satellite phone providing high quality voice

## COM DEV Equipment Launched on Star One and Eutelsat Commercial Communications Satellites

COM DEV International Ltd. announced that the Star One C3 and Eutelsat 21B satellites were successfully launched on November 10 with COM DEV-built multiplexers, filters and switches on board. Orbital Sciences built Star One C3 for Brazilian operator Star One; it carries 16 Ku-Band and 28 C-Band transponders. The satellite will provide communication services and TV broadcast for Brazil and South America. Thales Alenia built Eutelsat 21B, which replaces the existing satellite Eutelsat 21A and increases Eutelsat's resources at its orbit. It will provide telecommunications and data services for Europe, North and West Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. The satellites were launched from French Guiana on November 10 on an Ariane 5 rocket. Both have a life expectancy of at least 15 years.

## Thuraya Recognized as the Satellite Communications Player of the Year at the ASBU BroadcastPro Middle East Award Ceremony

Industry leading Mobile Satellite Services operator, Thuraya Telecommunications Company, announced it was recognized as Satellite Communications Player of the Year by the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) at the BroadcastPro Middle East 2012 Awards event held in Dubai on November 12. Thuraya was given the award for supporting Journalism on-the-move and providing connectivity to those who are putting their lives on the line to report on important events across the region. BroadcastPro Middle East noted the significant contribution of Thuraya's flagship product for reporters in the field, the Thuraya IP, which is an ultra-portable broadband terminal allowing broadcasters to link up to their studios across Thuraya's congestion-free satellite network using convenient uplink/downlink streaming speed packages.

The theme behind this year's awards was to recognize and encourage innovation and excellence in the area of broadcast technology. Thuraya IP was singled out as an innovative broadcast product for its contribution in helping leading media organizations to broadcast the news to their studios from the field. Thuraya's satellite footprint covers 140 countries where it provides critical data and voice communications for media organizations.

## Intelsat Reports Third Quarter 2012 Results

Intelsat S.A., the world's leading provider of satellite services, reported financial results for the three months ended September 30, 2012. Intelsat S.A. reported revenue of US\$654.9 million and a net loss of US\$34.5 million for the three months ended September 30, 2012. The company also reported Intelsat S.A. EBITDAi, or earnings before net interest, loss on early extinguishment of debt, taxes and depreciation and amortization, of US\$471.1 million, and Intelsat S.A. Adjusted EBITDAi of US\$511.3 million, or 78 percent of revenue, for the three months ended September 30, 2012. Contracted backlog at September 30, 2012, was US\$10.8 billion. Intelsat CEO Dave McGlade said, "In the third quarter, Intelsat achieved steady financial performance and

further executed on our initiatives to serve media, broadband, mobility and government applications. Sequential revenue growth increased as expected, as expansion capacity and a hosted payload entered service. Overall, we continue to expect that full year 2012 revenue results will be slightly positive as compared to 2011." McGlade continued, "Our launch campaign progressed with successful launches of Intelsat 20 and Intelsat 21 in the third quarter; both satellites are now in service. On October 14, we completed our fifth and final launch for this year, Intelsat 23, which is now completing in-orbit testing. Demand for broadband connectivity for mobility applications, such as maritime and aeronautical, is opening new growth avenues for our satellite infrastructure. As our global Ku-band broadband mobility platform nears completion, Intelsat is positioned for an early lead in serving these important growth segments."

## Eutelsat to Lease Russian Satellite Capacity

Eutelsat has signed an agreement with the Russian Satellite Communications Company (RSCC) to lease capacity on two RSCC satellites to be launched in 2013 and 2015. The contracts for Eutelsat's two 15-year leases are valued at approximately €300 million. RSCC's satellite expansion plans include two new programmes: Express-AT2 that will be launched to 140 degrees East in 2013, and Express-AMU1 that will be launched in 2015 to provide follow-on and expansion capacity for Eutelsat 36A at the 36 degrees East position. Express-AT2 will more than double Ku-band capacity for satellite broadcasting at the key video neighborhood serving Russia's Far East region. The satellite will transform the broadcasting infrastructure at 36 degrees East into a broader system to support more television services and IP-based applications to match the development of Russia's digital entertainment market. More than 11 million DTH antennas in Russia are already pointed at this video neighborhood, subscribing to the premium NTV+ platform or to Tricolor. The new satellite's manufacturer will be selected by the end of 2012 following an RFP. Eutelsat will commercialize the capacity under the name Eutelsat 36C.



# REGULATORY NEWS

## TCRA Sponsors ICT Varsity Students

The Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA) has set aside Sh132 million for sponsoring 17 university students this year, as part of the authority's program to boost information and communication technology (ICT) education in the country. Speaking during the awarding ceremony of the scholarships to nine students, who have won the sponsorships this year, TCRA director general, Prof John Nkoma, said that the move aims to curb shortage of experts in the ICT sector. He said the authority launched the program last year. "We have decided to spend Sh132 million on boosting human resources in the ICT sector, as we believe that ICT is an important factor for development in Tanzania," said Prof Nkoma. According to him, eight students won the sponsorships last year and nine have won it this year. "We are happy to see that out of the nine students, who won the sponsorships this year, four are ladies and five are boys, this shows that girls are increasingly doing very well in their education," said Prof Nkoma. Representing the deputy Minister of Communication, Science and Technology, the ministry's permanent secretary, Mr. Florence Turuka, called upon more private and government sectors to channel funds in ICT education to increase ICT experts in the country. "The ICT sector is still facing many challenges including shortage of qualified personnel. So, I urge other sectors to emulate TCRA," said Dr. Turuka, adding: "The ministry is doing all it can to ensure that the country has enough ICT experts." TCRA acting board Chairman Vuai Lilla urged the students to study hard.

## TRA Holds Internet Protocol Version 6 Workshop for the First Time in UAE

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) recently hosted the Internet Protocol Version 6 (IPv6) Workshop, the first of its kind in the UAE, at their Dubai office. The IPv6 Workshop introduced key internet stakeholders to the business drivers and challenges for IPv6 adoption. Over 50 public and private sector entities gathered for two days discussing ways to ensure internet business continuity. The program helps support Governments, businesses and other internet stakeholders to collectively coordinate and cooperate in devising policies, strategies and action plans with the aim to raise awareness and promote the deployment and usage of IPv6. "Internet and ICT services are a key factor and catalyst for the social and economic development of the UAE and its well-being," said H.E. Mohamed Nasser Al Ghanim, Director General of the TRA. "The IPv6 workshop acts as a platform to discuss and exchange views around IPv6 adoption in the UAE and the role to be played by the local internet stakeholders." The workshop comes as part of TRA's IPv6 strategy development initiatives preparing the UAE and its internet users for the expected IPv4 exhaustion. The program will help the UAE secure healthy levels of growth and development that have long characterized the nation's ICT sector, preserving its leadership role in economic and social development.

## 5G Mobile Broadband on the Horizon as Ofcom Prepares to free up 700MHz Spectrum

Ofcom is pushing ahead with plans to allow future mobile broadband services to run on spectrum currently used for digital television. The spectrum, in the 700MHz band, will most likely be used for '5G' services, the regulator said, given that it will take until 2018 for international agreements on its usage to click into place. In the US and Asia, it is already used for 4G services — the iPhone 5 famously supports 700MHz rather than the 800MHz spectrum coming up for auction in the UK — and a decision was taken at the World Radio Conference in February to free it up for mobile broadband across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Ofcom launched a consultation on the matter in March, and the results are now in. The regulator said on Friday that it would go along with the internationally agreed plan, and work on preparing for the re-allocation. "We are now ploughing ahead on the basis that this will be happening," an Ofcom spokesman told ZDNet UK. "We will be sitting down with our international colleagues and discussing a global spectrum plan."

## NBTC Telecom Panel Insists Spectrum Auction Carried Out Strictly in Accordance With Law

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission's telecom committee insisted that the 2.1GHz spectrum auction and all related processes had been carried out in strict compliance with the law and regulations, including the Constitution and frequency allocation law. Committee members made the remark at the Central Administrative Court, before being questioned by the court following a petition by the Ombudsman last week for it to rule on whether the auction had lacked free and fair competition. The Ombudsman also sought an injunction to suspend the NBTC's plan to grant licenses to the three bid winners at the October 16 auction. NBTC chairman Thares Punsri, telecom committee chairman Settapong Malisuwan and committee member Suthiphon Thaveechaiyagarn attended the court. Thares said the aim of the auction was to usher the country into the advanced mobile-phone technology era, while Settapong said the auction process had been developed in accordance with relevant law and regulations. The court had called the Ombudsman in for questioning on Wednesday following last week's petition. The telecom industry is anxiously waiting to see whether the NBTC's planned granting of 2.1GHz spectrum licenses to the bid winners will be disrupted by any legal order. Under the auction terms, the agency has to grant the licenses within 90 days of approving the bidding outcome. The telecom panel endorsed the bid winners on October 18.

## Government Shuts Down SIM Sales and MNP

Acting under the direction of the Ministry of the Interior, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has banned mobile number portability (MNP) with immediate effect, and the sale of SIMs from store fronts or franchises from 1 December citing security concerns. Both the prohibition of SIM sales and the cessation of MNP are extensions of long-running efforts by authorities to curb illegal distribution of SIMs and their use in criminal activities. Earlier this week,

the Interior Minister expressed the government's concerns that cellular services were being misused by anti-state elements and instructed the PTA to 'revisit the whole system and ensure that all SIM cards being used on stolen identity shall be blocked.' Further, the government is drafting new legislation regarding the misuse of electronic equipment. By eliminating operators' existing sale channels, the government hopes to gain greater control over the handling of SIM cards. Under a new system, the purchase of any SIM will require a customer to present their Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) and utility bills as proof of identity. The sale would then need to be approved by the National Database and Regulation Authority (NADRA) and the issued SIM would be then delivered to the customer's CNIC address only.

## NCC Bares Fangs on Telecom Operators over Anti-Competitive Measures

To sustain and improve on the present level of growth recorded in the telecommunications sector, telecoms operators have been warned against instituting any anti-competitive policies that can endanger the sector. Specifically, the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), which gave the warning, disclosed that it has employed the services of foremost Consultancy firm, KPMG to carry out a study on assessment of the current level of competition in the telecommunications industry. Speaking in Lagos recently, at the Stakeholders Forum on current level of competition in the Nigerian Telecommunications sector, organized by the commission, the Executive Vice Chairman of NCC, Dr. Eugene Juwah said a virile and competitive market with a level playing field for all players has been the target of the commission. Meanwhile, there have been appreciable increases in the number of active mobile subscription in Nigeria. In September, active phone subscribers in the country rose to 107.4 million up from 105.2 million in August, with the teledensity increasing from 75.2 per cent to 76.7 percent. According to statistics obtained from the commission's website, the country added 2.25 million GSM subscribers, while the troubled Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) sustained a down profile, moving from 3.347 million in August to 3.239 million in September.

## Zambia Documenting all Mobile Users in Country

A new report published by the Zambian Watchdog has reported that the country's secret service of the President has created a database of all mobile phone customers in the country as part of the SIM card registration required by telecom operators MTN, Airtel and Zamtel. According to the report, in December 2011, the former government created the Statutory Instrument on the Registration of Electronic Communication Apparatus, which forced all phone users in the country to register their SIM cards, as part of the entire East African regional push to do so. Although the registration process is supposed to be administered by the respective telecom providers in the country, the Watchdog has reported that all information of citizens and mobile phone users has been passed along to the government. "Phone users are required to provide their full name, national registration card number, driving license (for Zambian subscribers), passport or work-permit number (for non-national subscribers), and physical address," the government SIM registration process says.



## A SNAPSHOT OF REGULATORY ACTIVITIES IN SAMENA REGION

### Active Consultations & Invitations for Feedback

#### Bahrain

The Third National Telecommunications Plan of the Kingdom of Bahrain, published in July 2012, sets out the Government's policy for the sector. Among the priorities it identifies is the need to facilitate the availability of efficiently provided Long Term Evolution (LTE) based services in the Kingdom, under competitive conditions by releasing radio frequencies suitable for the provision of Post 3G mobile services. The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) issued a Consultation Document entitled, 'Award of Individual Licenses and associated Frequency Licenses for the delivery of mobile telecommunications services in the 900, 1800, 1900, 2100 and 2600 MHz frequency bands in the Kingdom of Bahrain'. The document advises interested parties of TRA's intention to conduct a licensing process that will result in the award of licenses for the provision of state-of-the-art mobile telecommunications services. TRA seeks views on the proposed award process, requirements and license conditions. The Authority's expects that this spectrum release will promote the delivery of high speed mobile services in the Kingdom, in line with the objectives of the Third NTP. The comments are to be submitted by December 27, 2012. (November 28, 2012) [www.tra.org.bh](http://www.tra.org.bh)

#### Oman

The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority has issued a public consultation on Internal Cabling Guidelines setting the functional requirements desired on the space and facilities required to enhance the range and/or quality of the telecommunication services that need to be provided in buildings by the licensed Service Providers. The functional requirements recommendations laid down in these guidelines are based on existing technology standards, service requirements and other relevant conditions. As such standards, service requirements and other conditions may change in line with technological advancements and differences in service demands. TRA reserves the right to revise, amend, and modify these guidelines from time to time. TRA is seeking the public opinion through this consultation paper on the draft regulation on Web Based services. December 5, 2012 has been fixed as the last date to submit the comments. (November 5, 2012) [www.tra.gov.om](http://www.tra.gov.om)

## Country-Wise Policy & Regulatory Developments

### Afghanistan

#### Board Chairman: Mr. Abdul Wakil Shergul

[Afghanistan Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (ATRA)]

Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT) has awarded WiMAX licenses to three operators to increase the availability of internet access in the nation. Neda Telecom, IO Global and Arianna Network Services were each awarded a license for a fee of US\$520,000. The MCIT said in a statement that between 20 - 30% of subscribers to telecoms services currently has access to the internet, though with the issuance of the trio of WiMAX licenses, and the allocation of 3G licenses earlier this year the ministry hopes to increase access to around 80% of the population within two years. Telecom minister added that to change Afghanistan into an advanced technological and e-government country, implementing of advanced technologies is necessary and provides great facilities to the residents of the country. 3G and WiMAX technologies [will] provide fast internet services for the people of Afghanistan.

(November 19, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

The Afghanistan Telecom Regulatory Authority (ATRA) has extended its tender for a satellite license until November 7. The international competitive tender for a single license to position and operate a communications satellite at the ITU-allocated geostationary orbital position for Afghanistan (50 degrees east) and/or associated planned frequencies. ATRA said it extended the tender on requests from interested bidders. (November 1, 2012) [www.atra.gov.af](http://www.atra.gov.af)

### Algeria

#### Chairperson: Ms. Zohra Derdouri

[Regulatory Authority for Post & Telecommunication (ARPT)]

Weather Investments, controlled by Egyptian telecoms tycoon Naguib Sawiris, has filed a \$5 billion claim against the government of Algeria for harassing and interfering with Djezzy, its former telecoms subsidiary in the country. It has filed the claim with the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes, an arbitration tribunal that is a part of the World Bank. Weather (Luxembourg) is seeking damages for what it says has been deliberate campaign of interference in Djezzy (Algiers, Algeria) by Algerian authorities, contravening an investment treaty between Algeria and the Belgo-Luxembourg Economic Union. "The Algerian government committed to a number of protections, including a promise to refrain from arbitrary interference in our operations, but has since 2008 pursued a campaign of interference and harassment which has cost Weather Investments over US\$5 billion in damages," said Sawiris in a statement. Sawiris says that Weather has invested more than \$3 billion in Algeria since 2001, when it won a competitive bid to operate there, creating 4,000 jobs and increasing telephone usage by 52% in just seven years. He also insists that losses arising from government interference forced Weather to sell its interest in Djezzy to Russia's VimpelCom (Amsterdam, Netherlands) last year, shattering his ambition of creating "the first global pan-Arab telco company". Algeria's government stopped the payment of dividends to foreign owners, according to Weather, and disrupted talks regarding the sale of Djezzy. The law firm representing Algeria's government has issued a statement saying that Weather has no case and cannot pursue the claim because it has only an indirect minority shareholding in Djezzy. Weather lodged a notice of dispute in April 2012,

warning Algeria's government it would pursue the claim if the matter was not otherwise settled within a six-month period. (November 19, 2012) [www.telecomengine.com](http://www.telecomengine.com)

Minister of Post and ICT, has proposed the establishment of a joint venture for the management of the country's fiber-optic networks. Said business will seek to encourage the promotion of broadband services within the North African nation by encouraging infrastructure-based tie-ups with other sectors, such as transport. The scheme will complement previously revealed government plans to implement its Plan National de la Fiber Optique (PNFO). Speaking at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Telecom World conference in Dubai last month minister commented: 'The first step is to commit to making better use of all fibers held by the companies, including the energy sector (15,000km), railways (nearly 5,000km), telecommunications (50,000km), and other companies and government agencies in the country'. (November 2, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

### Bahrain

#### Chairman & General Director: Mr. Mohamed Bubashait

[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has issued a Consultation Document entitled, 'Award of Individual Licenses and associated Frequency Licenses for the delivery of mobile telecommunications services in the 900, 1800, 1900, 2100 and 2600 MHz frequency bands in the Kingdom of Bahrain'. (November 29, 2012) [www.meed.com](http://www.meed.com)

The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA) issued a statement saying that progress in the release of spectrum in the bands 2500 MHz–2570 MHz and 2620 MHz–2690 MHz has been speedier than originally envisaged. As a result the Authority is able to release the entirety of the 2×70 MHz 4G bands to the winner(s) of the license award process envisaged to be conducted by Q1 2013, immediately after the process has concluded. Previously, the TRA said that 2×40 MHz would be immediately available for use, with the remaining 2×30 MHz tranche to become effective in Q4 2014. (November 20, 2012) [www.tra.org.bh](http://www.tra.org.bh)

Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has issued a Draft Determination on consultation in which it proposes to set the cost of capital for regulated telecommunications services at 9.5%. The cost of capital represents the return that investors are able to earn on capital employed in the provision of regulated telecommunications services. The TRA has examined the changes that have occurred since it last set the cost of capital in 2009, and has had taken into account international best practice, the latest available market information, regulatory precedents and the current economic environment. Although the proposed cost of capital is unchanged from the level set in 2009, a number of parameters upon which the cost of capital is based have changed, and these are reflected in the Draft Determination. The TRA considers that the proposed rate continues to provide the right investment incentives while preventing excessive profits. (November 8, 2012) [www.google.com.pk](http://www.google.com.pk)

Fine imposed by the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) in 2009 on Bahraini incumbent Batelco for restricting international cable access has been reduced following the conclusion of arbitration proceedings. The

penalty was imposed for preventing rival operators from accessing the country's international data channels via collocation at Batelco's submarine cable landing station. At the time the TRA said the former monopoly telco provided insufficient reasons for the obstruction. (November 1, 2012) [www.tra.org.bh](http://www.tra.org.bh)

## Bangladesh

### Chairman: Sunil Kanti Bose

[Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC)]

Bangladesh's total number of mobile users fell from 98.5 million in September 2012 to 98.3 million at the end of last month, the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) reported, after the regulator imposed a strict ban on selling pre-activated SIM cards to unregistered customers on 12 October. Because of the crackdown on registering users' identities, the largest cellco, GrameenPhone, lost a net 267,000 subscribers in a month while second-biggest operator Banglalink suffered a 155,000 net reduction in user base. GrameenPhone confirmed that the negative growth was a result of the introduction of the strict 'post-activation' process added to 'natural churn'. Third-placed cellco Robi managed to increase its user base by 316,000 in October, the BTRC reported, which a Robi official attributed to 'different kinds of promotional activities in the last few months'. According to the regulator's figures, Airtel Bangladesh's customers fell by 9,000 in a month, CityCell's users declined by 55,000 and Teletalk achieved a slight net increase of 1,000. (November 29, 2012) [The Financial Express](http://The Financial Express)

Bangladesh based CDMA network, Citycell is reportedly planning a migration to GSM services next year.

The transformation will require clearance from the telecoms regulator, and should be completed by next June. The company is the sole CDMA network in the country, and is owned by Singapore's Singtel (45%), Taiwan's Far East Telecom (23.5%) and local Pacific Motors (31.43%). The company's Chief Executive Officer told that talks with the telecom BTRC to introduce the GSM technology are underway and hopeful of launching the service by next June. The company has just 1.7 million customers and has languished in the market dominated by GSM operators, who are also preparing for 3G license auctions due probably early next year. (November 19, 2012) [www.bdnews24.com](http://www.bdnews24.com)

The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications and Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission are preparing for finalizing the number of VoIP service providers by December. The telecom regulator will complete evaluating the applications of the local entrepreneurs for license authorization in the beginning of December and after that the ministry will prepare the final list within days. BTRC Chairman told that they would complete evaluating the applications either at the end of November or at the beginning of December and then send those to the ministry. The former Telecom Secretary said the licenses are expected to be finalized in two weeks after sending the applications to the ministry, which will determine how many will be issued. "The licenses are likely to be issued early January," he said. A senior official at the BTRC's Legal and Licensing Department told that the applications were being evaluated on a 'grade basis' and incomplete applications were being rejected for not having necessary documents. The telecom regulator posted the final VoIP guideline and license application notice on its website on July 22, inviting applications for much-talked about VoIP license to stop illegal call transmission,

legalize the business and encourage the local entrepreneurs to invest more in the telecommunication sector. The license will be issued under the name of "VoIP service Provider (VSP)", it had said. However, the guideline did not mention how many licenses would be provided for this telecom business. The government took the initiative of issuing Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) license last year to stop illegal VoIP business, which has been causing huge revenue losses every year. About 1,500 entrepreneurs applied for VoIP business license by the deadline that expired on Oct 14. In the current guideline, the application fee for VSP has been fixed at Tk 5,000, license fee at Tk 500,000 and annual renewal license fee at Tk 100,000. Firms receiving the license will have to channel 10 percent of their income to government exchequer. According to the BTRC, the legal average daily international calls amount to nearly 30 million minutes while 10 million minutes of calls are made through illegal channel for which the government incurs Tk 50 million in revenue losses every day. The government now gets three cents from each international incoming call. According to the BTRC statistics, Bangladesh receives around 55-60 million minutes VoIP calls a day of which more than 10 million minutes calls are made through illegal channel. The government receives three cents from each international call as per the country's telecommunications act, but due to illegal VoIP, it is deprived of almost Tk 8.0 billion each year. (November 2, 2012) [www.bdnews24.com](http://www.bdnews24.com)

## Egypt

### Executive President: Dr. AmrBadawi

[National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (NTRA)]

Ministry of Communications & Information Technology (MCIT) has reportedly directed France Telecom-Orange to ensure that 15% of the shares in local mobile network operator MobiNil are publicly traded or owned by Egyptian investors. MobiNil issued a statement to the local stock exchange earlier this week confirming the regulator's order, which also claimed that FT-Orange is 'currently studying all options available to accommodate the ministry's request'. Following the resolution of a contracted shareholder dispute between Orascom Telecom Media and Technology Holding (OTMT) and FT-Orange earlier this year, Egyptian Company for Mobile Services (ECMS, operating as MobiNil) is 93.92% owned by MT Telecom, itself a wholly-owned unit of FT-Orange. A 5% stake, meanwhile, is still held by OTMT, while the remainder (1.08%) is in the hands of the public. (November 15, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

The Egyptian government plans to introduce new reforms in the telecommunication industry. The government is mulling a plan to allow state-controlled Telecom Egypt to launch mobile services. While focused on fixed-line services, Telecom Egypt also owns 45% in Vodafone Egypt. The government does not want to bring in another player in a crowded market, so the plan is to convert existing licenses, for fixed and mobile, into universal ones allowing all operators to compete in both fixed and wireless. Telecom Egypt could either launch a MVNO service or have its own network. Telecom Egypt would probably have to pay for the license change, but not too much. (November 5, 2012) [Reuters](http://Reuters)

## Iran

### Minister of communication & Information Technology: Dr. Reza Taghipour

[Communications Regulatory Commission (CRC)]

Iran's Minister of Communication and Information Technology is reportedly pushing for South African group

MTN to sell off a 21% stake in the country's second largest mobile operator, MTN Irancell. The government official claims the stake sale was included in the terms of Irancell's concession. MTN, which currently holds a 49% interest in Irancell, disagrees, however; it insists that the agreement to offload 21% via an initial public offer (IPO) only applied to Irancell's original foreign shareholder, Turkcell of Turkey. In 2005 Turkcell agreed to take a 70% stake in the nascent Irancell operation, with this to be reduced to 49% within three years by way of an IPO. When the deal with Turkcell was abandoned, MTN says that it agreed to take the 49% interest on the understanding that the 21% stake sale would no longer be required. Irancell claimed 39.4 million subscribers and around 45% of the Iranian wireless market at the end of September 2012. (November 8, 2012) [Kabir News](#)

## Iraq

### CEO: Dr. Buhan Shawi

[Communication & Media Commission (CMC)]

Iraq's three mobile operators will be forced to pay at least US\$3 billion apiece to upgrade to 3G concessions. The decision, which was made by a parliamentary higher committee, would mean that Iraq has the dubious distinction of offering the most expensive 3G licenses anywhere in the region. The Communications and Media Commission (CMC) commented that the committee discussed how to give them the spectrum, whether to auction a new license or introduce new fees that the mobile operators will have to pay. They decided that it would be better to go through a new license worth US\$3 billion to US\$6 billion. The decision has been poorly received by the incumbent operators, which say that their respective mobile concessions, for which they paid US\$1.25 billion apiece back in 2007, are technology neutral, and as such encompass both 3G and 4G LTE already.

(November 5, 2012) [The National](#)

Iraq's three mobile networks could be asked to pay at least US\$1 billion, and potentially as much as US\$2 billion each to secure additional radio spectrum for 3G services, a Parliamentary committee has recommended. The three networks paid US\$1.25 billion for their mobile licenses in 2007. The licenses are technology neutral, but the radio spectrum does not include the conventional 2100 MHz spectrum used by many 3G networks. The three networks may have additional funds for the licenses next year, as they are all required to list their shares on the local stock market as a condition of their existing licenses. There has been concern though that the stock market is not capable of handling such large listings and all three networks have missed their original deadlines to list shares. (November 4, 2012) [The National](#)

## Kuwait

### Minister of Communication: Dr. Mohammed Al-Baseeri

[Ministry of Communication (MOC)]

Zain Kuwait has announced that it has launched 4G services. The company stated that the country's first nationwide Long Term Evolution (LTE) offering is available for all compatible mobile phones, tablets, routers, hotspots and dongles. Rival cellco Kuwait Telecom Company Viva launched LTE services in December 2011; however coverage of that network is believed to be restricted to central areas. (November 22, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](#)

## Lebanon

### Acting Chairman & CEO: Dr. Imad Hoballah

[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

Lebanon's telecoms ministry has said internet connection speed in the country has significantly increased between June 2011 and June 2012. "International connectivity has increased 11 times and will soon be redundant with the purchase of an 800 Gbps capacity on the Alexandaros submarine cable," the ministry said.

(November 11, 2012) [The Daily Star](#)

Lebanon will complete a project to link telecoms switchboards across the country with high speed fiber-optic transmission links in April 2013, telecoms minister announced. The 'comprehensive' domestic fiber network would result in raising internet connection speeds by a multiple up to ten times, said the minister. Minister was speaking at the launch of a network operations centre which forms part of a project being carried out by Swedish equipment provider Ericsson, which last year won a US\$6.3 million contract for the first phase of setting up a domestic optical transport network. He added that higher connection speeds would be made available in April to internet access providers including the country's two mobile network operators, Alfa and Touch, as well as hospitals and educational facilities. At a later stage, he said that households would be granted direct access to the fiber network after a tender for building a fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) network is held later this year. The news follows Alfa's announcement that it was carrying out 4G LTE tests, while Touch is expected to follow suit. Following international internet capacity upgrades, the government issued a formal directive in September 2011 to speed up fixed internet connections by between four and eight times (up to 8Mbps), to lower retail DSL costs by 80% and to increase monthly data allowances for broadband users. However, full national rollout of faster speeds based on ADSL2+ connections required fixed line incumbent Ogero to complete equipment upgrades including finishing its fiber-optic transmission backbone rollout to all parts of the country, which at the time was expected to be completed in the second half of 2012. (November 7, 2012) [www.Zawya.com](#)

## Nepal

### Acting Chairman: Mr. Ananda Raj Khanal

[Nepal Telecommunication Authority (NTR)]

According to the Nepal Telecommunications Authority's (NTA's) latest market report, the total number of fixed lines in the country fell to 836,825 at mid-September 2012, from 839,067 a month earlier. In its MIS Report for the month ended 14 September, the watchdog said that Nepal was home to 635,703 PSTN and 201,122 wireless in the local loop (WiLL) connections. State-owned incumbent PTO Nepal Telecom (NT) reported a total of 629,906 PSTN lines up 105 on the month of August, while STM Telecom's base edged up from 5,197 to 5,199. Further Smart Telecom reported 598 PSTN-based public phone booths (broadly unchanged on mid-August). NT also reported 126,740 WiLL customers, down from 129,126 in August, United Telecom Limited's (UTL's) service reported 71,432 WiLL subscribers (71,395), and Nepal Satellite Telecom (NST) had 2,950 (unchanged). The NTA also reported expansion in the number of people taking limited mobility subscriptions. The total rose from 1.14 million to 1.15 million in the period under review, with UTL reporting 582,205 users, Smart Telecom with 418,847, NST with 146,758 and STM with 155. The NTA's MIS Report also counted 1,742 GMPSC users in the country. In the mobile market segment, the NTA noted that the total number of

subscribers stood at 15.81 million at 14 September 2012, compared to 15.63 million in mid-August. The overwhelming majority, 14.98 million are GSM users to either Spice Nepal Private Ncell. The former had 8.60 million GSM customers at mid-September up from 8.49 million, ahead of NT with 6.37 million (6.30 million). In addition, NT counted 832,864 CDMA Sky Phone users, up from 830,172.

(November 29, 2012) [www.nta.gov.np](http://www.nta.gov.np)

Four out of six telecoms service providers in Nepal have applied for the new unified service licenses being offered by the regulator, the Nepal Telecommunications Authority (NTA). The four – Nepal Telecom (NT), Spice Nepal Private (Ncell), Smart Telecom and United Telecom Limited (UTL) – all submitted applications, noting that they have already been paying the requisite license, royalty and frequency fees stated as a condition of obtaining a unified license. NTA added that UTL and Smart – like NT and Ncell – will be eligible to offer GSM and 3G mobile services if their bids are approved. The government of Nepal ratified the planned introduction of a unified licensing scheme around five months ago, allowing network operators to deliver fixed, mobile and data services on a single license in return for a fee of NPR357.50 million (US\$4.09 million) and the agreement to pay a license renewal fee of NPR20.13 billion for ten years. (November 28, 2012) [The Himalaya Times](http://TheHimalayaTimes.com)

## Oman

### Chief Executive Officer: Dr. Hamed Al-Rawahi

[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

Oman has granted a fixed-line telecommunications license for the greater Muscat area to a consortium of Awaser Oman Co and Hong Kong's PCCW International, the regulator said on Monday, a decision that may squeeze earnings at Oman's existing operators. The license is valid for the Governorate of Muscat – home to about a quarter of Oman's estimated 2.8 million people – and will enable the consortium to provide fixed-line data and voice services for 25 years. PCCW International is a subsidiary of PCCW Ltd.

The consortium will compete against Oman Telecommunications Co (Omantel) and Nawras, a subsidiary of Qatar Telecom (Qtel). As the former monopoly, Omantel has an extensive fixed-line network and this provided just over half of its revenue for the nine months to September 30. Fixed-line accounted for 18.5% of Nawras's third-quarter revenue. The Awaser-PCCW license was awarded as fixed-line services lag mobile, which had penetration of 180% – or 1.8 mobile subscriptions per person – at the end of June, according to Oman's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority. Many people hold multiple mobile SIM cards and switch provider depending on which has the best offers for local and international services, with Omantel also hosting two mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs). MVNOs lease network capacity and usually target a particular economic or ethnic group. Fixed-line take-up has been sluggish in comparison – penetration was only 10.7% at the end of June, up 0.6% point since mid-2011, with just over a quarter of households using the Internet on a fixed connection. Yet fixed-line Internet services are lucrative, with monthly average revenue per user (ARPU) of 32.071 rials (\$83.30) in the second quarter, up 1.3% from the previous quarter. Mobile broadband penetration was 51 percent at the end of June. (November 26, 2012) [Reuters](http://Reuters.com)

## Pakistan

### Chairman: Malik Farooq Awan

[Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA)]

The Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA) has finally selected consultants for its long-awaited 3G auction, reports Pro Pakistani. The PTA received 51 applications, 27 of which were qualified, before selecting three via a short listing and selection committee. The plans to auction 3G licenses earlier this year ran into difficulties when it emerged that the PTA had not followed approved procedures for the selection of advisory consultants, raising suspicions of potential foul play. The tender is now expected to take place in mid-January 2013 and would look to draw in new international investors. The three consultants have been hired for a three-month period, at a total cost of US\$545,000, whilst the PTA chairman reportedly expects the auction to generate USD900 million for state coffers. (November 22, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

The Pakistani government prohibited cell phone number portability, barring mobile phone subscribers from switching to other service providers while retaining the number from their original network, media reported. The Interior Ministry made the decision because portability was making it more difficult to trace the whereabouts of suspected criminals. Interior Minister presided over the meeting. The conferees also decided that service providers would issue a new cell phone connection or subscriber identity module (SIM) only on the production of a computerized national identity card and utility bills by an applicant, media added. (November 10, 2012) [Central Asia Online](http://CentralAsiaOnline.com)

The long-awaited auction of 3G concessions has been further delayed by problems hiring a consultant for the sale. Three firms submitted bids to the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) for the role and all three were disqualified: two were dismissed on financial grounds, whilst the third was ruled out for security reasons. PTA was forced to postpone an attempt to tender the licenses in March this year after the Auction Supervisory Committee (ASC) voiced concerns over the regulator's short listing of consultants for the auction. The PTA had bypassed directions from the ASC to form an evaluation committee to narrow down the list of candidates and instead hand-picked four firms, raising suspicions of potential foul play. (November 5, 2012) [www.propakistani.com](http://www.propakistani.com)

## Qatar

### Executive Director: Ms. Christa Cramer

[The Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technology (ictQATAR)]

ictQATAR has published its Regulatory Authority Annual Report outlining the Authority's key accomplishments during the past year. The Report, published on November 15, 2012, showcases the measures the Authority has taken throughout the year to foster competitive markets in order to promote the efficient, fairly priced and high-quality supply of telecommunications services to end-users, and to promote public confidence in the telecommunications sector. The Report highlights key initiatives that have been implemented throughout the past year as part of ictQATAR's commitment to safeguarding consumer rights and ensuring a competitive, robust telecommunications market in the State of Qatar. Key Regulatory Authority initiatives and activities during 2011 included:

- Consumer Affairs Department.
- Strategic Sector Review.
- Numbering Management System.
- Market Definition and Dominance Designation

- Type Approval Guidelines for RTTE
- Launch of "Qatar" and the Qatar Domains Registry (QDR)

The Report also highlighted several new licenses issued throughout the year including: the Resale Class License authorizing retail resale of telecom services by hotels, public call offices, Internet cafes and wireless Internet zones, the Private Network Class License authorizes ownership and operation of a private telecommunications network. Additionally, QNBN was authorized to provide wholesale fixed telecom infrastructure. (November 18, 2012) [www.ictqatar.qa](http://www.ictqatar.qa)

Passive broadband network operator Qatar National Broadband Network Company (QNBN) has signed an agreement with Swedish technology provider Ericsson to deploy its fiber-to-the-x (FTTx) infrastructure across Qatar, with rollout to start 'immediately'. QNBN's passive network will provide equal and open access to operators while offering a choice of service provider for the end-user. Qatar's government established QNBN in 2011 to accelerate the rollout of a nationwide high speed, accessible fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) network, and it aims to provide fiber access to citizens and businesses, targeting 95% coverage. (October 18, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

Vodafone Qatar has reported an 18% year-on-year rise in total revenue to QAR696 million (US\$191 million) in the six months ended September 30, 2012, the first half of its UK-based parent group's fiscal year, driven by a growing customer base, improved ARPU and higher handset sales. Six-month EBITDA grew 15% to QAR102 million. Net loss for the period widened to QAR240 million from QAR237 million in the corresponding period of 2011, partly due to a one-off QAR25 million accounting gain last year. Mobile subscribers increased by 15% year-on-year to 936,300 at the end of September 2012, and ARPU for the six-month period was QAR118 – up by 7.0% year-on-year due to strong demand for data services, and the company expects a further boost in take-up from the introduction of mobile number portability next spring. Vodafone Qatar is also preparing for a 4G LTE trial in Q1 2013, while in its fledgling fixed broadband segment it noted that its first enterprise customers in the Barwa City area now have access to broadband services with up to 100Mbps connection speeds. The UK's Vodafone Group, which owns a minority stake in Vodafone Qatar but has management control, has extended its original five-year management contract by another five years to June 2018. As part of the deal Vodafone Group reduced the percentage of the cellco's revenues it receives as management fees, from 5% to 3.5%, 'to reflect the increased scale of the business and the transition to a fixed and mobile operation,' a joint statement read yesterday. 45% of Vodafone Qatar's shares are controlled by Vodafone & Qatar Foundation LLC, a UK-Qatari joint venture 51% owned by Vodafone Group, giving the latter a 22.95% overall stake; the British firm has overall board control and has expressed confidence that there will be an opportunity in the future to take a majority stake in its Qatari business. (November 15, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

### Saudi Arabia

#### Governor: Eng. Abdullah A. Al Darrab

[Communication & Information Technology Commission (CITC)]

The telecom regulator CITC has ordered network Etihad Etisalat (Mobily) to suspend sales of new prepaid SIM cards. The company said that the ban is a temporary one and will remain in place until it fully meets the prepaid service provisioning requirements. The requirements include

the CITC decision that links prepaid SIM re-charge to the customers ID number. In a statement, Mobily said that the financial impact of such decision will be insignificant, especially that the revenue drivers and growth areas for Mobily are the data, corporate and postpaid revenues.

(November 25, 2012) [www.cellular-news.com](http://www.cellular-news.com)

### Sri Lanka

#### Director General: Mr. Anusha Palpita

[Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (TRC)]

Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (TRC) has taken a decision to auction frequency licenses for 4G Long Term Evolution (LTE) mobile broadband services by the end of this year, according to the director general of the watchdog, Anusha Pelpita, who was quoted by internet news service Colombopage.com as saying that 4G networks could be commercially launched next year. No official announcement on the 4G auction date has yet been issued. The delays to LTE launches had been caused by the regulator needing extra time for determining frequency allocations and 'other practical regulatory procedures', according to an expert consultant to the watchdog.

(November 16, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

Sri Lanka will halve taxes on high-speed broadband services to 10% to make the service cheaper in an effort to develop the island's budding information communications technology industry, President Mahinda Rajapaksa said. Income tax on the ICT sector will be kept at a maximum 16%. Rajapaksa, who is also finance minister, told parliament, while presenting the government budget for 2013. The island's business process outsourcing firms and foreign investors in the sector have complained the high cost of broadband services was hindering expansion. The sector has annual export earnings of around 400 million US dollars which the government aims to increase to a billion dollars in the next few years and generate 150,000 jobs, he said. The government has identified the ICT sector, especially business process outsourcing, as one that has potential to increase foreign exchange earnings and generate more employment.

(November 8, 2012) [www.lankabusinessonline.com](http://www.lankabusinessonline.com)

According to Sri Lanka's Central Bank, the country's internet subscriber base increased by 77.3% year-on-year during the second quarter of 2012 to 1.15 million, while fixed line telephony lines in service decreased by 3.5% in the same period to 3.43 million. The number of public payphones in the country also continued to drop, decreasing by 10.8% to 7,035 at the end of the quarter.

(November 6, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

### Turkey

#### Chairman & CEO: Dr. Tayfun Acarer

[Information & Communication Technologies Authority (BTK)]

Moody's Investors Service has upgraded Turkey based Turkcell's debt ratings and said that the outlook is now stable. "Today's upgrade reflects Turkcell's improved operating performance in the first nine months of 2012," says Moody's Vice President -- Senior Analyst and lead analyst on Turkcell. "The resulting strengthened liquidity profile will allow the company to face a number of potential cash calls, which Moody's assumes to include potential dividend payments for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 of \$1.1 billion line with the company's general dividend policy to pay out minimum 50% of net distributable income and potential Greenfield investments or acquisitions of up to \$500 million," adds VP. In the first nine months of 2012, Turkcell improved its financial performance with debt/

EBITDA decreasing to 1.4x from 1.6x as of year-end 2011 and retained cash flow (RCF)/debt strengthening to 64.6% for the 12-month period ending September 2012 from 47.9% as of year-end 2011. Additionally, as a consequence of Euroasia default in March 2012, cross default clauses have been triggered on four loan agreements. In July 2012, waivers were obtained from the related banks, resulting in no imminent cash need. Moody's has kept Turkcell's ratings on par with the sovereign rating for Turkey, as, in the rating agency's view, the shareholder conflict as well as the high contribution from the domestic market do not warrant a delineation. Firstly, with more than 80% of revenues and EBITDA generated in the domestic market, the correlation between Turkcell and the macroeconomic environment in Turkey remains high with little diversification benefits from countries that also have weaker sovereign credit profiles than that of Turkey. Secondly, although the shareholder conflict has not had a negative impact on the company's day-to-day operations, it has constrained decisions that Moody's believes are of significance with regards to sizeable shareholder distributions, with no dividends for 2010 and 2011 having been dispersed despite a recommendation from the board for 2010; and weaknesses in the governance structure, as evidenced by a gridlock over a number of issues such as convening shareholders' meetings. Therefore, the financials may in fact be stronger, while the shareholder conflict is constraining action, than it will ultimately be once the governance issues are addressed. The stable outlook reflects Moody's assumption that Turkcell's financial profile will remain strong with debt/EBITDA around 2.0x and RCF/debt around 40%. The stable outlook also assumes that the shareholder dispute will not have an impact on the company's day-to-day operations.

(November 1, 2012) [www.cellular-news.com](http://www.cellular-news.com)

## United Arab Emirates

### Director General: Mr. Mohamed Nasser Al Ghanim

[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

The UAE is "a great working example" of the true power of information and communication technology, or ICTs, for economic growth, social development and modernization in the 21st century, the head of International Telecommunication Union said. Dr Hamadoun Toure, Secretary General of the ITU, said ICT has become a driving force for growth in the UAE. "It is a fundamental component used in creating employment; in attracting skilled labor into the region; and in transforming public services by increasingly taking advantage of new technologies," he said at the opening of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly 2012 in Dubai. The assembly is taking place for the first time in the Middle East. Hosted by the TRA, this United Nations event takes place once every four years and is organized by the ITU. Toure said Dubai has transformed itself into one of the Middle East's most important economic centers and is one of the greatest symbols of human achievement in the modern world. Toure said the mandate of the WTSA -- which gathers every four years -- is to define the roadmap for standardization in the world telecommunications. "Global standards in ICT will help avoid costly market battles over preferred technologies. And for companies from emerging markets, they create a level playing field, providing equal access to markets. Standards are also essential for international communications and global trade. They are also fundamental in assisting developing countries in rolling out infrastructure and encouraging greater levels of social and economic development. Standards can also reduce costs for manufacturers, operators and consumers, through

economies of scale," Toure said. "We have seen mobile telephony become almost ubiquitous, with over six billion mobile cellular subscriptions worldwide, and well over 100 countries now have mobile penetration rates of over 100 per cent," said Toure. According to him, the next big challenge is clearly to replicate the mobile miracle for broadband, to ensure that the entire world's people have affordable and equitable access to advanced communications services. He said the ITU and UNESCO set up the Broadband Commission for Digital Development - to advocate for increased global broadband infrastructure rollout and access. Toure said over the past four years, ITU has also strengthened its resolve to bridge the Five hundred million customers around the world are now connected using broadband equipment based on the work of ITU's Standardization Sector, and 95 per cent of all international traffic runs over optical fiber, the standards for which are based on ITU's work. ITU chief said standardization and interoperability are at the core of information communication technologies. "They are essential to ensure that the host of different devices, communication networks and protocols can communicate and work in parallel to deliver services to end-users with reliability, affordability, and without delay no matter their circumstances," he said. Toure said ITU has been the driving force pushing forward the frontiers of the future ICT. "These new frontiers of ICT include cloud computing, the Internet of Things, intelligent transport systems, the transition to IPv6, advanced multimedia, and Internet Protocol TV (IPTV)." He said ITU's technical standardization work is helping to realize the vision of a fully-networked society, as users expect to be able to access high-speed services anytime, anywhere, over any device. (November 21, 2012) [www.zawya.com](http://www.zawya.com)

The United Arab Emirates has no plans to permit the use of MVNO based services in the country, the telecoms regulator has announced, quashing persistent rumors about the plans. "There are no plans for MVNO and we are happy with the current structure of the market," the Director General of the TRA told. The country is split between two networks, Etisalat and Du and market penetration is one of the highest in the world at over 230 percent thanks to the large expat community. Just Oman and Jordan allow MVNOs in the region. (November 20, 2012) [The National](http://TheNational)

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) will be hosting three important United Nations conferences on telecommunications in November and December of 2012. The conferences will be organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). These conferences are taking place for the first time in the Middle East, a great feat for the UAE and a reflection of the country's growing status in the international telecommunications arena. The Global Standards Symposium (GSS) takes place on the November 19, 2012, the World Telecommunications Standardization Assembly (WTSA) is from November 20-29, 2012, and the World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT) held after 24 years since its last iteration, starts on the December 3 and concludes on December 14, 2012. (November 19, 2012) [www.gulftoday.ae](http://www.gulftoday.ae)

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) hosted the Internet Protocol Version 6 (IPv6) Workshop. The IPv6 Workshop introduced key internet stakeholders to the business drivers and challenges for IPv6 adoption. Over 50 public and private sector entities gathered for two days discussing ways to ensure internet business continuity. The program helps support Governments, businesses and

other internet stakeholders to collectively coordinate and cooperate in devising policies, strategies and action plans with the aim to raise awareness and promote the deployment and usage of IPv6. The workshop comes as part of TRA's IPv6 strategy development initiatives preparing the UAE and its internet users for the expected IPv4 exhaustion. The program will help the UAE secure healthy levels of growth and development that have long characterized the nation's ICT sector, preserving its leadership role in economic and social development. (November 5, 2012) [www.ameinfo.com](http://www.ameinfo.com)

## Yemen

### Minister of Telecommunication & information Technology: Dr. Ahmed Ebeid Bin Dagher

[Ministry of Telecommunication & information Technology (MCITT)]

The Yemeni government has begun installing a national WiMAX network to improve the availability of internet access, reports National Yemen. The project is to be completed in two phases and will see the deployment of 28 stations covering Sanaa and Aden. The rollout is expected to cost YER591 million (US\$2.736 million). Commenting at a ceremony marking the launch of the project, Minister of Telecommunications said that they are looking for all the people to benefit from this technology and it will be available to all kinds of people, and not just a specific group. It will be helpful in many fields – in education, health, communication. (November 20, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

## Regulatory Activities Beyond the SAMENA Region

### ITU

The World Telecommunications Standardization Assembly (WTSA) came to a conclusion in Dubai after discussing proposals submitted by member states regarding international telecommunications over 12 days of sessions and meetings. The Assembly, which convened on November 20 and was organized by the UN's International Telecommunication Union (ITU), took place for the first time in the Middle East and was hosted by the TRA. During his closing address, Director General of the TRA said that such meetings allow us to unify our vision and aspirations when it comes to ICTs, in a way that would help the industry develop all around the globe, particularly in developing nations for whom this sector can offer so much in terms of addressing numerous economical, educational, social, and health-related issues. Director General also thanked everyone involved in the preparations for WTSA. Over 1000 participants from member states, industry, and academia engaged in discussions around the areas that need to be further studied to produce new or amended standards for world telecommunications. A number of resolutions were passed, including one concerning the applications and standards for ICTs in order to improve access to e-health services, and a resolution on the role of ICTs in e-waste management. A number of resolutions were amended and updated. The Arab delegation's list of candidates for the standardization sector at the ITU has been approved for the next study period 2012-2016. (November 29, 2012) [www.tra.gov.ae](http://www.tra.gov.ae)

### SAMENA

The Board of Directors of SAMENA Telecommunications Council, the tri-regional consortium of telecom operators, chaired by Sh. Mohamed Bin Isa Al Khalifa, announced the appointment of Bocar A. BA, as its new Chief Executive Officer. Bocar has been with the SAMENA Council since its early foundation stages and brings with him 22 years of experience in telecom consensus, advocacy and business development. He has held various senior management positions in major corporations in France. He has also worked closely with several institutions to promote growth, investment and cooperation between developed and developing countries in Europe and the Middle East. Sheikh Mohamed Bin Isa Al Khalifa, CEO of Batelco Group and Chairman of the Board of SAMENA Telecommunications Council said, "I am delighted to announce that the Board has appointed Bocar A. BA, as Chief Executive Officer to lead the Council forward and

further enhance its efforts in transforming the regional ICT environment. Bocar has played a crucial role in promoting the Council's agenda and driving membership development. He has also achieved several successes in policy advocacy reflecting the Telecom Operators viewpoints in coordination with Policy Makers and Regulators. The Board is confident that he will build on the Council achievements and take it to new heights." Having resigned as the CEO of the SAMENA Council in order to pursue and focus on new opportunities in the region, Thomas W. Wilson said, "I wish to thank all of the stakeholders in the industry for supporting the SAMENA Council and helping it achieve the level of growth that it has today. It's an absolute pleasure to have served under Mohamed Issa AlKhalifa and the past Chairmen of the Council, and have worked so closely with the member operators and policy regulators in the SAMENA region. I am convinced that SAMENA will continue to grow and support the industry with continued success. I have worked closely with Bocar over the past years and wish him the very best in his new role." The Board of Directors of the SAMENA Council expressed gratitude and thanked Thomas Wilson for his energy, dedication and vision which has played a significant role in the success of the organization and the global recognition it has earned as an important regional telecommunications platform under his leadership. Bocar A. BA, on being appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer said, "I am honored by the Board's confidence and the opportunity to continue leading the agenda of such an important organization like the SAMENA Council. We are on the verge of embarking on a very challenging journey with regard to the global and regional telecommunications industry." "With over 90 leading regional and international organizations including over 38 Telecom Operators currently as members of the SAMENA Council, I am looking forward to further developing our collaboration with the Policy Makers, Regulators and Governments", added Bocar. Bocar also serves as a board member of several companies in Technology and Management & Consultancy Services and is driving the awareness of the value of technology in everyday life across the region. His expertise includes enabling companies in building solid relationships with global customers, identifying untapped revenue growth opportunities, consolidating multiple contracts for government cooperation and developing strategies for market penetration in emerging countries throughout the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

(November 12, 2012) [www.samenacouncil.org](http://www.samenacouncil.org)

## United States

The Federal Communications Commission FCC is to look in to how the mobile networks coped in the aftermath of the Hurricane Sandy that cut off power and communications across the North-East of the country. The hearings will focus on the unique challenges faced by communications service providers, state and local officials, emergency personnel, and consumers before, during and after Superstorm Sandy as well as other natural disasters. FCC Chairman Genachowski said, "This unprecedented storm has revealed new challenges that will require a national dialogue around ideas and actions to ensure the resilience of communications networks." The hearings will enquire as to what extent did service providers take advantage of advance notice about the storm's arrival to stage communications assets such as portable cell sites to reduce the effects of the storm? The review will also look at how the networks can share facilities and services during major outages - as several did on an ad-hock basis following the recent storm. The other issue, which caused some concern is that when commercial power is unavailable, how long should back-up power sources be expected to last? While many base stations had back-up power, in some areas it took longer to restore electricity supplies, resulting in coverage reducing in places as the cleanup advanced. The review will also look at how the restoration of communications services can proceed faster or services remain operational for longer. A potentially controversial issue is whether the networks would be allowed to prioritize traffic based on its type - such as blocking video services or other bandwidth heavy platforms during disasters. This would be controversial as it would break the principle of "net neutrality", albeit in desperate times. Beginning in early 2013, hearings will take place throughout the country in locations that have experienced major natural disasters, starting in New York. They will include businesses, public safety officials, engineering and academic experts, consumers and other stakeholders.

(November 21, 2012) [www.cellular-news.com](http://www.cellular-news.com)

## Argentina

Argentina plans to auction mobile spectrum suitable for the provision of 4G services next year. The move is expected to help the country's mobile operators to meet the growing demand for data services from consumers, although the government will probably retain an 'important' quantity of that spectrum. In September the government announced that it had called off a much-delayed auction of 3G spectrum, as only one bidder - America Movil-owned Claro - had met the financial requirements of the tender. Instead, the spectrum was handed to state-owned satellite and telecoms operator Arsat, which will operate almost 25% of the country's 3G frequencies and is expected to use the spectrum in partnership with small- and medium-sized companies and local cooperatives to provide services in rural areas. Arsat's eventual entry in the wireless market and the planned 4G spectrum auction should resolve complaints from consumers about poor service quality.

(November 27, 2012) [Dow Jones Newswires](http://Dow Jones Newswires)

## European Union

The European Commission has today decided to add another 120 MHz to the radio spectrum portfolio for 4G technologies, such as LTE, around the 2 GHz band. This band is currently solely used for 3G networks. The Decision makes it mandatory for Member States to open the relevant spectrum by June 30, 2014 at the latest, and lays down

harmonized technical conditions to allow coexistence between different technologies. On this basis the EU will enjoy up to twice the amount of spectrum for high speed wireless broadband as in the United States, namely around 1000 MHz. The Commission's decision means mobile operators will have more opportunities to invest in improved mobile networks, which benefits the whole economy, and consumers will, over time, enjoy faster data transfers and more broadband services. Greater access to spectrum for 4G technologies will make a substantial contribution to the Digital Agenda broadband target of universal EU broadband coverage of at least 30 Mb/s by 2020. European Commission Vice President Neelie Kroes said: "This extra spectrum for 4G in Europe means we can better meet the changing and growing demand for broadband. I want to see Member States acting swiftly to change existing licenses. We all win from faster wireless connections in Europe." The Decision enforces the harmonized liberalization of the 2 GHz band (1920-1980 MHz paired with 2110-2170 MHz) in all Member States, avoiding internal market fragmentation in the future use of this band. Introducing flexibility of use in spectrum bands by removing technology restrictions offers a cost-effective way for deploying advanced wireless infrastructure in response to market demand.

(November 6, 2012) [www.investineu.com](http://www.investineu.com)

The European Commission has said that member Governments must, by June 2014, allow mobile operators to deploy LTE services in spectrum that is currently reserved for UMTS. The EC has released a Decision making it mandatory for Governments to allow operators to refarm 3G spectrum for LTE use. The spectrum bands in question are at 1920-1980 MHz paired with 2110-2170 MHz; these are the bands currently used by operators for UMTS, or 3G, services. The Commission also added that it is looking at the re-allocation of unused unpaired, or TDD, spectrum in the band, and is considering "alternative applications to terrestrial mobile broadband". That could have implications for operators who had been considering opening services using previously unused TDD spectrum (1900-1920 MHz and 2010-2025 MHz) at some point in the future. The Commission has already issued a Mandate to CEPT (European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations) to study suitable applications and develop appropriate technical conditions and sharing arrangements for the unpaired spectrum in those bands. The EC is committed to allocating a total of 1200 MHz of spectrum available for 4G technologies, and said that opening up the 2 GHz UMTS bands would bring the total available spectrum to 1000 MHz. It said this is twice the spectrum the USA has made available for 4G technologies. European Commission Vice President Neelie Kroes said: "This extra spectrum for 4G in Europe means we can better meet the changing and growing demand for broadband. I want to see Member States acting swiftly to change existing licenses. We all win from faster wireless connections in Europe." A similar EC Decision enabled EE's recent re-farming of 1800 MHz spectrum for LTE use, so such decisions can have tangible impact upon market dynamics. One proviso is that re-farming 2100 MHz spectrum would require compatible devices, thereby adding another LTE band to the device landscape.

(November 5, 2012) [www.mobileeurope.co.uk](http://www.mobileeurope.co.uk)

## United Kingdom

UK telecoms regulator OFCOM has taken another step towards enabling consumer devices to make use of white spaces spectrum. OFCOM has now published detailed

proposals for a framework to allow white spaces spectrum to be utilized by consumer wireless devices, and kicked off a fresh consultation on its proposals — which will run until January 10 next year. OFCOM said additional steps next year will involve the EC — with a possible UK launch date “towards” the end of 2013. The regulator has also confirmed its previously stated preference for white spaces spectrum to be license-exempt. Doing this will require new legislation, and OFCOM has published an example of how the legislation might look. (November 23, 2012) [www.techcrunch.com](http://www.techcrunch.com)

Frequency from the 700 MHz spectrum band is set to be released under new plans from OFCOM. OFCOM has unveiled plans to release new airwaves from the 700 MHz spectrum band in an attempt to meet growing consumer demand for fast mobile broadband access. Under the proposals, mobile network operators will be able to take advantage of frequency that is currently used for the delivery of digital terrestrial TV services. The new airwaves can be released without the need for a further TV switchover. The 700 MHz band has been chosen as part of the effort to harmonize mobile broadband spectrum planning across Europe and the rest of the world. It is hoped that by using the same frequencies of spectrum, different countries will be able to benefit from economies of scale and wider availability of mobile devices, which should in turn reduce prices for the end user. The announcement comes as new data published by OFCOM revealed Brits are now consuming 20 million GB of data - equivalent to five billion music tracks - via mobile networks every month. OFCOM chief executive Ed Richards said: “Our plans are designed to avoid a ‘capacity crunch’, ensuring that the UK’s mobile infrastructure can continue to support the inescapable growth in consumer demand and economic growth more generally.” (November 19, 2012) [www.cable.co.uk](http://www.cable.co.uk)

OFCOM has provisionally given mobile operators until December 11 to submit their applications to take part in the upcoming 4G network auction. The regulator plans to introduce rules governing how 4G licenses will be awarded on November 23, and will confirm the December submissions deadline around this time. The organization also revealed the auction could raise at least £1.3 billion. Once the application deadline passes, OFCOM will grant permission for successful candidates to bid in the auction, which is expected to take place in January. Operators will be invited to submit their bids via a secure internet connection, using software that has been specifically developed for the auction. The bid winners will then be notified in February or March, and licenses will be granted shortly after. 4G services from a range of network providers are then expected to go live in May or June 2013. At present, EE is the only UK mobile operator offering 4G to customers, after it was granted permission by OFCOM to reuse part of its 1800 MHz spectrum to deliver the service back in August. The move prompted anger from its rivals, who will have to wait for the outcome of the 4G auction to rollout their own 4G networks. Ed Richards, chief executive of OFCOM, said the announcement marks an important milestone in the wide-scale deployment of 4G services across the UK. “The entire industry is now focused on the auction itself, with a shared goal of delivering new and improved mobile services for consumers,” said Richards. (November 12, 2012) [www.itpro.co.uk](http://www.itpro.co.uk)

## Finland

The Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority has announced that registration for Finland’s auction of the 800 MHz frequency band has begun. Registrations will be accepted until December 17 and the auction begins on January 24, 2013. A total of 2x30 MHz of frequencies are for sale in the 800 MHz frequency band, to be auctioned in 2x5 MHz frequency pairs. Any bidder may be awarded a maximum of three frequency pairs. The Government will grant the winning bidders a license for a fixed period of 20 years. The licenses to be granted will cover the whole of Finland excluding the Region of Åland. (November 20, 2012) [www.cellular-news.com](http://www.cellular-news.com)

## Germany

The Federal Network Agency (FNA) has published its proposal for new mobile termination rates charged by the country’s four mobile network operators. From December 1, 2012 the watchdog suggests that the rate fall to a uniform EUR0.0185 (US\$0.024) per minute from the previous fees of EUR0.0336 for Royal KPN’s local unit E-Plus and UK-based Vodafone Germany, EUR0.0338 for Telekom Deutschland and EUR0.0339 for Spain’s Telefonica (O2). In a second step, mobile termination rates will drop further, to EUR0.0179 per minute, on December 1, 2013. The announced rate cuts are provisional and subject to a national consultation procedure and subsequent feedback from the European Commission and regulators in other European Union member states. (November 20, 2012) [Reuters](http://Reuters)

Telecoms regulator, the Bundesnetzagentur presented its scenarios for the future provision of mobile spectrum at an information event held for interested parties. The scenarios concern in particular the GSM frequencies in the 900 MHz and 1800 MHz bands where assignments expire in 2016. The scenarios presented range from renewing frequency usage rights to auctioning these frequencies along with additional spectrum. The strong growth in demand for mobile broadband leads to a consistently high demand for spectrum. The aim behind our scenarios presented today is to clarify at the earliest possible stage how the spectrum will be made available. We particularly need to look at the option of assigning the GSM frequencies together with other spectrum, such as the UMTS frequencies for which assignments expire in 2020, emphasized Bundesnetzagentur President. Last year the Bundesnetzagentur published its first key elements outlining the procedure for the future provision of the frequencies in the 900 MHz and 1800 MHz bands. A formal requirements assessment procedure was also launched. The Bundesnetzagentur followed this up with an analysis paper put out to consultation in spring of this year. The scenarios published today reflect the results and comments derived from these procedures. All interested parties now have until January 31, 2013 to submit their comments. (November 12, 2012) [www.cellular-news.com](http://www.cellular-news.com)

## Belgium

The telecoms regulator, BIPT has published a proposal for the use of the 800 MHz band for mobile broadband services. According to the European Radio Spectrum Policy Program, Member States should carry out the authorization process before January 2013 in order for the 800 MHz band (also called “digital dividend”) to be available for electronic communications services. Considering the importance of the allocation of the frequency band, BIPT launched a

public consultation at the request of Minister Vande Lanotte regarding a bill amending the Electronic Communications Act (ECA) and a draft royal decree with regard to the terms for allocation and use of this frequency band. The draft royal decree and the bill are underpinned by the study carried out by AethConsulting Limited and NERA Economic Consulting, carried out for BIPT. This study issues a series of recommendations more in particular on:

- The frequency blocks in the 800 MHz band to be auctioned; 3 lots of 10 MHz duplex;
- The coverage requirements to be complied with: 98% of the population after 6 years; - quality obligations to be complied with: a compulsory average download speed of 3Mbit/sec;
- The allocation procedure, including a minimum entry bid (90 million euro per lot for a 15- year period).

BIPT hopes to complete this allocation procedure by the end of next year, provided that the texts are approved in due time. (November 19, 2012) [www.cellular-news.com](http://www.cellular-news.com)

The Belgian Institute for Post and Telecommunications (BIPT) has launched a consultation commissioned by economy minister on a bill amending the Electronic Communications Act and a draft royal decree as regards the terms for allocation and use of the 800MHz frequency band. Alongside this, the regulator has also published a study regarding the terms for allocation and use of the band, carried out by an independent external consultant. The plans fall in line with the European Radio Spectrum Policy Program, which requires member states to designate the 800 MHz band for wireless broadband services by January 1, 2013. The BIPT noted that a number of recommendations had been made in the study it has released, with those including: the number of blocks of spectrum to be auctioned (3x10MHz duplex); population coverage requirements (98% within six years); quality obligations (a compulsory average download speed of 3Mbps); and a minimum entry bid (EUR90 million [US\$114 million] per lot for a 15-year period). The consultation is open until December 14, 2012, following which the BIPT has said it hopes to complete the spectrum allocation before the end of 2013, provided the revised regulations are introduced in due time. (November 16, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

## Norway

The Norwegian Post & Telecoms Authority (NPT) has announced that its auction of spectrum in the 2GHz band ended after just a single round. Having begun a consultation on the rules for the sale process back in September 2012, the regulator at that date confirmed it planned to offer a total of nine blocks – two lots of 2x4.8 MHz and seven lots of 2x5.0 MHz – in the 1920 MHz-1980 MHz/2110 MHz-2170 MHz bands, with the nationwide concessions on offer to be technology neutral and valid for a 20-year period. In calling for feedback on the proposals the NPT confirmed that it was recommending a cap on the number of frequency blocks each participant would be allowed to bid for, and it produced a separate document detailing its reasons for implementing such a restriction. With the sale getting underway on 19 November as planned, in the event all nine blocks were sold at the reserve price of NOK5 million (US\$866,482) per block. Five bidders had registered to take part in the auction, but the NPT revealed that two of those withdrew from the auction, with one doing so just 24 minutes before the first round began, and after the auction process had officially started. Due to the regulator's restriction on the amount of spectrum any one company could win, the sale

was concluded after the first round, with TeliaSonera and Telenor each laying claim to the maximum of four blocks each, while Tele2-owned Mobile Norway won the final block of spectrum. In announcing the results, the NPT noted that the outcome meant that all three of the aforementioned operators now hold the same amount of spectrum in the 2GHz band of approximately 2x20MHz.

(November 20, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](http://www.telegeography.com)

## Czech Republic

The Czech Telecommunications Office (CTU) has announced that the tender for the sale of frequencies for 4G LTE mobile services is being left open for the time being, and that it will not announce the results as originally planned. No reason was given for the regulator's decision and no new date has been published on when the auction of 800 MHz, 1800 MHz and 2600 MHz spectrum will end. The outcome of the LTE auction will be determined by the level of 'further interest of the auction participants in the offered frequencies'. Earlier this month the CTU launched its auction of frequencies suitable for the provision of 4G services in the country. The process is expected to see four pre-qualified bidders – incumbents T-Mobile Czech Republic, Telefonica O2 CR and Vodafone Czech Republic and local financial firm PPF Group's subsidiary PPF Mobile Services – taking part for spectrum in bands available. The watchdog will auction off spectrum in three frequency bands, with the lowest band considered key to developing widespread high speed broadband mobile internet coverage across the country. The reserve price for this band has been set at CZK1.1 billion (US\$54.89 million) for the six blocks on offer but, partly in response to comments from industry players, it is understood the CTU believes that an extension in national roaming conditions would be the best way for a newcomer to get off the ground without prohibitive start-up costs. The regulator also now intends to cut the cost of new frequencies in the 1800 MHz band by 20% to attract a newcomer, with the PPF Group considered the only viable contender to establish a venture to challenge the big three incumbents at this time. However, analysts remain to be convinced that that Czech mobile market is big enough and lucrative enough to support a new entrant. (November 29, 2012) [Reuters](http://Reuters)

The Czech Telecommunication Office (CTU) has launched its auction of mobile frequencies suitable for the provision of 4G mobile services in the country. CTU spokesman is quoted as saying that the process will see four pre-qualified bidders – incumbents T-Mobile Czech Republic, Telefonica O2 CR and Vodafone Czech Republic and local financial firm PPF Group's subsidiary PPF Mobile Services – taking part for spectrum in the 800 MHz, 1800 MHz and 2600 MHz bands. The auction will close on December 20, 2012 and the winners will be announced soon after. The watchdog will auction off spectrum in three frequency bands, with the lowest band considered key to developing widespread high speed broadband mobile internet coverage across the country. The reserve price for this band has been set at CZK1.1 billion (US\$54.89 million) for the six blocks on offer but, partly in response to comments from industry players, it is understood the CTU believes that an extension in national roaming conditions would be the best way for a newcomer to get off the ground without prohibitive start-up costs. The regulator also now intends to cut the cost of new frequencies in the 1800 MHz band by 20% to attract a newcomer, with the PPF Group considered the only viable contender to establish a venture to challenge the big three

incumbents at this time. However, analysts remain to be convinced that that Czech mobile market is big enough and lucrative enough to support a new entrant.

(November 21, 2012) [Bloomberg News](#)

## Russia

Mobile number portability (MNP) is belatedly set to arrive in Russia, after the State Duma (lower house of the Federal Assembly) granted its initial approval to a bill regarding the introduction of the service. The bill, which was read on November 23, stipulates that the cost of the service to end-users must not exceed RUB100 (US\$3.22). However, the State Duma must approve the bill in three separate readings during its autumn session, before it can be passed to the Federation Council of Russia, or upper house, and eventually be signed into law by the President. If the legislation is processed according to plan, MNP services could be available as soon as December 1, 2013.

(November 26, 2012) [Prime-Tass News Agency](#)

## Australia

Australia's Communications Minister, Stephen Conroy has intervened in the country's forthcoming radio spectrum auction in order to set the reserve prices himself. The telecoms regulator normally sets the floor-price for spectrum auctions, but the government Minister has the ability to overturn their decisions and impose a different level. The government is expecting to rise up to AU\$4 billion for the government, but the level of competition in the auction has been in doubt following suggestions that Vodafone might not participate. With a lack of bidders, the spectrum is likely to sell for the reserve price, and won't meet the government revenue raising expectations. The regulator, the ACMA has now to wait until the Minister confirms how much revenue the spectrum auction is required to raise, and then depending on how many bidders there are, will have to set the reserve price accordingly. The auction for both 700 MHz and 2.5 GHz bands is set for next April. Although the Ministerial intervention is not expected to delay the auction, it may cause the preparatory schedule to be compressed to meet the deadline. (November 21, 2012) [The Australian](#)

Telecom regulator ACMA says that it has been a key driver in developing a block of radio spectrum, the APT 700 MHz plan, which identifies 45 MHz of paired spectrum within 703-803 MHz optimized for mobile broadband. The plan has been adopted as a standard by the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP) for LTE services. In a recent speech delivered in Mexico City, ACMA Chairman Chris Chapman said that "the increasing adoption of the APT 700 MHz plan around the world is testimony to the efficiency and utility of the plan and recognition of the immense economies of scale and roaming benefits the plan will make available." Mr. Chapman's presentation at the Latin American Spectrum Conference 2012 is part of a coordinated effort by the ACMA to advocate global adoption of the APT 700 MHz band plan. In 2013, as part of the digital dividend auction, the ACMA will allocate the 700 MHz band using the APT band plan. The ACMA says that the only real alternative to the APT 700MHz band plan is the USA's 700MHz band plan, which is highly fragmented and offers far less spectrum for mobile broadband use. Significantly, the US plan only provides for 10 MHz LTE channels, while the APT plan offers multiple 20 MHz LTE channels, widely regarded as the preferred channel bandwidth for LTE systems. "The APT 700 MHz band plan has the opportunity to be the most highly

harmonized, nearly worldwide, band for mobile broadband, and the only one below 1 GHz that offers the potential for markets totaling many hundreds of millions, if not billions, of people," Mr. Chapman said. The resulting economies of scale for APT band plan-compliant devices are expected to be massive, with corresponding economic, consumer and societal benefits. As a consequence, the future development of a cheap smartphone (perhaps as low as \$30) was a real possibility, said Mr. Chapman.

(November 20, 2012) [www.cellular-news.com](#)

## Brunei

Telecoms regulator, the Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry (AITI), has published its annual ICT indicators. Although no time-frame is mentioned by the regulator, it is assumed that the figures apply to the end of the country's financial year, 31 March 2012. The regulator has revealed that the Sultanate's mobile user base reached 449,260, up from 443,161 a year earlier. That total comprises 382,286 pre-paid users and 66,974 post-paid contract customers. Meanwhile, the number of fixed line subscribers increased from 79,839 to 80,039, ending a negative trend of falling subscriber totals evident in 2010 and 2011. In terms of internet access, the AITI reported 21,492 fixed line broadband subscribers, 4,161 dial-up users and 27,620 mobile internet users. (November 16, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](#)

## Philippine

The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) is poised to publish the terms of reference for the planned re-auction a 10MHz block of 3G frequencies relinquished by Connectivity Unlimited Resource Enterprises (CURE), a subsidiary of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT), as part of the approval conditions for the latter's acquisition of Digitel last year. The terms and conditions are finalized and the agency is set to release the full details for the tender, maybe on the first week of December. The watchdog has yet to set a floor price for the spectrum. (November 20, 2012) [Daily Business Mirror](#)

## Thailand

Another of the investigations into Thailand's 3G license auction has failed to find any evidence of collusion between the three bidders. Following the failure of the auction to sell the licenses for more than the reserve prices, there had been allegations that the three sole bidders for the three licenses had colluded to fix the prices. They all denied the claims, which generally came from special interest groups unhappy with the auction in general. That the auction would probably sell the licenses at the reserve price was expected, due to the way it had been structured by the regulator. The Department of Special Investigation (DSI) and a probe committee led by the House Secretary General have now said that they were both unable to find any evidence to support the claims of collusion. The regulator itself called in the DSI to investigate the auction process, to assuage concerns of a cover-up. A separate court case is being held to overturn the entire auction process on the grounds that the lack of competition was illegal. If the licenses cannot be formally handed over by the end of January, then they will be invalidated anyway, and the auction will have to be carried out again. (November 23, 2012) [www.cellular-news.com](#)

The board of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) has officially endorsed its telecom committee's approval of last month's

3G auction results. A group of senators had submitted a petition to the Administrative Court via the office of the Ombudsman, alleging that the telecom committee's endorsement of the 2100 MHz license auction was illegal, on the basis that legislation stated that the regulator's entire board should ratify the result. (November 15, 2012) [the Bangkok Post](#)

## Taiwan

Taiwan's telecoms regulator, the NCC has set the spectrum allocations for its forthcoming 4G license auction. The NCC said that bidding for licenses would be set at 15MHz multiplied by two, while the upper limit will be set at 35MHz multiplied by two. There will be a total of four licenses available, each with 17-year licenses, and may come with conditions forbidding the use of unlimited data tariffs. Although operators will be required to bid for between 15 MHz and 35 MHz in the auction, they will be able to later sell blocks of 5 MHz to other operators. By setting the basic unit at 15MHz multiplied by two, the NCC will effectively prevent opportunists from taking advantage of the auction, allowing telecommunication firms to develop healthily. The auction is due to take place late next year. (November 29, 2012) [The China Post](#)

## Hong Kong

Communications Authority (CA) released a statement permitting China Mobile Hong Kong (CMHK) and SmarTone Mobile Communications to swap a portion of their wireless spectrum in the 1800 MHz band. The two cellcos are currently each assigned a total of 2x13.2MHz spectrum in the 1800 MHz band. Their assignments are not contiguous as different frequency blocks were assigned to them at different times. In order to convert some of their fragmented frequency blocks to contiguous ones, CMHK and SmarTone submitted a joint request to the CA asking for its permission to swap 2x1.6MHz blocks of their assigned spectrum. The objective of the equal swap is to reduce the interference with other networks and to improve the service quality, resulting in more flexible use of the spectrum, thereby increasing the spectral efficiency and network capacity of both operators. The frequency blocks to be swapped are currently held as: (a) CMHK – 1716.9-1718.5 MHz paired with 1811.9-1813.5 MHz (2x1.6MHz); and (b) SmarTone – 1781.7-1782.5 MHz paired with 1876.7-1877.5 MHz (2x0.8MHz) and 1784.1-1784.9MHz paired with 1879.1-1879.9 MHz (2x0.8MHz). SmarTone switched on an 1800 MHz 4G LTE network in August this year, while CMHK currently uses its 1800 MHz spectrum for 2G services, having launched LTE in the 2600 MHz (FDD) band in April, whilst preparing for the imminent launch of 2300 MHz TD-LTE. (November 7, 2012) [www.telegeography.com](#)

## India

Three of India's largest mobile networks have requested that a portion of the radio spectrum reserved for CDMA services be repurposed for use by the GSM networks. Bharti Airtel, Vodafone and Idea Cellular sent a joint letter to the Department of Telecoms with recommendation that the 800 MHz spectrum band is harmonized with the international band plan to become part of an extended 900 MHz band which will increase the availability of spectrum in the 900 MHz band by up to 10 MHz (or over 40 per cent). The CDMA operators also all refused to participate in the recent spectrum auction, citing the high reserve price being set, which was 1.3 times higher than the price for the 1800 MHz spectrum. The government currently plans to take a second attempt at selling the spectrum next year, but the GSM

networks feel they could make better use of the spectrum. (November 25, 2012) [www.cellular-news.com](#)

The Department of Telecommunication (DoT) has begun working on possible solutions following the weak result from this week's 1800MHz auction. The DoT is investigating alternative auction methodologies, financing solutions and lowering the reserve price as possible means to encourage operators to purchase spectrum left unsold after the auction earlier this week. The auction fell far short of expectations, with frequencies in four key circles attracting no interest from bidders and netting less than a quarter of the targeted income from the sales. The failure of the auction has reportedly led ministry officials to rethink plans for the sale of 900 MHz frequencies, which were to have even higher reserve prices. In light of the result of the 1800 MHz sale, the current pricing mechanism does not seem feasible and is expected to be restructured.

(November 16, 2012) [the Business standard](#)

*"Information contained herein has been obtained from sources, which we deem reliable. SAMENA Telecommunications Council is not liable for any misinformed decisions that the reader may reach by being solely reliant on information contained herein. Expert advice should be sought."*

## Javaid Akhtar Malik

Director Regulatory Affairs

**SAMENA Telecommunications Council**



## Aligning Interests in Harmony

Much of what we have achieved in telecommunications has been driven by innovation, global standardization, and cross-border cooperation. The need to develop, launch, operate, and inter-connect technologies in the global plane is so strong that no single technology provider, telecoms service provider, regulator, or a policy-making body can hope to realize its objectives by operating in a disconnected fashion, disengaged from global market trends. This need to succeed in the global plane has inarguably contributed to the expansion and the availability of telecommunications services to more than six billion people around the globe.

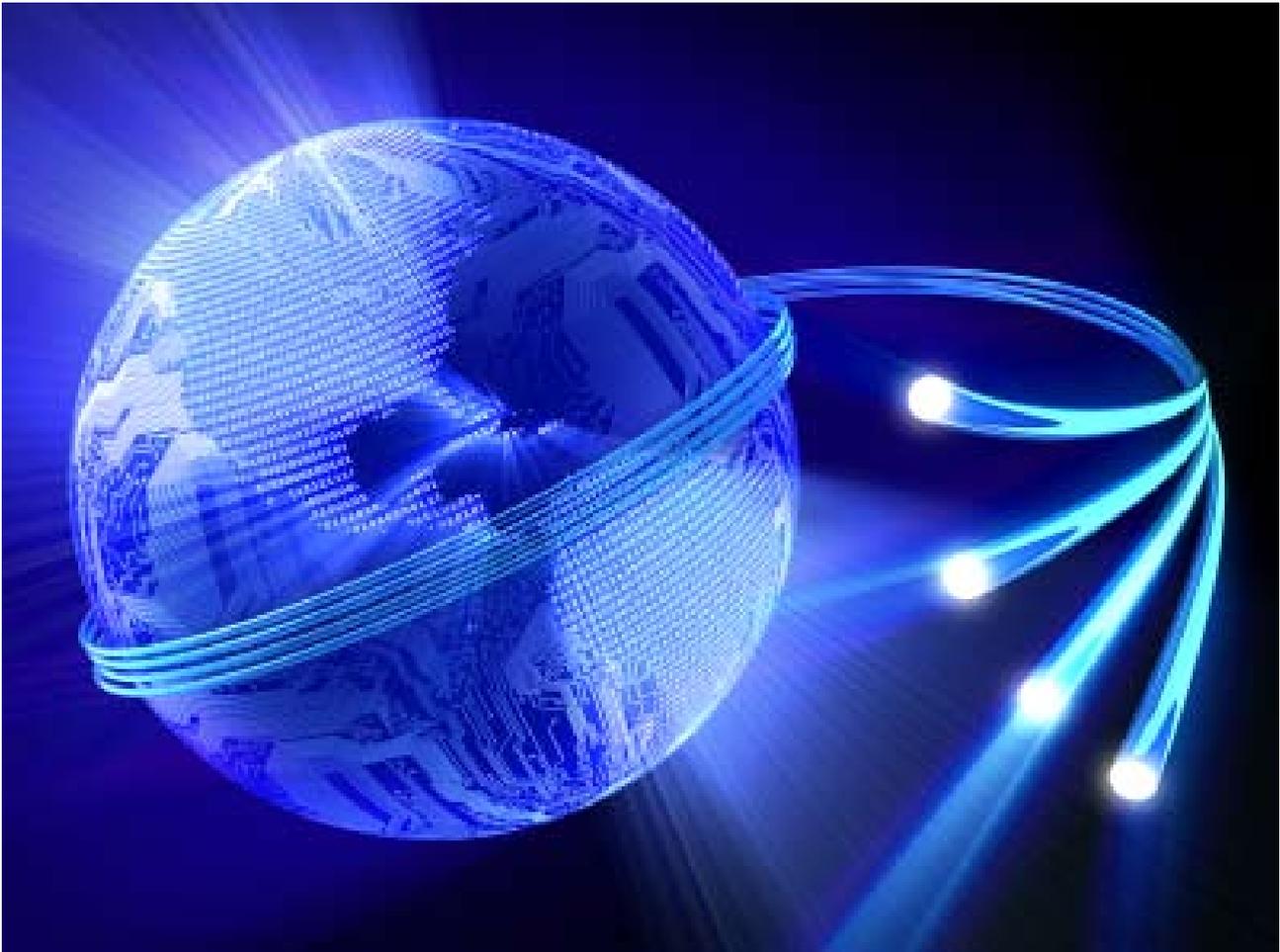
Consequently, both encouraged by growth prospects and compelled by the necessity to keep up with the competition, telecoms operators have expended large capital—over hundreds of billions of dollars—on infrastructure development, service packaging and delivery, and content-based offerings. This, effectively, has paved a path for digitization across the globe, foreshadowing future economic prospects worth a trillion dollar for the South Asia – Middle East – North Africa region alone. Of no surprise then is the impact that advancing digitization in the world is to have on the improvement of employment rates, reduction in poverty, creation of ICT capacity-building programs—including for persons with special needs, and the realization of environmental efficiencies.

Such an impact, for it to bear desired outcomes, demands cooperation, unbeknownst earlier.

In the current times and those nearing, the term cooperation carries much greater depth than it did when the world starting venturing into telecommunications a few decades ago. Today, cooperation is global, inevitable, and is integral to the success of the multi-stakeholder business model that governs the interaction, transactions, collaboration, and inter-dependence among its constituents both in and outside of the telecommunications industry. It is through cooperation only that policy objectives and business interests can be best aligned; and national digital agendas could find their fulfillment.

Some of the key areas where cooperation between the telecommunications business and ICT policy-making is greatly needed, but is comparatively less discussed, include the protection of the environment; the creation of value through telecommunications to positively impact the quality of life of persons with disabilities and special needs; and poverty reduction across the globe.

In some markets around the world, since the end of 2011, the year that “marks the end of the End of History<sup>1</sup>”, the perception that progressive internationalism<sup>2</sup> can press upon national and cross-border policy change and that it may compromise the interests of some over the interests of the others has manifested itself with coarse clarity. This may have impacted, albeit inconclusively, national policy attitudes toward cross-border telecommunications as well. Considering, however, that telecommunications catalyzes economic prosperity and can define success in



forementioned areas requiring international cooperation, cross-border political developments—in optimism—should not have adversely impacted the telecommunications business; at least not to an unfathomable extent.

Many decisions taken at the policy tiers in some markets of the South Asia – Middle East – North Africa region over the past year have been supported only by the pretexts of security and political stability. Such decisions, taken in absence of a cooperative multi-stakeholder approach, caused unqualified loss to the telecommunications business, and created economic ramifications for those they directly affected.

Such policy-level decisions, subsequently, proved to be impractical and isolated, entrenched with proclivity to be revoked.

There thus exists an undeniable need to achieve harmony in and with telecommunications; and to build cross-border bridges in knowledge-sharing, need assessment, and policy-making. In so doing, an assurance could be obtained that, globally, investments in telecommunications—and, by association, in digitization—remain sustainable. The time may be on the horizon when cooperation-building with regard to international telecommunications matters will have direct, unprecedented impact on initiating and nurturing cooperation in other aspects of the human interaction, for decades to come.

**The views communicated here belong to the author and do not necessarily coincide with the SAMENA Council's own position.**

**Izhar Ahmad**  
 Director, Government & External Relations  
**SAMENA Telecommunications Council**

<sup>1</sup> Article title by Jerome Roos, October 23, 2011, *Reflections on a Revolution (ROAR)* online magazine

<sup>2</sup> Assessment by Jonathan Glennie in his article "Global co-operation must not be sacrificed on the altar of self-interest", December 23, 2011, *The Guardian*



# ROAMING NEWS

## Durja Telecom Launched Revolutionary Low Cost Global Mobile Roaming Service

Durja Telecom, a global travel communication services provider has launched a revolutionary low cost global roaming mobile service that will help International Travelers save up to 90 percent on their International Roaming Mobile bills. International travelers can now get an international SIM card with a single number that will work in over 220 countries worldwide. The number becomes permanent with the customer and can be re-used during every International trip by simply recharging it again through their travel agent or online at <http://www.durjatel.com>. This revolutionary low cost global roaming mobile service offers free incoming in over 90 countries and outgoing call costs starting as low as 20 US cents per minute. Other benefits include high speed data and free incoming SMS worldwide. Since the product is prepaid, there are no monthly fees, no minimum term contracts, no commitments and no setup charges. Users will pay for only what they use. "90 percent of International Travellers who have used their local number on International Roaming have experienced Bill Shock" said Abhishek More, Founder, Durja Telecom. "Also, a lot of travelers do not carry their mobile phone with them during their International trips due to the fear of extremely high roaming costs". "The Durjatel Global SIM card will not only help International Travellers save over US\$ 500 per trip (depending on the length of their trip and usage), but most importantly will offer an opportunity to every International Traveler to carry a mobile phone with them during their international travels", added Abhishek More.

## Sisteer to Support Uros Mobile Data Roaming in France

Provider of roaming free internet enters into a wholesale agreement with MVNE Sisteer to enable business travellers to cut communications cost. Tier-one mobile virtual network enabler (MVNE) Sisteer ([www.sisteer.com](http://www.sisteer.com)) announced that it has entered into an agreement with roaming free internet provider Uros ([www.uros.com](http://www.uros.com)) enabling use of the Goodspeed Mobile Traveller Hotspot products in France. The goal of the agreement is for Uros to leverage the technical expertise of Sisteer and the business arrangements it has with local Mobile Network Operators. Users using the Goodspeed hotspot device need only pay a low-cost fixed fee when travelling abroad. Data consumption can be expensive while travelling abroad, especially on business trips when staying connected is a must. For business travellers who work online via their laptops and tablet computers, data consumption can easily cost hundreds of Euros per day. The Goodspeed Mobile Hotspot solution resolves this issue and costs around 90 percent less than the cap set in the latest EU roaming regulations to use. "We are pleased to announce this agreement with Sisteer which will provide our customers with local rates when travelling to France," says Jyrki Halttunen, Uros' sales and marketing vice-president. "Sisteer has world class technical expertise and business standing with MNOs around the globe and we expect to leverage these and expand our agreement to cover more countries and regions world-wide."

## Bharti Airtel to Offer African Customers free Incoming While Roaming in South Asia

Bharti Airtel introduced the world's first intercontinental roaming facility that offers free incoming calls to businessmen, tourists and students from its African network while travelling in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. The world's fourth largest telco by customers said that it had included India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka to its current bouquet of One Network services for its African customers, who already avail this service across Airtel's mobile network in 17 countries across Africa. Airtel customers in Africa will be automatically provisioned for this service and do not need to register or buy new SIM cards. With this, 60 million Airtel customers in Africa will be able to roam at affordable tariffs in the Indian sub-continent. Andre Beyers, chief marketing officer at Airtel Africa said, "Airtel's One Network now gives our customers the ability to drastically reduce roaming charges whilst travelling within and across the two continents. Our goal is to provide affordable and relevant mobile communication solutions across borders." The world's first seamless service across continents ups the ante for global telecom providers, the company said.

## SK Telecom Launches WiFi Roaming for 56 Countries

A new service offers unlimited WiFi access for Smartphones, tablet PCs, or laptops in 56 countries for just W10,000 a day. SK Telecom announced that it is launching the service, which switches the local WCDMA protocol to WiFi in 56 countries including Japan, China, the U.K. and the U.S. Up to three IT devices can be simultaneously connected to the hotspot device, which is about the size of a business card. It can be rented from local service centers of SK Telecom nationwide. Customers of other telecom providers can use the service from next month.

## GTA Expands Roaming Services to More International Destinations

GTA wireless customers now have access to enhanced roaming services in more international destinations. GTA wireless customers can call and send text messages when visiting Italy and Vietnam. With enhanced roaming capabilities, customers can also use voice, text messaging and data services in the Czech Republic, India, Indonesia, and Switzerland. Roland Certeza, executive vice president of sales and marketing at GTA said, "We have made significant strides to improve our roaming services this year, now roaming in more than 60 countries. As we begin the holiday season, we anticipate that more families will leave the island for vacation and will need roaming services while away from home. These recent additions to our roaming locations make it more convenient for our customers to stay in touch." GTA first began providing wireless service in Guam in January 2006. GTA continues to offer voice, text, and data roaming to a multitude of national and international destinations. Customers are encouraged to call 644-4482 prior to travelling to ensure the roaming feature is enabled on their handsets.

## Airtel Uganda Adds to "One Network" Roaming Options

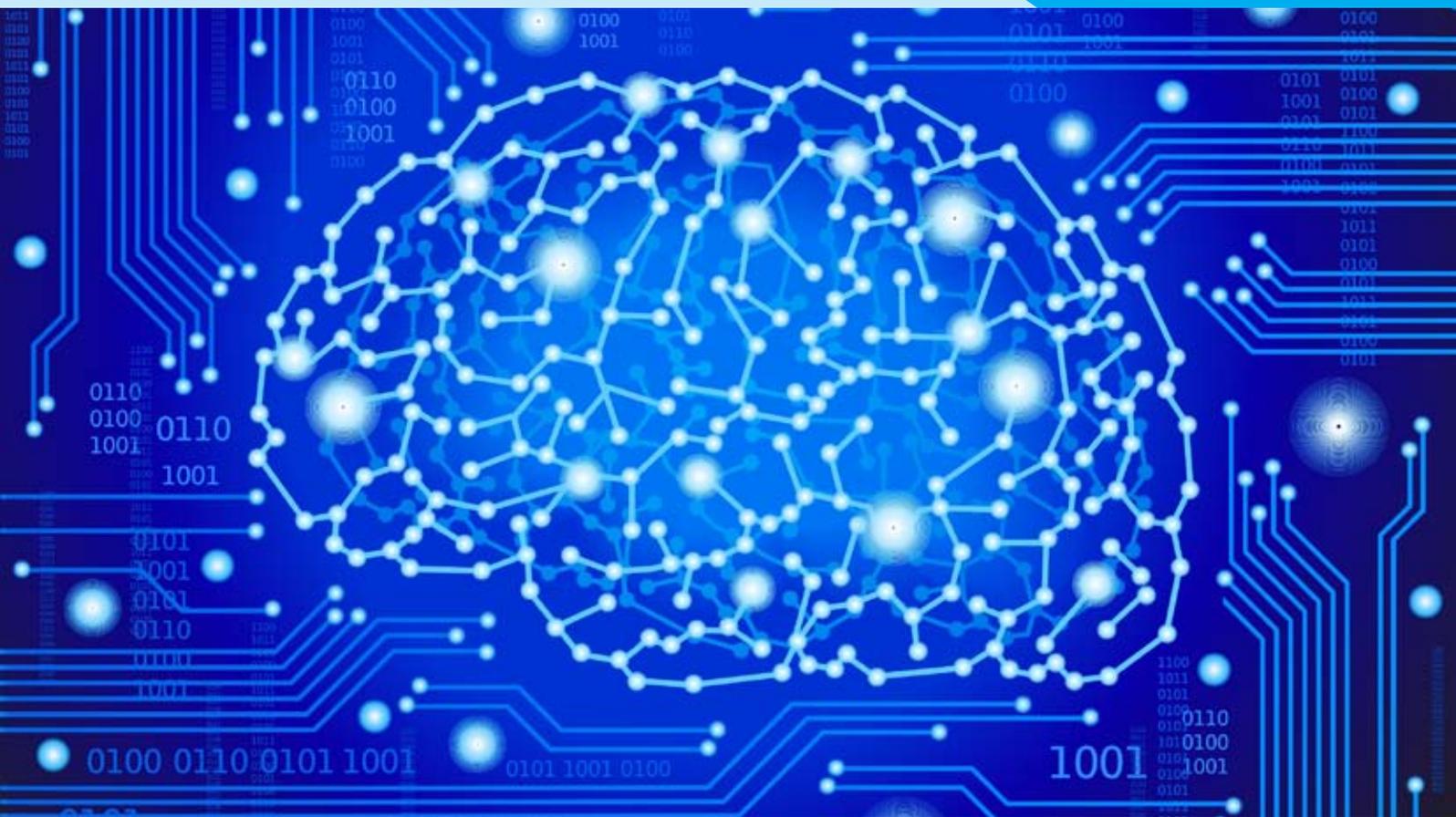
Recently, Airtel Uganda added Jordan and a number of African countries to its "One Network" roaming plan for customers. The company announced it had added a number of other countries to its offerings, in the hopes that users with the company will continue to make voice calls while traveling. The new countries include India and Southeast Asia and are expected to help the company push forward on attracting business minded users to its network. The idea is that users will not be forced to purchase a local line while they travel abroad and can maintain their Uganda service even while abroad at a lower roaming fee. "The One Network profile allows customers to communicate at local rates, receive calls for free and recharge partner airtime vouchers when they travel to other Airtel countries in Africa. It now also offers free incoming calls in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh," said Airtel Uganda in announcing the addition of India and Southeast Asia. With both smartphone and penetration on the rise in Uganda, experts believe that Airtel is moving forward with positive offerings and services to its user base that will likely keep customers pleased with what they receive from Airtel Uganda.

## New Mobile Termination Rates as of January

Poland's telecom market regulator UKE stands by the January 1, 2013 deadline for the introduction of new lower mobile termination rates (MTR), UKE head Magdalena Gaj wrote in a statement. "The president of UKE announces that there is no threat for the introduction of new mobile termination rates as of January 1, 2013," the statement read. The comment follows Monday press reports that the introduction of new MTRs could be delayed until end-February 2013, UKE said. The new rates have already been approved by the European Commission and are currently being processed by the competition and consumer protection office UOKiK, which has two weeks to take a stance, the statement further read. MTRs will be reduced to PLN 0.0826 per minute as of January 1, 2013, before they reach the target level of PLN 0.0429 as of July 1, 2013, according to the telecom market watchdog UKE's proposal announced in August. Currently MTRs stand at PLN 0.122 per minute.

## Vodafone Launches Data Angel for Roaming

Vodafone New Zealand has extended the Data Angel service to roaming. The service will prompt customers to buy data when they switch on their phones or other mobile devices after arriving in another country. Customers will also receive a warning once 80 percent of the allowance has been reached, the Business Day writes. At the same time, Vodafone has lowered the price of roaming data for customers travelling to Australia by 70 percent to AUD 15 for 100 MB.



# TECHNOLOGY NEWS

## Russian Mobile Operator MegaFon and Cisco Complete 100G Technology Test

Russian mobile service provider MegaFon and Cisco have completed 100G technology test. Cisco and the North West Branch of MegaFon tested data transmission at the rate of 100 gigabits per second in an existing MegaFon dense wavelength-division multiplexing (DWDM) network. During the testing Cisco 100G solutions were incorporated in networks based on other vendors' technologies. The results proved that Cisco solutions are compatible with different manufacturers' products, can be effectively used for multiple purposes, feature simplicity of configuration and usage, and prevent the necessity of deploying guard bands. The project was aimed at testing the effectiveness and interworking of Cisco 100G transponders, Cisco ASR 9000 Series Aggregation Services Routers and the Cisco ONS 15454 Multiservice Transport Platform (MSTP) at the distance of 140 and 384 kilometers (87 and 239 miles). The 100G services were supported by Cisco DWDM transponders tuned to 192.6 GHz (1556.55 nm). Thus, the operator can maximize the potentiality of network bandwidth," said Sergey Semenov, CTO, North West Branch, MegaFon. Recently, TelecomLead.com reported that Lumos Networks, a fiber-based service provider, has completed a technology test of Cisco's 100G coherent DWDM solution. Lumos Networks can meet customer demand for high-capacity bandwidth on its 10G fiber plant by deploying 100G line cards in its current Cisco ONS 15454 platforms.

## IBM Opens Public Cloud Data Center in France

IBM has opened its first data center for public cloud computing in France outside Montpellier. The SmartCloud Enterprise + data center is one of seven such facilities worldwide, with two others in the US and one in Canada, Germany, Japan and Singapore. The SCE+ offers the same services and prices worldwide, shared or dedicated IaaS environments supporting PaaS and SaaS, and the IBM SmartCloud for SAP solution. IBM has been investing in data centers in France since 2009 to help businesses develop their private clouds, with existing customers including French business software developer Cegid and hosting service provider Aspaway. IBM France CEO Alain Benichou said the new cloud center would help French public and private organizations grow nationally, but its strength also lies in supporting their international growth through its data global center network.

## PLDT Building P856-M Cebu-Bohol-Mindanao Fiber Optic Link

PLDT and its mobile subsidiary Smart Communications, Inc. are building a P856-million fiber optic cable (FOC) route linking Cebu to Bohol and Misamis Oriental. The new facility, initially equipped with 210 Gigabits per second (Gbps), will be completed by September 2013. The Cebu-Bohol link will provide 20 Gbps of capacity to the island. The Bohol-Mindanao link will carry 190 Gbps of capacity.

We have fast-tracked this particular project because the demand for broadband services—both from consumers and businesses—is growing rapidly in the Visayas and Mindanao areas,” said PLDT and Smart head of network and IP systems Rolando G. Peña. The project involves laying about 450 kilometers of fiber optic cable from Cebu to Cagayan de Oro City. A little over 300 km of the cable will be laid inland. The rest will be undersea links between Cebu and Bohol and between Bohol and Misamis Oriental. These will add to PLDT and Smart’s current total of over 54,000 km of fiber optic cable assets nationwide. By adding the third link, said Peña, “we will be able to continue providing service in Mindanao even if we suffer two breaks in our transmission networks connecting the island.”

## Dubai eGovernment Unveils Mobile ePayment Applications during GITEX

In line with its ‘Customers First’ strategy and its commitment to adopt the latest technologies in support of Dubai’s eTransformation, Dubai eGovernment has recently announced the launch of two new mobile applications to facilitate real-time ePayment services and allow easy access to all services provided by the Government of Dubai. This launch comes in conjunction with the 32nd GITEX Technology Week, being held from October 14 to 18, 2012, at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Center (DICEC). The first application is designed to offer immediate ePayment services via mobile phones to facilitate access to information and online payment transactions of three main government services: Dubai Police fines, DEWA bills and RTA Salik account recharge. The second application covers Dubai Government services such as information, location and contact details of government authorities and departments, and also the filing of complaints or making suggestions online. In addition, the public will be able to stay up-to-date with the latest news on Dubai and government authorities, as well as the various events taking place in the emirate, while also being able to access a database of information on more than 1,600 exciting landmarks in and around Dubai.

## Dubai Visa Services Now on Smartphones

The General Directorate for Residency and Foreigner Affairs (GDRFA) in Dubai has launched a new smartphone application that allows residents to make queries on visa issues. The free app will allow users to apply for visa renewals, access M-Visa services, and elicit answers for their queries on general visa issue. The GDRFA introduced its new e-service during the 32nd edition of Gitex Technology. GDRFA has added several new services since its inception. “Amer van, which renders most of the services given by the GDRFA to its customers, is a vehicle dispatched to the doorstep upon the request of a customer or company. The van is fitted with the necessary equipment which can process and complete the GDRFA’s transactions fast,” Major General Al Merri said. “These mobile services will enable our customers in any place in the world to be provided with better and fast services by using the latest technology,” he added. The GDRFA app allows users to apply for M-Visa services in which a customer’s mobile phone becomes an enabling device to replace the original visa. “The sponsor will be informed immediately after M-Visa is issued from GDRFA through mobile phones in an SMS, Major General Al Merri said.

## NEC Makes Polkomtel’s Mobile Access Network LTE Ready With iPASOLINK

NEC Corporation has signed a multiple-year frame contract to supply Polkomtel, one of Poland’s leading mobile operators, with its iPASOLINK series in order to rebuild a nationwide mobile access network over the next three years. As one of the main suppliers under this contract, NEC will deploy ultra-compact IP-based microwave links across Poland to enhance the capacity and efficiency of the 3G backhaul network. NEC will fully support the advancement of Polkomtel’s network toward LTE, which requires great deal more network capacity for handling large volumes of IP data traffic. NEC will provide its sophisticated microwave radio solutions, including the iPASOLINK200, iPASOLINK400, iPASOLINK1000 and the MS5000 network management system. NEC will also provide a full range of professional services, such as installation, testing of equipment, training and maintenance support services. NEC’s iPASOLINK series flexibly accommodates today’s growing transmission needs through a variety of different interfaces on a single platform.

## OTDR Automates FTTH Fault Management

Intended for in-service FTTH testing, monitoring, and troubleshooting, the FG-750 Node iOLM from EXFO is a specialized OTDR that performs end-to-end PON (passive optical network) testing from the central office. The unit can test point-to-multipoint fibers or run downstream tests from the node or central office to any PON line type, providing operators with an automated, operation-oriented way of assessing the health of their FTTH networks. The FG-750 Node iOLM (intelligent optical link mapper) allows operators to validate end-to-end fiber quality from a centralized location and throughout the lifecycle. Its ability to perform online quality control of contractual work and to further use the same equipment for isolating and pinpointing optical-layer impairments in a more automated way improves operational efficiency. Carrier-class hardware used in the FG-750 meets FTTx network requirements, such as connection to multiple optical test ports, use of multifiber cables, low power consumption, small volume, and scalability. In addition, EXFO offers 576-port and 720-port optical-switch and test-access modules to allow in-service addition of out-of-band OTDR signals to the line under test, all from the node.

## Chile Ports 615,000 Mobile Numbers in 10 Months

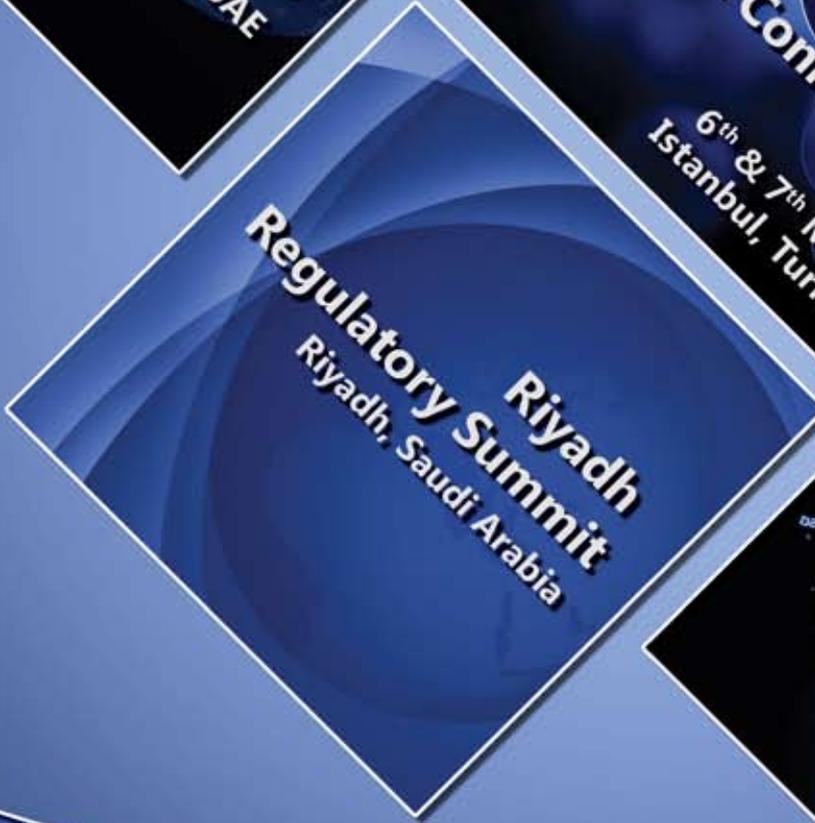
Chile ported over 615,402 numbers since the mobile number portability was launched on 16 January. Claro led mobile number portability in the period, adding nearly 94,501 net ported customers by 8 October, according to a report from Chilean telecoms regulator Subtel. Virgin attracted 10,654 net users, followed by VTR (7,890), Nextel (3,924), and Telsur (682). Movistar lost 81,740 net ported customers and Entel shed 35,934 users in the ten-month period. Chilean operators also ported over 43,272 numbers since the fixed number portability was launched in December 2011. VTR led fixed number portability in the period, adding nearly 15,664 net ported customers by 8 October attracted 6,356 net users, followed by Entel (1,935), Telsur (450), and Netel (103). Movistar lost nearly 22,966 net ported customers in the period.



**CMO Day**  
28<sup>th</sup> January, 2013  
Dubai, UAE



**Beyond Connectivity**  
2013  
6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> March  
Istanbul, Turkey



**Riyadh Summit**  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



**Convergence to Bahrain**  
November, 2013  
Manama, Bahrain



**SAMENA TRENDS**



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